

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	וַיֹּאמֶר	אֶת	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	לֵאמֹר	זֶה
commanded	And Moses	H853	the children	of Israel	saying
H6680	H4872		H1121	H3478	H2063
הָאָרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר	תִּתְּנוּלָהּ	אֵת	בְּגוֹךְ לְ	אֲשֶׁר
This is the land	H834	which ye shall inherit	H853	by lot	H834
H776		H5157		H1486	
צִוָּה	יְהוָה	לָתֵת	לְתֵשֶׁעַ תְּ	הַמִּטָּה:	וְנֶחֱצֵי
commanded	which the LORD	to give	unto the nine	tribe	and to the half
H6680	H3068	H5414	H8672	H4294	H2677
הַמִּטָּה:					
tribe					
H4294					