

Numbers 36:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they said, The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters.

Analysis

The reference to God's command that land be given by lot establishes the divine origin of land distribution. The leaders' concern isn't with overturning earlier decisions but with preserving the system's integrity. They acknowledge both the LORD's command to give the daughters inheritance and the principle that tribal allocations are permanent. This demonstrates that God's commands don't contradict but must be harmonized through wisdom. The Reformed hermeneutical principle that Scripture interprets Scripture and doesn't contradict itself is illustrated.

Historical Context

The combination of lot (determining location) and inheritance law (determining transmission) created Israel's land system. The lot established tribal boundaries as permanent, divinely ordained, and not subject to change. If daughters marrying outside their tribe transferred land permanently, it would violate the lot's divine determination of tribal boundaries.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do we harmonize seemingly competing biblical principles through wisdom?
2. What does the appeal to divine command teach about grounding arguments in Scripture?
3. In what ways should Christians resolve tensions between valid principles?

Interlinear Text

אָתָּה לֹתֶת תְּבִיהַנְתָּה צְדָקָה יְאַמְרָנָה
And they said H853 and my lord H113 commanded H6680 The LORD H3068 to give H853
H559 H776 H5159 H1486 H1121 H3478 H113

אָדָנִי יְשָׁבָא לְלִבְנֵי נַפְלָתָה בְּגֹנֶךָ לְבָנָה צְדָקָה
the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel and my lord
H776 H5159 H1486 H1121 H3478 H113

אָלְפָתְד נַפְלָתָה לְבָנָה צְדָקָה אָתָּה לֹתֶת תְּבִיהַנְתָּה
commanded The LORD to give H853 for an inheritance of Zelophehad
H6680 H3068 H5414 H5159 H6765

אָחָת יְנִזְבָּנִי
our brother unto his daughters
H251 H1323

Additional Cross-References

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.

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