

# NUMBERS

## Chapter 34

### *Boundaries of the Land*

**34** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** “Command the people of Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land of Canaan (this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan as defined by its borders), **3** your south side shall be from the wilderness of Zin alongside Edom, and your southern border shall run from the end of the Salt Sea on the east. **4** And your border shall turn south of the ascent of Akrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its limit shall be south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon. **5** And the border shall turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and its limit shall be at the sea. **6** “For the western border, you shall have the Great Sea and its coast. This shall be your western border. **7** “This shall be your northern border: from the Great Sea you shall draw a line to Mount Hor. **8** From Mount Hor you shall draw a line to Lebo-hamath, and the limit of the border shall be at Zedad. **9** Then the border shall extend to Ziphron, and its limit shall be at Hazar-enan. This shall be your northern border. **10** “You shall draw a line for your eastern border from Hazar-enan to Shepham. **11** And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain. And the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth on the east. **12** And the border shall go down to the Jordan, and its limit shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as defined by its borders all around.” **13** Moses commanded the people of Israel, saying, “This is the land that you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe. **14** For the tribe of the people of Reuben by fathers' houses and the tribe of the people of Gad by their fathers' houses have received their inheritance, and also the half-tribe of Manasseh. **15** The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, toward the sunrise.”

**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)

*List of Tribal Chiefs*

**16** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **17** “These are the names of the men who shall divide the land to you for inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. **18** You shall take one chief from every tribe to divide the land for inheritance. **19** These are the names of the men: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. **20** Of the tribe of the people of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud. **21** Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon. **22** Of the tribe of the people of Dan a chief, Bukki the son of Jogli. **23** Of the people of Joseph: of the tribe of the people of Manasseh a chief, Hanniel the son of Ephod. **24** And of the tribe of the people of Ephraim a chief, Kemuel the son of Shiphtan. **25** Of the tribe of the people of Zebulun a chief, Elizaphan the son of Parnach. **26** Of the tribe of the people of Issachar a chief, Paltiel the son of Azzan. **27** And of the tribe of the people of Asher a chief, Ahihud the son of Shelomi. **28** Of the tribe of the people of Naphtali a chief, Pedahel the son of Ammihud.” **29** These are the men whom the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance for the people of Israel in the land of Canaan.

**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)