Numbers 30:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded.

Analysis

Moses speaking to Israel's tribal heads about vows establishes that promises made to God are serious matters requiring community leadership's attention. The instruction begins with leaders, who must then teach their people. This demonstrates that spiritual leadership includes teaching about commitment and integrity. Vows are voluntary, but once made, they become binding obligations. The Reformed emphasis on the sanctity of oaths and the seriousness of commitment to God finds strong support in this chapter's introduction.

Historical Context

Vows were common in Israel—people voluntarily promised specific actions or offerings to God, often in response to blessing or as petition for help. The vow's voluntary nature meant people chose to bind themselves, but divine holiness meant these self-imposed obligations were as binding as direct commands. Breaking a vow was not merely changing one's mind but breaking faith with God.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does the seriousness of vows teach about making commitments to God?
2. How should church leaders address the modern tendency toward casual promises?
3. In what ways do voluntary commitments to God become binding obligations?

Interlinear Text

וַיְדַבֵּ ר	מֹשֶׁה	אֶל	רָאשֵׁ י	הַמַּטּ וֹת	לִבְנֵ י
spake	And Moses	H413	unto the heads	of the tribes	concerning the children
H1696	H4872		H7218	H4294	H1121

יִשְׂרָאֵ ל	לֵאמֹ ר	זֶ ה	הַדָּבָ ר	אֲשֶׁ ר	צִוָּ ה
of Israel	saying	H2088	This is the thing	H834	hath commanded
H3478	H559		H1697		H6680

יְהוָה:
which the LORD
H3068

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 7:2 (References Israel): That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers, who were the princes of the tribes, and were over them that were numbered, offered: