

Numbers 34:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

Analysis

And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance—God commands appointing **one prince** (נָשִׂיא אֶחָד nasi echad, one leader/chief) per tribe to oversee land distribution (לְתַחַל אֶת-הָאָרֶץ linchol et-ha'aretz, 'to cause the land to be inherited'). The singular emphasis—one per tribe—ensures clear tribal representation and prevents leadership disputes during the critical inheritance allocation.

This appointment demonstrates God's concern for orderly, representative governance. The land distribution wasn't arbitrary but involved tribal leaders ensuring fair allocation according to census and tribal size (Numbers 26:52-56). The New Testament similarly emphasizes ordered appointment of qualified leaders: 'Appoint elders in every city as I commanded you' (Titus 1:5)—spiritual community requires structured, authorized leadership.

Historical Context

Canaan's division (Joshua 13-21) occurred under these appointed leaders' oversight, supplemented by Joshua and Eleazar the priest. The process combined divine guidance (lots cast before the LORD) with practical administration (tribal representatives ensuring fair treatment). This balanced supernatural direction with orderly human governance.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 – Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the appointment of one representative per tribe demonstrate God's concern for structured, representative governance?
2. What does the combination of divine guidance (lots) and human administration (tribal leaders) teach about balancing supernatural direction with practical wisdom?
3. How can churches maintain both Spirit-led discernment and orderly, accountable decision-making processes?

Interlinear Text

תקין 1	ממעט ה	אך ד	נש יא	אך ד	נש יא	אך ד	נש יא
prince	one	prince	one	of every tribe	And ye shall take		
H5387	H259	H5387	H259	H4294		H3947	

לְנָחָת אֶת הָאָרֶץ
by inheritance the land

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org