

Numbers 36:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.

Analysis

And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers—The Hebrew *nachalah* (נַחֲלָה, 'inheritance') refers not merely to property but to covenant identity rooted in tribal land allotment. The concern raised by Zelophehad's daughters' male relatives addresses a genuine legal gap: if heiresses marry outside their tribe, land transfers permanently to another tribe, violating God's fixed tribal boundaries.

This passage reveals how God's law addresses emerging situations not explicitly covered in original legislation. The solution (endogamous marriage within the tribe) preserved both women's inheritance rights and tribal integrity—a balance of justice and order.

Historical Context

This dialogue occurred circa 1406 BC on the plains of Moab as Israel prepared to enter Canaan. The case of Zelophehad's daughters (Numbers 27:1-11) established women's inheritance rights when no male heirs existed. Numbers 36 refines this

ruling to prevent unintended consequences. Ancient Israel's tribal land system was foundational to covenant identity.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's attention to this inheritance detail demonstrate His concern for both justice and social order?
2. What does the development of case law in Scripture teach about applying biblical principles to new situations?
3. How should Christians balance individual rights with community responsibilities in church life?

Interlinear Text

יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי	שְׁבֵט י	בְּנֵי	לְאֹחַי ד	יִהְיוּ
of Israel	of the children	of the other tribes	of the children	to any	
H3478	H1121	H7626	H1121	H259	H1961
נָחֳלֹתָיו	נָחֳלֹתָיו	וְנָחֳלֹתָיו	יִגָּרְעוּ:	לְנָשִׁים	
from the inheritance	from the inheritance	from the inheritance	be taken	And if they be married	
H5159	H5159	H5159	H1639	H802	
אִשׁ ר	הַמִּטָּה	נָחֳלֹתָיו	עַל	וְנִזְכָּר	אֲבֹתָיו
H834	of the tribe	from the inheritance	H5921	and shall be put	of our fathers
H4294	H4294	H5159	H5921	H3254	H1
יִגָּרְעוּ:	נָחֳלֹתָיו	וּמִגֵּבֹל	לָהֶם	תְּהִי יָדָה	
be taken	from the inheritance	from the lot			
H1639	H5159	H1486		H0	H1961