

Numbers 34:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot, which the LORD commanded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe:

Analysis

Moses commands the nine and a half tribes to receive their inheritance 'by lot,' emphasizing divine sovereignty in distribution. The Hebrew 'goral' (lot) was used to discern God's will, removing human favoritism or strife. Proverbs 16:33 affirms, 'The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.' This method demonstrated that each tribe's portion came from God's hand, not human merit or power. The principle continues in the New Testament: believers are chosen 'according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will' (Eph 1:11), and we 'have obtained an inheritance' by divine appointment.

Historical Context

This distribution occurred after Canaan's conquest under Joshua (Josh 13-21). Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh had already received territory east of Jordan (Num 32), leaving nine and a half tribes to inherit west of Jordan. The lot-casting likely used Urim and Thummim or similar sacred method, possibly stones drawn from a container, ensuring divine direction. The practice prevented tribal conflicts over superior land, as each tribe received God's specific assignment for them.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Do you trust that God has sovereignly assigned your 'inheritance' - your life circumstances, gifts, and calling?
2. How does understanding God's sovereign distribution help you avoid envy of others' portions?

Interlinear Text

צִוָּה	ה	מֵשֶׁה	אֶת	בְּנֵי	לֵבֶן	רַבְנָה	אָתָּה	זֶה
commanded	And Moses	H853	the children	of Israel	saying			H2063
H6680	H4872		H1121	H3478	H559			
בְּאַרְצָה	רַבְנָה	אֲשֶׁר	תִּתְנַחַל	וְ	אַתָּה	בְּגֹעַךְ	לְ	אֲשֶׁר
This is the land	H776	H834	which ye shall inherit	H5157	H853	by lot	H1486	H834
צִוָּה	ה	יְהוָה	לְתַשְׁעַת	לְתַשְׁעַת	לְתַשְׁעַת	לְתַשְׁעַת	וְ	צִוָּה
commanded	which the LORD	H3068	to give	unto the nine	tribe	and to the half		H2677
H6680			H5414	H8672	H4294			
הַמּוֹطָה:								
tribe								
H4294								