

# Numbers 35:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.

## Analysis

**And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; from them that have few ye shall give few**—This principle of proportional giving (מִאֲתָר הַרְבֵּה מֵעֵתְּ הַרְבֵּה וּמֵאֲתָר הַפָּחוּת טַרְבּוּ וּמֵעֵתְּ הַפָּחוּת יָטוּ, *mē'ēt hārāḇ tarbū ûmē'ēt ham'aṭ tam'îṭû*) reflects both justice and equity. Larger tribes (like Judah, Ephraim) with more territory gave more cities; smaller tribes gave fewer. God didn't impose equal burden regardless of ability—He required proportional sacrifice.

This anticipates New Testament teaching on giving: 'according to what one has, not according to what one does not have' (2 Corinthians 8:12). The widow's mite was proportionally greater than the rich man's abundance (Mark 12:41-44). God sees percentages and heart attitude, not merely absolute amounts. This principle guards against both the pride of large gifts and the excuse of small resources.

## Historical Context

The tribal allotments varied significantly. Judah and Simeon in the south and Ephraim/Manasseh in the center received large territories and thus contributed more Levitical cities. Smaller tribes like Benjamin and Dan contributed fewer.

Joshua 21:1-42 records the actual distribution, showing this proportional principle in action. The system remained functional until the exile (586 BC).

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does proportional giving (based on what you have, not absolute amounts) challenge both wealth and poverty as excuses for not supporting God's work?
2. What would change in your church if everyone gave proportionally rather than fixed amounts?
3. How can you discern what is truly 'proportional' sacrifice for you—not too little (stinginess) but also not beyond your actual capacity?

## Interlinear Text

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וְעָרֵי יוֹ	אֲשֶׁר רַ	יִתֵּן	מֵאֲחֵי ת	בְּנֵי
And the cities	H834	shall give	shall be of the possession	of the children
H5892		H5414	H272	H1121
וּמֵאֵת	תְּרַב וְ	הַרְבֵּה	מֵאֵת ת	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל
of Israel	H853	from them that have many	ye shall give many	H853
H3478		H7227	H7235	
כַּכֹּפֶּי	אִישׁ	תִּתֶּנּוּ יְטֹו	הַמְעַט	ט
according	every one	ye shall give few	but from them that have few	
H6310	H376	H4591	H4592	
וְעָרֵי יוֹ	יִתֵּן	לְיֹנֶה לּוֹ	אֲשֶׁר רַ	נַחֲלָתוֹ
And the cities	shall give	which he inheriteth	H834	to his inheritance
H5892	H5414	H5157		H5159
לְלֵוִים:				
unto the Levites				
H3881				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 33:54** (Parallel theme): And ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families: and to the more ye shall give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be in the place where his lot falleth; according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit.

**Numbers 26:54** (Parallel theme): To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.

**Exodus 16:18** (Parallel theme): And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

