

Numbers 35:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan;

Analysis

The instruction to speak to Israel before giving the command demonstrates that understanding precedes obedience. Moses must prepare the people for this law by explaining its context and purpose. This teaches that law without explanation can be misunderstood or misapplied. The Reformed emphasis on teaching and catechesis before implementation is supported here—God's people must understand the reasons and purposes behind His commands. Blind obedience isn't the goal; informed, willing submission is.

Historical Context

The cities of refuge would not be established immediately but when Israel conquered and settled Canaan. Advance explanation ensured the people understood the purpose and procedures. When the cities were eventually designated (Joshua 20), Israel already understood the system's operation and theological basis.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Why does God prioritize understanding alongside obedience in His commands?
2. How does teaching the reasons behind laws affect their implementation and acceptance?
3. In what ways should the church emphasize both instruction and obedience in discipleship?

Interlinear Text

אֶת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם אֶלְעָזֶר בֶּן יַעֲקֹב
Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan

אֶלְעָזֶר בֶּן יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם
unto the children of Israel and say unto them When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan

אֶלְעָזֶר בֶּן יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרָיִם
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