

Numbers 33:53

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.

Analysis

The instruction that land be divided by lot 'according to the families' combines divine sovereignty (lot) with providential distribution (family size). God determines inheritance through ordained means, not arbitrary chance. The balance between what God ordains (the lot's outcome) and natural factors (family needs) teaches that providence works through means. The Reformed doctrine of divine concurrence—God works in, with, and through natural factors while remaining sovereignly in control—is clearly illustrated in this land distribution system.

Historical Context

The lot-casting system for land distribution appears throughout Joshua's conquest account. It prevented disputes by making God the arbiter of boundaries. The proportional aspect meant larger tribes received more land, smaller tribes less, ensuring both divine sovereignty and practical justice. The system's wisdom became evident as disputes were resolved by appealing to the lot's divine determination.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's use of means (lot and census) teach about providence working through natural processes?
2. What does combining divine sovereignty with proportional justice demonstrate about God's character?
3. In what ways should Christians trust God's sovereignty expressed through natural means?

Interlinear Text

לְקַשֵּׁת	אֶת	בָּאָרֶץ	וַיֵּשֶׁבּוּ	בָּיִת
And ye shall dispossess	H853	the inhabitants of the land	and dwell	H3588
H3423		H776	H3427	
לְקַשֵּׁת	נָתַתִּי	אֶת	בָּאָרֶץ	
therein for I have given	H5414	H853	the inhabitants of the land	
H0			H776	
לְקַשֵּׁת	אֶתְּתָה			
And ye shall dispossess	H853			
H3423				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 11:31 (Parallel theme): For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.