

Instructions for Occupying Canaan (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 33:50–56

50 Then Yahweh spoke to Moses on the desert-plateau of Moab by *the Jordan across* Jericho, saying,
 51 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them, ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan,
 52 you will drive out the inhabitants of the land from your presence, and you will destroy all their idols and all the images of their molten idols, and you will demolish all their high places;
 53 you will dispossess the land and live in it because I have given the land to you to possess it.
 54 You will distribute the land by lot according to your clans; to the larger group you will give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller group you will give less inheritance. However the lot falls for him, there the lot will be. You will distribute it according to the tribes of your ancestors.
 55 But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from your presence, then it will happen that whomever you let remain of them will be like irritants in your eyes and like thorns in your sides; they will be your enemies in the land in which you live.
 56 And just as I planned to do *to* them, I will do to you.’”

Boundaries of the Promised Land (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 34:1–15

Introduction

1 Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,
 2 “Command the Israelites and say to them, ‘When you come into the land of Canaan, this *is* the land that was allotted to you as an inheritance, the land of Canaan according to its boundaries.

Southern Border

3 Your southern edge will be from the desert of Zin toward the side of Edom, and your southern border will be from the end of the Salt Sea to the east;
 4 your boundary will turn from the south to the ascent of Akkrabbim and will pass over to Zin, and its limits will be from the south of Kadesh Barnea; it will continue to Hazar Addar and pass over to Azmon.
 5 The boundary will turn from Azmon to the valley of Egypt, and its limits will be to the sea.

Western Border

6 “Your western boundary will be the Great Sea; this will be your western boundary.

Northern Border

7 Your northern border will be from the Great Sea; you will make a boundary from the Great Sea to Mount Hor.
 8 From Mount Hor you will make a boundary to reach Hamath; the limits of the territory will be at Zedad.
 9 The boundary will go out to Ziphron, and its limits will be at Hazar Enan. This will be your boundary to the north.

Eastern Border

10 “You will mark out your eastern boundary from Hazar Enan to Shepham;
 11 the boundary will go down from Shepham to Riblah from the east side of Ain, and the boundary will go down and border on the eastern side of the Sea of Kinnereth.
 12 The boundary will go down to the Jordan, and its limits will be at the Salt Sea. This will be your land according to its boundaries all around.’”

Land to be Divided Between the Nine Remaining Tribes (including the half-tribe of Manasseh)

13 So Moses commanded the Israelites, saying, “This *is* the land that you will obtain as an inheritance for yourself by lot, which Yahweh commanded to give to the nine and a half tribes.
 14 For the tribe of the children of the Reubenites, the children of the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh took their inheritance according to the house of their families.
 15 The two and a half tribes have taken their inheritance from beyond the Jordan *across* Jericho, east toward the sunrise.”

Leaders Appointed to Distribute the Land (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 34:16–29

16 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,
 17 “These *are* the names of the men who divide up the land for your inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.
 18 You will take one leader from every tribe to divide up the land for inheritance.

19 These *are* the names of the men: of the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;
 20 of the tribe of the descendants of Simeon, Samuel son of Ammihud;
 21 of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Chislon;
 22 of the tribe of the descendants of Dan, the leader Bukki son of Jogli;
 23 of the descendants of Joseph, the tribe of the descendants of Manasseh, the leader Hanniel son of Ephod.
 24 Of the tribe of the descendants of Ephraim, the leader Kemuel son of Shiptan;
 25 of the tribe of the descendants of Zebulum, the leader Elizaphan son of Parnach;
 26 of the tribe of the descendants of Issachar, the leader Paltiel son of Azzan;
 27 of the tribe of the descendants of Asher, the leader Ahihud son of Shelomi;
 28 of the tribe of the descendants of Naphtali, the leader Pedahel son of Ammihud.”
 29 These are those whom Yahweh commanded to allot to the Israelites the land of Canaan.

Cities for the Levites (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 35:1–8

1 Yahweh spoke to Moses on the desert plains of Moab beyond the Jordan *across* Jericho, saying,
 2 “Command the Israelites that they give to the Levites from the inheritance of their property cities to live in; and you will give to the Levites pastureland all around the cities.
 3 The cities will be theirs to live in, and their pasturelands will be for their domestic animals, for their possessions, and their animals.
 4 “The pasturelands of the cities that you will give to the Levites *will extend* from the wall of the city to *a distance of* a thousand cubits all around.
 5 You will measure outside the city the eastern edge two thousand cubits, for the southern edge two thousand cubits, for the western edge two thousand cubits, and for the northern edge two thousand cubits, with the city in the middle; this will be for them the pasturelands of the cities.
 6 “All the cities that you will give the Levites will be six cities of refuge, to which the killer can flee; in addition to them you will give forty-two cities.
 7 All the cities that you will give to the Levites will be forty-eight cities, them with their pasturelands.
 8 And the cities that you will give from the property of the Israelites, you will take more from the larger group and less from the smaller group; each of them will give according to the portion of their inheritance according to the portion that he inherits.”

Cities of Refuge (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 35:9–34

Establishment of Six Cities of Refuge

9 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,
 10 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them, ‘When you cross the Jordan *into* the land of Canaan,
 11 you will select for yourselves cities for your cities of refuge, that a killer who has killed a person unintentionally can flee there.
 12 The cities will be to you a refuge from a redeemer, so that the killer will not die until he stands before the community for judgment.
 13 The cities that you are to give will be your six cities of refuge.
 14 You will give three cities across the Jordan and three cities in the land of Canaan; they will be cities of refuge.
 15 To the Israelites, to the alien, and to the temporary resident in their midst there will be these six cities as a refuge to which anyone who unintentionally kills a person may flee.

Laws Governing Murder Cases

16 “ ‘But if he hit him with an object of iron, so that he dies, the killer must surely be put to death.
 17 And if he hit him with a stone in the hand, by which he will die, and he does die, he *is* a killer; the killer must surely be put to death.
 18 Or if he hit him with a wooden object, by which he will die, and he does die, he *is* a killer; the killer must surely be put to death.
 19 The blood avenger himself will put the killer to death; he must put him to death when meeting him.
 20 If he shoves him in hatred, or he throws something at him with intention, and he dies,
 21 or if he hits him in hostility with his hand, and he dies, the one that struck him will put to death the killer when meeting him.

Laws Governing Manslaughter Cases

22 “ ‘Or if in an instant he shoved him, not in hostility, or threw something at him without intention,
 23 or with any stone, without seeing it dropped on him so that he dies, while *he was* not seeking his injury,
 24 then the community will judge between the striker and between the blood avenger according to these ordinances.
 25 The community will deliver the killer from the hand of the blood avenger, and the community will restore him to the city of his

refuge to which he fled; and he will live there in it until the death of the high priest who was anointed with holy oil.
 26 But if the killer surely goes out of the territory of the city of his refuge to which he fled,
 27 and the blood avenger finds him outside the territory of the city of his refuge, and the blood avenger kills the killer, he will not be guilty of blood
 28 because he must live in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the killer will return to the land of his property.
 29 These things will be as a decree of justice for you for your generations in all your dwellings.

Proper Legal Procedure (Witnesses) and Prohibition of Ransoming the Guilty

30 “If anyone kills a person, the killer will be put to death according to the testimony of witnesses, but someone cannot die on testimony of one person.
 31 Also, you will not take a ransom payment for the life of a killer who *is* guilty of death; indeed, he must surely be put to death.
 32 You will not take a ransom payment for the one that flees to the city of his refuge, so that he may return to live in the land before the death of the priest.

Theological Rationale Behind the Laws

33 So you will not pollute the land in which you are; because blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is poured out on it except with the blood of the one who poured it out.
 34 You will not defile the land on which you *are* living because I *am* living in the midst of it; I am Yahweh; I *am* living in the midst of the Israelites.”

Epilogue—Daughters of Zelophehad (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 36

Historical Background (see Numbers 27:1–11)

1 The leaders of the families of the clans of descendants of Gilead the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, of the clans of the descendants of Joseph came near and spoke before Moses and before the leaders of the families of the Israelites.
 2 And they said, “Yahweh commanded my lord to give the land by lot as an inheritance to the Israelites, and my lord was commanded by Yahweh to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters.

The Case Presented by the Gileadite Clans

3 But if they become wives to one of the sons from *another* tribe of the Israelites, their inheritance will disappear from the inheritance of our ancestors, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they belong; the lot of our inheritance would disappear.
 4 When the Jubilee of the Israelites comes, it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they belong; and their inheritance will disappear from the tribe of our father.”

Moses Presents the Case Adjudication at Yahweh’s Command

5 Then Moses commanded the Israelites by the command of Yahweh, saying, “The tribe of the descendants of Joseph *is* right *regarding what they are* speaking.
 6 This *is* the word that Yahweh commanded the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, ‘Let them marry whomever they like; only they must marry from within the clan of the tribe of their father.
 7 Thus an inheritance of the Israelites will not go around from tribe to tribe. Rather, the inheritance of each tribe of his father will remain with the Israelites.
 8 Every daughter who possesses an inheritance from the tribes of the Israelites will marry one of the clan of the tribe of her father, so that the Israelites will possess the inheritance of his ancestors.
 9 Therefore an inheritance will not go around from *one* tribe to another tribe because the tribes of the Israelites will each hold to their *own* inheritance.”
 10 Just as Yahweh commanded to Moses, so the daughters of Zelophehad did:
 11 Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married the sons of their uncles.
 12 They married those from the sons of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained among the tribe of the clan of their ancestors.

Conclusion of the Case and the Book of Numbers

13 These *were* the commands and the stipulations that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses to the Israelites on the desert-plateaus of Moab by the Jordan *across* Jericho.