NUMBERS

Chapter 34

*Boundaries of Canaan*

**The Lord said to Moses, 2 “Command the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you enter Canaan, the land that will be allotted to you as an inheritance will have these boundaries: 3 “ ‘Your southern side will include some of the Desert of Zin along the border of Edom. On the east, your southern boundary will start from the end of the Salt Sea, 4 cross south of Scorpion Pass, continue on to Zin and go south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it will go to Hazar Addar and over to Azmon, 5 where it will turn, join the Wadi of Egypt and end at the Sea.6 “ ‘Your western boundary will be the coast of the Great Sea. This will be your boundary on the west. 7 “ ‘For your northern boundary, run a line from the Great Sea to Mount Hor 8 and from Mount Hor to Lebo Hamath. Then the boundary will go to Zedad, 9 continue to Ziphron and end at Hazar Enan. This will be your boundary on the north. 10 “ ‘For your eastern boundary, run a line from Hazar Enan to Shepham. 11 The boundary will go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain and continue along the slopes east of the Sea of Kinnereth. 12 Then the boundary will go down along the Jordan and end at the Salt Sea. “ ‘This will be your land, with its boundaries on every side.’ ” 13 Moses commanded the Israelites: “Assign this land by lot as an inheritance. The Lord has ordered that it be given to the nine and a half tribes, 14 because the families of the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance. 15 These two and a half tribes have received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan of Jericho, toward the sunrise.” 16 The Lord said to Moses, 17 “These are the names of the men who are to assign the land for you as an inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun. 18 And appoint one leader from each tribe to help assign the land. 19 These are their names: Caleb son of Jephunneh, from the tribe of Judah; 20Shemuel son of Ammihud, from the tribe of Simeon; 21Elidad son of Kislon, from the tribe of Benjamin; 22Bukki son of Jogli, the leader from the tribe of Dan; 23Hanniel son of Ephod, the leader from the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph; 24Kemuel son of Shiphtan, the leader from the tribe of Ephraim son of Joseph; 25Elizaphan son of Parnach, the leader from the tribe of Zebulun; 26Paltiel son of Azzan, the leader from the tribe of Issachar; 27Ahihud son of Shelomi, the leader from the tribe of Asher; 28Pedahel son of Ammihud, the leader from the tribe of Naphtali.” 29 These are the men the Lord commanded to assign the inheritance to the Israelites in the land of Canaan.**

**34:3–12** The listing of the four boundaries is not only for information, but also to display again the dimensions of God’s great gift to his people. (CSB)

**34:3** The southern border of the Promised Land began at the lower tip of the Salt Sea and swept southward in a semicircle, turning northward along the Brook of Egypt and ending at the Mediterranean (Jsh 15:2–4).

**34:7–9** *Mount Hor*. This unidentified mountain must be distinguished from the height where Aaron was buried (20:22–29; 33:38–39). Apparently, it is a northern peak of the Lebanon range. From here, the northern border was formed by a line drawn eastward to the desert and ending at an oasis named Hazar-enan, west of Hamath. 250. (TLSB)

**34:8** *you shall draw a line*. The Lord speaks to Moses as though he has a map in front of him. A clay map of the Mesopotamian city Nippur dates from this era. Moses may have created such a reference tool. (TLSB)

**34:11–12** The eastern border is traced from Hazar-enan south through some unknown sites to a line that ran westward to the southeastern edge of the Sea of Chinnereth. From here, it followed the Jordan to the Salt Sea, the starting point of the survey (v 3). (TLSB)

**34:13–15** The new realities that the settlement of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Transjordan brought about (see ch. 32). (CSB)

**34:13** *inherit by lot*. Cf Jsh 14–20. (TLSB)

 **34:1–15** God has already given the Israelites the Promised Land. Yet, the Lord still calls them to faithful action, to live and serve according to the promise. He also calls us to fulfill our calling as His heaven-bound people. As you face new challenges, consider that the Lord has already prepared your way. His gift and inheritance cannot be taken from you. • “Faint not nor fear, His arms are near; He changes not who holds you dear; Only believe, and you will see That Christ is all eternally.” Amen. (*LSB* 664:4) (TLSB)

**34:16–29** The listing of the new tribal leaders recalls the listing of the leaders of the first generation (1:5–16). This time the promise will be realized; these new leaders will assist Eleazar and Joshua in actually allotting the land. (CSB)

**34:17** *for inheritance*. Before the Israelites began to take possession of the land, God reminded them that they had no vested claim to it; it was His gift to them. He would assign each tribe an allotment (v 13; 26:52–56; Jsh 14:2). (TLSB)

**34:18–29** Ten tribal leaders were chosen to carry out the divine directives for the division of the land west of the Jordan. Reuben and Gad had already received their portion **34:16–29** The Lord works through the drawing of lots and assigns the territory He wishes various tribes to inhabit (cf Jsh 14–20). Eleazar and Joshua oversee the process as God’s representatives. Inheritance can become a matter of dispute in families. Speak and work in a Christlike manner with family members about sensitive matters. Realize that, as God’s people, Christ has prepared a great and lasting inheritance for you, which surpasses all earthly joys. • “O sweet and blessed country, The home of God’s elect! O sweet and blessed country That faithful hearts expect! In mercy, Jesus, bring us To that eternal rest With You and God the Father And Spirit, ever blest.” Amen. (*LSB* 672:4) (TLSB)