

Numbers 36:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.

Analysis

God addresses the inheritance rights of Zelophehad's daughters, commanding they marry within their father's tribe to preserve tribal inheritance. This supplementary law balances two principles: women's inheritance rights (Num 27:1-11) and tribal land preservation. The phrase 'let them marry to whom they think best' shows God grants freedom within His boundaries - liberty with limits. This case demonstrates Scripture's progressive clarification: earlier revelation (ch 27) is refined by subsequent revelation (ch 36) as new situations arise. The principle applies to Christian freedom: we're free to marry 'only in the Lord' (1 Cor 7:39) - liberty bounded by God's wisdom.

Historical Context

This ruling addressed a unique situation: Zelophehad had no sons, only five daughters (Num 27:1). The earlier judgment gave them inheritance rights - revolutionary for that era. However, if they married outside Manasseh, their land would transfer to other tribes in Jubilee, fragmenting tribal territories. This clarifying law ensured land stayed within tribes while honoring women's property rights. The daughters' willing obedience (v.10-12) demonstrates humble submission to God's wise boundaries.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you balance exercising Christian liberty while staying within God's wise boundaries for flourishing?
2. Are there areas where you're claiming freedom that actually violate God's protective limits?

Interlinear Text

זֶה	הַדָּבָר	אֲשֶׁר	צִוָּה	יְהוָה	
H2088	This is the thing	H834	doth command	which the LORD	
	H1697		H6680	H3068	
לְבָנֹת	אֶלְפֶּהָד	לֵאמֹר	טוֹב	בְּעֵינֵיהֶם	
concerning the daughters	of Zelophehad	saying	best	to whom they think	
H1323	H6765	H559	H2896	H5869	
תְּהִי יָנָה	לְנָשִׁים:	אֶל	לְמִשְׁפַּחַת	מִטַּה	אֲבִיהֶם
H1961	Let them marry	H389	only to the family	of the tribe	of their father
	H802		H4940	H4294	H1
תְּהִי יָנָה	לְנָשִׁים:				
H1961	Let them marry				
	H802				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 36:12 (Parallel theme): And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

2 Corinthians 6:14 (Parallel theme): Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Genesis 24:3 (References Lord): And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

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