

Numbers 26:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

Analysis

The 'serpent' and 'protected' pairing creates theological tension—Benjamin's wolf-like ferocity (serpent-cunning) balanced by divine covering. This echoes Jacob's blessing that Benjamin 'dwells between his shoulders' (Deuteronomy 33:12), suggesting both vulnerability and special divine protection. These lesser-known clans remind us that census records preserve even minor lineages; every family matters in covenant accounting. The Shuphamites and Huphamites would inherit their portion just as surely as Bela's prominent clan.

Historical Context

These clans' relatively obscure status in Scripture contrasts with Bela's prominence (King Saul descended from Becorath, possibly Becher-related, 1 Samuel 9:1). Yet their inclusion ensured they received land in Benjamin's territory. Small clans often merged or were absorbed, but this census memorialized them at this crucial moment before Conquest.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the careful recording of minor clans like Shupham and Hupham encourage believers who feel insignificant in God's larger purposes?
2. What does the 'serpent/protected' pairing teach about how God's covering enables His people to operate with wisdom and courage?
3. How might textual variants in clan names remind us that God's covenant faithfulness transcends precise record-keeping and embraces real, messy families?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁפָּטָת לְשֻׁפּוֹת מִשְׁפָּטָת לְחוֹפּוֹת מִשְׁפָּטָת
Of Shupham the family of the Shuphamites of Hupham the family
H8197 H4940 H7781 H2349 H4940

בְּחוֹפּוֹתִים
of the Huphamites
H2350

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