

Numbers 31-36 • Chapter Study

INTRO

The countdown has begun to Israel's entrance into the PL.

Moses will soon pass the baton of leadership to Joshua.

Knowing the time is short, Moses gives them some last instructions.

Ch31 • Midian Cursed

¹ And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people."

The Midianites were a nomadic tribe living E of the Jordan.

They travelled back & forth between the regions of Moab & Edom.

They'd allied with Moab in the whole fiasco that took place we looked at over the last cpl wks.

The pagan prophet Balaam advised the Moabite king Balak to have the women of Midian & Moab seduce the men of Israel & invite them to worship Ba'al.

Balaam knew once Israel committed idolatry, God's judgment would come.

The plan worked & a plague killed 24K before Phinehas, the high priest's son, ended it with a spear.

God's command to attack the Midianites suggests it was **they**, rather than the Moabites, who provided the ladies.

The only woman named in this episode was **Cozbi**, a Midianite princess.

³ So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm some of yourselves for war, & let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the Lord on Midian." ⁴ A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war."

Just as Midian provided **satan agents** to stumble God's people, Israel would serve as **God's agent** in judging Midian.

⁵ So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel 1K from *each* tribe, 12K armed for war. ⁶ Then Moses sent them to the war, 1K from *each* tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles & the signal trumpets in his hand.

This was literally a Holy War because God specifically commanded it.

Israel was the agent of His Judgment.

So Phinehas, the high priest's son went with them leading the ark & carrying the trumpets used in the tabernacle service.

Their sounding announced the both the attack & its conclusion.

⁷ And they warred against the Midianites, just as the Lord commanded Moses, & they killed all the males. ⁸ They killed the kings of Midian with *the rest of* those who were killed—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, & Reba, the 5 kings of Midian. Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.

Thought called kings, these guys were more like tribal **chieftains**.

Living among them was Balaam; the jerk who started this whole mess.

He thought he could retire to enjoy his reward, but that's not the way it works when you defy God.

Sin may be pleasurable for a season, but as we'll read later: Be sure your sin will find you out.

⁹ And the children of Israel took the women of Midian captive, with their little ones, & took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, & all their goods. ¹⁰ They also burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, & all their forts. ¹¹ And they took all the spoil & all the booty—of man & beast. ¹² Then they brought the captives, the booty, & the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, & to the congregation of the children of Israel, to the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho. ¹³ And Moses, Eleazar the priest, & all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp. ¹⁴ But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, *with* the captains over thousands & captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle. ¹⁵ And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive? ¹⁶ Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the incident of Peor, & there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.

All the Midianite men has been killed, but they kept the women & children.

Not out of any sense of mercy!

There was no pity for innocents going on here.

The women and children were part of the loot & spoils of war Slaves!

Remember: It was the **beauty & sensuality** of the Midianite women that had seduced the men of Israel.

The Israelite soldiers thought, “Kill Cindy Crawford’s & Emma Watson’s husbands, but not Emma & Cindy.”

When Moses saw all the captives he was stunned.

The Israelites viewed the Midianite **MEN** as a threat, because of the **physical** danger they presented.

They didn’t recognize the **greater threat** the women presented **spiritually** because they were blinded by their beauty.

Those women knew the effect on Israel of their seduction. Why not try it again as a way to exact revenge on Israel?

Moses saw the danger and was **appalled** the men of Israel didn’t as well. // So

¹⁷ Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, & kill every woman who has known a man intimately. ¹⁸

But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately.

We talked about this in a recent study. To kill little boys seems **cruel; inhuman** even.

But we have to be careful about layering back on to history the values & sensibilities of our modern time.

Those values & sensibilities, more often than not drawn from a Biblical WV, are good and right.

But The Gospel that informs and empowers them came nearly 1500 yrs after what we’re reading here.

In the ME culture of that time, & in many regions of the ME even to this day, as we see in the incessant conflicts of that region, the obligation of **retribution** & revenge was in play.

The idea was this: If you kill someone in my family, as the male head of household, I’m honor & duty bound to kill you as soon as I can arrange & get away with it.

If you die before I get a chance to exact revenge, then I go after your nearest male relative.

Who will then go after me or my nearest male relative and so on in perpetuity!

The BL is this: If the Midianite boys had been left alive, as soon as they’d matured, they’d have turned into a army of murderers in Israel.

It’s just the way things were done in that culture at that time.

So all the women & boys had to be executed.

The only survivors would be the little girls who’d be made into slaves.

But please, don’t picture their slavery as the brutal & torturous thing we imagine from the Plantation Slavery of Colonial America.

Slaves were very expensive and valuable in that time.

The vast majority of slaves were treated well and became valued servants in the home.

Don’t get me wrong: Being a slave was something almost no one wanted because you weren’t free.

But the freedom of most people in the ancient world wasn’t anything close to the freedom we enjoy.

Women didn’t have much freedom since they were bound by law to obey their fathers, then husbands.

And most men weren’t free because they had to obey whatever ruler sat the throne.

The vast majority of these young Midianite girls would be taken into the homes and families of their captors where they’d become household servants.

Their clothing, food and care was the responsibility of their owner.

So, in many ways, nothing much changed from before their capture.

¹⁹ And as for you, [**the returning fighters**] remain outside the camp 7 days; whoever has killed any person, & whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves & your captives on the 3rd day & on the 7th day. ²⁰ Purify every garment, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats’ hair, & everything made of wood.”

Touching a dead body made a person ritually unclean, so they had to go through the rite of purification before they were allowed to re-enter the camp of Israel.

²¹ Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to the battle, “This *is* the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses: ²² “Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, & the lead, ²³ everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, & it shall be clean; & it shall be purified with the water of purification. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water. ²⁴ And you shall wash your clothes on the 7th day & be clean, & afterward you may come into the camp.” ²⁵ Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁶ “Count up the plunder that was taken—of man & beast—you & Eleazar the priest & the chief fathers of the congregation; ²⁷ and divide the plunder into 2 parts, between those who took part in the war, who went out to battle, & all the congregation.

The booty of the battle wasn’t kept only by those who’d gone into battle.

It was distributed among all the people in a fair & equitable manner.

It was 1st divided in half with ½ going directly to the 12K fighters.

The other ½ went to the 565K guys who *didn't* go.

²⁸ And levy a tribute for the Lord on the men of war who went out to battle: 1 of every 500 of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, & the sheep; ²⁹ take it from their half, & give it to Eleazar the priest as a heave offering to the Lord. ³⁰ And from the children of Israel's half you shall take 1 of every 50, drawn from the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, & the sheep, from all the livestock, & give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of the Lord." ³¹ So Moses & Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses.

A levy was placed on the spoils that went to God.

From the warrior's half, 1/500th went to the high priest.

The congregation's half gave 1/50th to the Levites.

In vs32-47 we get an accounting of the plunder & how it was dispersed.

⁴⁸ Then the officers who were over thousands of the army, the captains of thousands & captains of hundreds, came near to Moses; ⁴⁹ and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken a count of the men of war who are under our command, & not a man of us is missing.

What?!?! That's not just remarkable – it's miraculous.

And the men realize it.

So in vs50-54, they make a special offering of thanksgiving to God from the jewelry they'd taken as loot.

Ch32 • Reuben & Gad in E Jordan

We looked at the 1st 24 vs last Sunday.

The leaders of the tribes of Reuben & Gad convene a meeting of all Israel's leadership.

Moses is there. The high priest is there, as well as the leaders of the other tribes.

Reuben & Gad then say they want to settle on the E side of the Jordan in the land they'd taken from the Amorites.

It was prime pasturage for their many flocks and herds and was good enough for them.

Moses was again floored that they'd do this.

He remembered like it was yesterday what had happened at KB 38 yrs before when Israel balked at entering Canaan.

Did this mean Israel would have to wander round the wilderness for another few decades?

But Reuben & Gad said after they took a short break to settle their wives and kids into new homes there in E Jordan, they'd send all their battle ready troops over with the other tribes to secure the PL.

Moses wasn't happy about this, but knew he couldn't force people that had already made up their minds and agreed to their compromise.

²⁵ And the children of Gad & the children of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying: "Your servants will do as my lord commands. ²⁶ Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, & all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead; ²⁷ but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, before the Lord to battle, just as my lord says." ²⁸ So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, & to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. ²⁹ And Moses said to them: "If the children of Gad & the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the Lord, & the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. ³⁰ But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan."

Moses won't be leading Israel into Canaan; that's Joshua's & Eleazar's assignment.

So he makes his agreement with the Reubentites & Gadites clear to them.

³¹ Then the children of Gad & the children of Reuben answered, saying: "As the Lord has said to your servants, so we will do. ³² We will cross over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us on this side of the Jordan." ³³ So Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, & to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites & the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country.

When the tribe of Manasseh saw that Reuben & Gad were given permission to stake a claim in Gilead, half of them said they preferred to stay there too.

We saw the spiritual application of this last Sunday.

In vs. 34-42 we get a listing of the cities Reuben, Gad, & half Manasseh moved in to.

Reuben, Gad & half Manasseh kept their promise & helped the other tribes brothers conquer Canaan, then they went home.

But E&W Jordan became estranged from each other. It almost broke out in war at one point until someone reminded them they were close relatives.

A millennium later, when the Assyrians invaded, it was the E'n tribes who got hit 1st & hardest.

Then in Mark 5 & Luke 8, we read the story of Jesus visiting this region on the E side Galilee Lake.

It was called **Gadera** after the tribe of Gad; inhabited by the **Gadarenes**.

Jesus took the disciples there one day by sailing across the lake.

As Jesus stepped ashore, a grotesquely & totally out of control demon possessed man who'd terrorized the region ran to Him.

The demons pleaded with Jesus not to torment them.

***There's an interesting image: Demon's who'd terrorized men, terrorized **by** a Man.

They knew Jesus came to set the captives free, so they asked Jesus for permission to enter a herd of pigs grazing nearby.

When He consented, the demon-possessed pigs ran into the lake & drowned.

But the BIG Question that ought to grip us as we read that story is— What were Gadarenes doing raising pigs?

They're JEWS, and pigs are verboten; unclean, a non-Kosher **abomination**.

Gadera was part of a larger region known as **Decapolis**.

It was ½-Jewish, ½ Greco-Roman. And Romans ate pork! A Lot of it; they **LOVED** it.

So the Gadarenes traded in their sheep & cattle for pigs because it was more profitable.

But you can't make a profit when your herd drowns itself.

That version of **deviled ham** couldn't be canned.

So the pig-herders ran back to their village & told everyone what happened.

The whole town turned out to see Jesus & the formerly demon-possessed man sitting, clothed & in his right mind.

But instead of **marveling** & asking Jesus to stay & teach, they **plead with Him to leave!**

They didn't want religion messing with their income.

Listen: If our faith doesn't "mess with our income," spending, saving, investments in time, money, & energy, we have to ask if it's a real.

Gad & Reuben's problem **began** when they put more stock in **livestock** & the pastures of E-Jordan than God's Promise.

It one day became a request that Jesus leave them alone.

Ch33 • A Review of Their Journey

Vs1-49 is a review of Israel's journey over the previous 40 yrs from the day they left Egypt to where they were now in the Plains of Moab.

The Command to Take & Divide Canaan • vs50-56

⁵⁰ Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho, saying, ⁵¹ "Speak to the children of Israel, & say to them: 'When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, & demolish all their high places; ⁵³ you shall dispossess *the inhabitants of* the land & dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess.

Israel was to **displace all** Canaanites.

Their worship centers were to be **obliterated**.

Before we go on . . .

Please note that it says here they were to "**drive out**" the Canaanites.

There will be times later when God tells them to **wipe** certain groups out.

But the general rule is given here: Displace them: Make them leave.

We'll get in to the WHY of that later.

For now, just note the command to displace them.

I make a point of this because DNA tests conducted among people of the Middle East prove there are **modern** descendants of the Canaanites.

When this was reported in a technical journal recently, it was picked up by a couple dozen MSM news outlets & headlined as, "Bible Wrong: Canaanites **Weren't** Wiped Out."

The articles joyfully proclaimed that DNA tests prove the Bible was wrong in its assertion Israel wiped out the Canaanites.

The Bible categorically DOES NOT assert that Israel wiped out the Canaanites.

They were told to **displace** them.

AND: Israel failed at the task!

The Bible chronicles Israel's failure in obeying God by allowing some of the Canaanites to remain.

But as far as the MSM is concerned; don't let the facts get in the way of what you **want** to believe.

⁵⁴ And you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, & to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone's *inheritance* shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers.

The land was going to be broken up into regions by Joshua with the territories being of varying sizes & shapes.

The larger tribes, as determined by the 2nd Census taken in Ch26, were assigned larger territories, the smaller tribes, smaller regions.

Once this **basic tribal** division was made, what **families** got what was assigned by lot.

⁵⁵ But if you do drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* irritants in your eyes & thorns in your sides, & they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.

⁵⁶ Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.”

In Gen. 15:16, God told Abe his descendants would **return** to Canaan when the wickedness of the native peoples was full.

Archaeology informs us at the time Israel arrived at the border 600 yrs later, it was **overflowing**.

They weren't just ripe for judgment; they were rotten to the core.

God used Israel as the instrument of His judgment on a corrupt society so perverse it beggars description. He warned them if they **failed** to dispossess the Canaanites, they'd end up taking them down with them.

And God would bring someone else to do to Israel what He intended them to do to the Canaanites.

Ch34 • Borders & Leaders

Vs1-15 give the geographical borders of the PL.

Vs16-29 give the leaders that will both lead Israel **into & in** Canaan.

Ch35 • Cities

Vs1-8 are a description of the cities that are to be set up around the PL for the Levites to live in.

Remember: As priests, they weren't going to be given a region for their tribe.

They needed to be spread throughout all the other tribes so they could lead the religious life of the nation.

So they were given cities and here we find instructions for setting them up.

Cities of Refuge 35:9-34

⁹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰“Speak to the children of Israel, & say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹then you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there. ¹²They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment.

Of the 48 cities to be given to the Levites, 6 of them were to be special places of refuge for those who'd accidentally killed someone else.

Remember earlier I mentioned the custom of **blood-feud**; if a member of a family was killed, it was the nearest male kin's duty to go after the slayer & kill him.

Well, what about a case of **accidental** death?

The cities of refuge were places where someone could flee & be safe from the avenger of blood.

If the fugitive could enter the gates of the city before the avenger caught him, the Levites would protect him.

A trial would be held & evidence, testimony & eyewitnesses heard.

If the man was innocent, then he could remain inside the city of refuge, safe from the avenger. He would be allowed to return to his own city when the current high priest died.

If he was found guilty of murder, he has turned over to the avenger.

3 Cities of refuge were set up on the western side of the Jordan, & 3 on the eastern side, pretty evenly spaced so a person could reach it in a day.

The roads to the cities of refuge were to be kept in good repair as well, to facilitate travel. [Deut. 19:3]

[Show map of cities]

¹³And of the cities which you give, you shall have six cities of refuge. ¹⁴You shall appoint three cities on this side

of the Jordan, & three cities you shall appoint in the land of Canaan, *which* will be cities of refuge. ¹⁵These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, for the stranger, & for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there. ¹⁶But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, If he strikes him with the intent of killing him . . .

he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁷And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, & he does die, he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁸Or *if* he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, & he does die, he *is* a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death. ¹⁹The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. ²⁰If he pushes him out of hatred or, while lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies, ²¹or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck *him* shall surely be put to death. He *is* a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him. ²²However, if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, ²³or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing *it* at him without seeing *him*, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm, ²⁴then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer & the avenger of blood according to these judgments. ²⁵So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, & the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, & he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil. ²⁶But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, ²⁷and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, & the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood, ²⁸because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.

Some important guidelines are given for the judges of Israel to determine guilt or innocence; if it was manslaughter or murder.

They were to consider the implement used.

They were to consider the situation & context of the killing.

They were to look at the relationship between the slayer & the victim.

And they were to consider the state of mind of the slayer, as evidenced by his actions. In other words, they could draw a reasonable conclusion about his state of mind at the time of the killing by considering all the other factors.

The cities of refuge provide us a wonderful picture of Jesus.

Some 15 times in the Psalms God is referred to as our refuge, something that would have reminded the people of ancient Israel of the cities of refuge.

For example, Psalm 46:1 . . .

God is our refuge & strength, a very present help in trouble.

In the NT we have Heb. 6:18 which says that in Christ we . . .

. . . have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

Consider some of the ways the cities of refuge & Jesus are alike . . .

Both Jesus & the cities of refuge are ***within easy reach*** of the needy person; they were of no use unless someone could get to the place of refuge.

They are both ***open to all***, not just the Israelite; no one needs to fear that they would be turned away from their place of refuge in their time of need.

They both became a place where the one in need would ***live***; you didn't come to a city of refuge in time of need just to look around.

Both Jesus & the cities of refuge are the ***only alternative*** for the one in need; without this specific protection, they are destroyed.

They both provide protection ***only within their boundaries***; to go outside meant death.

With both Jesus & the cities of refuge, full freedom comes with the ***death of the High Priest***.

But there is a crucial distinction: The cities of refuge only helped the ***innocent***; the ***guilty*** can come to Jesus & find refuge through forgiveness, through being turned from guilty to innocent through the blood of Christ.

²⁹And these *things* shall be a statute of judgment to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

³⁰Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death on the testimony of witnesses; but one witness is not *sufficient* testimony against a person for the death *penalty*.

One witness was not enough simply because such testimony could actually be used as a way for a vindictive person to **murder** someone **though the legal system**.

³¹Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who *is* guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death.

Justice was to be blind to a person's social class or standing. The murderer couldn't wangle his way out of being executed by paying a fine.

³²And you shall take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest. ³³So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, & no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

³⁴Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the children of Israel.”

God considers the shedding of innocent blood as something that defiles the very land of a nation.

The only way to remove the moral & spiritual pollution of innocent blood is by expunging it through the shedding of the murderer's blood.

We need to see that this isn't something that was true just for Israel.

We find much the same thing said at the murder of Abel by Cain.

God said that Abel's blood cried out to him from the ground. [Gen 4:10]

There is a huge debate today over capital punishment.

While I would love to go into this in greater depth, because of time, I'll need to be brief & maybe we can get into it more at another time.

While you & I as Christians are not to exact revenge, & to turn the other cheek & all that, the same rule does NOT APPLY to the role of civil government!

In Romans 13 Paul makes it clear that God gives to the State the power of the sword, to restrain evil.

It's the duty of civil government, to show neither harshness nor mercy, but to do **pure justice**.

Capital punishment is entirely proper when a murderer has been tried in a manner consistent with Biblical standards of equity & justice.

A guilty verdict ought **never** be found in a case where the evidence is purely circumstantial in nature or when the evidence is merely 1 eye-witness.

A judicial system that doesn't handle all cases & people with the same standards also isn't right & needs to be reformed.

XVII. FEMALE HEIRS Ch. 36

¹Now the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near & spoke before Moses & before the leaders, the chief fathers of the children of Israel. ²And they said: “The Lord commanded my lord *Moses* to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel, & my lord was commanded by the Lord to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. ³Now if they are married to any of the sons of the *other* tribes of the children of Israel, then their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, & it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance. ⁴And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.”

Last week we saw in ch. 27 about the Daughters of Zelophehad. They had no brother & realized that their family name & inheritance of land was going to die out of Israel.

So they went to Moses & asked what could be done.

He settled it by giving the land to the women, saying that the land would belong to them until a male heir could be raised up through one of them.

Now the other men of Manasseh come & say, “Hold on – if these women all marry outside our tribe, their lands will get gobbled up by those other tribes & they will have little pieces of holding inside our territory.”

⁵Then Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the Lord, . . .

So Moses went to the Lord & asked Him what to do.

⁵Then Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the Lord, saying: “What the tribe of the sons of Joseph speaks is right. ⁶This *is* what the Lord commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, ‘Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe.’ ⁷So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of

Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. ⁸And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel shall be the wife of one of the family of her father's tribe, so that the children of Israel each may possess the inheritance of his fathers. ⁹Thus no inheritance shall change hands from *one* tribe to another, but every tribe of the children of Israel shall keep its own inheritance."

¹⁰Just as the Lord commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad; ¹¹for Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, & Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to the sons of their father's brothers. ¹²They were married into the families of the children of Manasseh the son of Joseph, & their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's family. ¹³These *are* the commandments & the judgments which the Lord commanded the children of Israel by the hand of Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, *across from* Jericho.