

Numbers 27:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

Analysis

God's instruction 'thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him' indicates transfer of authority from Moses to Joshua. The Hebrew *hod* (honour/majesty) suggests more than respect—it conveys authoritative dignity. However, the phrase 'some of thine honour' shows Joshua would not equal Moses (Deuteronomy 34:10). Moses' unique mediatorial role as lawgiver would not be replicated. This teaches that ministerial authority can be transferred while recognizing unique, unrepeatable roles. Apostolic authority similarly transferred to subsequent elders, though none equal the original apostles' foundational role (Ephesians 2:20).

Historical Context

Moses' unmatched status as the lawgiver who spoke with God face-to-face (Exodus 33:11) meant no successor could fully replace him. Joshua's role was implementing the law Moses received, not receiving new foundational revelation. This distinction preserved Torah's authority—later prophets called Israel back to Mosaic law rather than replacing it. Only Christ would come as prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15), fulfilling and superseding the law.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do we distinguish transferable ministerial authority from unique, unrepeatable roles?
2. What does it mean that some leaders have foundational roles that successors implement but don't replicate?
3. How does Christ's unique role as final prophet surpass even Moses?

Interlinear Text

וְנָתַתָּהּ	מִהוֹדֶךָ	עַל יוֹ	לְמַעַן	יִשְׁמָעוּ	כָּל
And thou shalt put	some of thine honour	H5921	H4616	may be obedient	H3605
H5414	H1935			H8085	
עָלָיו	בְּנֵי יִ	יִשְׂרָאֵל:			
upon him that all the congregation	of the children	of Israel			
H5712	H1121	H3478			

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