

Numbers 26:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the sons of Pallu; Eliab.

Analysis

And the sons of Pallu; Eliab—this brief verse introduces Eliab (אֵלָיָה, 'my God is Father'), whose sons Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram led a notorious rebellion against Moses (Numbers 16:1). The next verses (26:9-11) will detail this rebellion's catastrophic consequences.

The census's inclusion of Eliab sets up a cautionary tale embedded within genealogical record-keeping. Not all descendants remained faithful; Eliab's family produced rebels who challenged God's appointed leadership. Yet even notorious failures are recorded in Scripture as warnings: **these things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us** (1 Corinthians 10:11). The census is not merely statistical but theological, teaching covenant lessons through family histories.

Historical Context

Eliab was a prominent Reubenite whose sons Dathan and Abiram joined Korah's rebellion (Numbers 16). These men, along with 250 leaders, challenged Moses's authority and were swallowed alive by the earth in divine judgment. Eliab himself is not mentioned in the rebellion account, suggesting he may have died before this event or remained uninvolved.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the census's inclusion of Eliab—whose sons would rebel—remind us that faithful parents cannot guarantee their children's spiritual choices?
2. What does the detailed recording of rebellion and judgment teach about Scripture's honest portrayal of covenant community failures?
3. In what ways might positional privilege (being from a prominent family) become a temptation to presumption rather than faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

And the sons	of Pallu	Eliab
H1121	H6396	H446

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