

NUMBERS 36:1 The heads of the fathers' households of the family of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spoke before Moses, and before the princes, the heads of the fathers' households of the children of Israel.

The inconveniences which might be produced by daughters, inheritances, marrying out of their own tribe, remedied on the recommendation of certain chiefs of the tribe of Joseph, who stated the case of the daughters of Zelophehad, Num 36:1-4. The daughters of Zelophehad are commanded to marry in their own tribe, Num 36:5, Num 36:6; which is to be an ordinance in all similar circumstances, Num 36:7-9. The daughters of Zelophehad marry their father's brother's sons, and thus their inheritance is preserved in their own tribe, Num 36:10-12. The conclusion of the commandments given by the Lord to the Israelites in the plains of Moab, Num 36:13.

NUMBERS 36:2 They said, "The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for inheritance by lot to the children of Israel. My lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters.

Verse 2

To give the inheritance of Zelophehad - unto his daughters - See this case spoken of at large on Numbers 27 (note).

Either the first eleven verses of Numbers 27 should come in before this chapter, or this chapter should come in immediately after those eleven verses; they certainly both make parts of the same subject.

Here Moses determines that heiresses should marry in their own tribe, that no part of the ancient inheritance might be alienated from the original family.

NUMBERS 36:3 If they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then will their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of our fathers, and will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they shall belong. So will it be taken away from the lot of our inheritance.

NUMBERS 36:4 When the jubilee of the children of Israel shall be, then will their inheritance be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they shall belong. So their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers."

NUMBERS 36:5 Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the LORD's word, saying, "The tribe of the sons of Joseph speaks right.

NUMBERS 36:6 This is the thing which the LORD does command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them be married to whom they think best; only they shall marry into the family of the tribe of their father.

Verse 6

Let them marry to whom they think best - Here was latitude sufficient, and yet a salutary and reasonable restraint, which prevented a vexatious mixture of property and possession.

NUMBERS 36:7 So shall no inheritance of the children of Israel move from tribe to tribe; for the children of Israel shall all keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

NUMBERS 36:8 Every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may each possess the inheritance of his fathers.

Verse 8

Every daughter that possesseth an inheritance - This law affected none but heiresses; all others were at liberty to marry into any of the other tribes. The priests and Levites, who could have no inheritance, were exempt from the operation of this law. Jehoiada had the king of Judah's daughter to wife, 2Chr 22:11. And another priest had for wife one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, Ezr 2:61. "By reason of such marriages," says Mr. Ainsworth, "there might be kindred between Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, who was of the daughters of Aaron, and Mary the virgin, the mother of our Lord, who was of the lineage of David, and tribe of Judah;" Luk 1:5, Luk 1:36; Luk 3:23-31.

NUMBERS 36:9 So shall no inheritance move from one tribe to another tribe; for the tribes of the children of Israel shall each keep his own inheritance."

NUMBERS 36:10 The daughters of Zelophehad did as the LORD commanded Moses:

NUMBERS 36:11 for Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to their father's brothers' sons.

Verse 11

Mahlah, Tirza, etc. - For a curious account of these names, see the notes on Num 27:7.

NUMBERS 36:12 They were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph. Their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

Verse 12

And their inheritance remained in - the family - "By this example, and the law of inheritances in the Holy Land, the people of God," says Ainsworth, "are taught to hold fast their inheritance in his promises, and their right in Christ, which they hold by faith; that as the Father hath made them meet

to be partakers of the inheritance among the saints in light, Col 1:12, so they may keep the faith and grace which they have received to the end."

NUMBERS 36:13 These are the commandments and the ordinances which the LORD commanded by Moses to the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

Verse 13

These are the commandments, etc. - See these different terms analyzed and explained, Lev 26:15 (note).

Thus ends the book of Numbers, containing a series of astonishing providences and events. Scarcely any piece of history in the sacred writings is better calculated to impress the mind of a serious reader with a sense of the goodness and severity of God. In every transaction his holiness and justice appear in closest union with his benevolence and mercy. From such a Being what have the wicked not to fear! From such a Father and Friend what have the upright not to hope! His justice requires him to punish iniquity, but his mercy inclines him to pardon all who truly repent and believe in the Son of his love.

The journeyings of this people, from the time they left Egypt, exhibit a series of providential wonders. Every where, and in every circumstance, God appears: and yet there is no circumstance or occasion that does not justify those signal displays of his Grace and his Justice. The genuine history of God's providence must be sought for in this book alone; and as every occurrence happened as an example, we have authority to conclude that in every case where his own glory and the salvation of man are interested, he will interfere and give the fullest proofs that he is the same to-day that he was yesterday, and will continue unchangeable for ever and ever. Reader, are these matters ensamples to thee? Art thou, like the Israelites, come into the plains of Moab, on the very verge of the promised land? Jordan alone separates thee from the promised inheritance. O, watch and pray, that thou come not short of the glory of God. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; see then that the sting of death, which is sin, be extracted from thy soul, that, being justified by Christ's blood, thou mayest be made an heir according to the hope of an eternal life. Amen, amen. "I will bring you into the Wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face, like as I pleaded with your fathers in the Wilderness of the land of Egypt. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and bring you into the bond of the covenant," Eze 20:35-37. "He (Christ) is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance," Heb 9:15.

Sections In the Book of Numbers, carried on from Leviticus, which ends with the Thirty-Third.

The Thirty-Fourth, called במדבר bemitbar, begins Num 1:1, and ends Num 4:20.

The Thirty-Fifth, called נשא nasa, begins Num 4:21, and ends Num 7:89.

The Thirty-Sixth, called בהעלתך behaalothecha, begins Num 8:1, and ends Num 12:16.

The Thirty-Seventh, called שלח shelach, begins Num 13:1, and ends Num 15:41.

The Thirty-Eighth, called קרח korach, begins Num 16:1, and ends Num 18:32.

The Thirty-Ninth, called חקת chukkath, begins Num 19:1, and ends Num 22:1.

The Fortieth, called בלק balak, begins Num 22:2, and ends Num 25:9.

The Forty-First, called פינחס pinechas, begins Num 25:10, and ends Num 30:1.

The Forty-Second, called מטות mattoth, begins Num 30:2, and ends Num 32:42.

The Forty-Third, called מסעי masey, begins Num 33:1, and ends Num 36:13.