

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**4-6-22**  
**Numbers 36**

**Laws Concerning Women Heirs – Verses 1-2**

**<sup>1</sup> And 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, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel: <sup>2</sup> And they said, The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters.**

**36:1** The LORD commanded my lord Moses to give the land as an inheritance: This passage is a reference back to Numbers 27:1-11, where the daughters of Zelophehad were concerned that their father's inheritance would vanish, because there were no sons in their family.

**36:2** Was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters: God, through Moses, declared that if a father has no sons, the inheritance can then go to the daughters.

**The Problem Raised By The Solution Regarding Zelophehad's Daughters And Their Issue – Verses 3-4**

**<sup>3</sup> And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.**

**<sup>4</sup> And when the jubile of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.**

**36:3** If they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then their inheritance will be taken: If the land was given to the daughters, then when the daughters married, the land went to their husband's tribe - and eventually, the original tribe's lands would become depleted.

**36:4** So their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers: Solving the problem of Zelophehad's daughters had created another problem - how to keep the property in a tribe through the generations. This illustrates an important principle - that there are rarely perfect solutions to problems; there are usually answers that are trade-offs in other areas. Maturity is able to make and accept the right decisions even when they aren't perfect, "cost-free" solutions.

**How To Keep The Land Within The Tribes – Verses 5-9**

**<sup>5</sup> And Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph hath said well. <sup>6</sup> This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry. <sup>7</sup> So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. <sup>8</sup> And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe**

**of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. <sup>9</sup> Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.**

**36:5-9** Zelophehad had five daughters but no sons. After he died, his daughters appealed to Moses. Because the inheritance normally passed only through the male line, the family line of Zelophehad would have disappeared. God told Moses that if a man died without sons, then the inheritance would go to his daughters (27:8). But the question of marriage arose. If the daughters were to marry outside of their tribe, the land would belong to another tribe at the Year of Jubilee. So Moses commanded that in such cases the women should marry men in their own clan and tribe so that each tribe would retain its original inheritance. Later, when the tribes received their land under Joshua, the daughters of Zelophehad received their inheritance as God had instructed (Joshua 17:3-6). We don't have to look far to find those who want to be considered "special cases" and "exceptions to the rule," but wise leaders will sort out those who have legitimate concerns and make sure that justice is done in these special situations.

### **How The Specific Problem Worked Out In Regard To The Daughters Of Zelophehad – Verses 10-12**

**<sup>10</sup> Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad: <sup>11</sup> For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their fathers brothers' sons: <sup>12</sup> And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.**

**36:10-12** Their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's family: In their case, not only did they marry within the tribe, but they were married to the sons of their father's brothers - their cousins. This obviously kept the land inheritance within the tribe, and even within the larger family unit.

### **Conclusion To The Book By The Jordan – Verse 13**

**<sup>13</sup> These are the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses unto the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho.**

**36:13** The book of Numbers covers 39 years and closes with the Israelites poised near the banks of the Jordan River with the Promised Land in sight. The wanderings in the wilderness have come to an end, and the people are preparing for their next big move—the conquest of the land. The apostle Paul says that the events described in Numbers are examples that warn us and help us avoid the Israelites' mistakes (1 Corinthians 10:1-12). From their experiences we learn that unbelief is disastrous. We also learn not to long for the sinful pleasures of the past, to avoid complaining, and to stay away from all forms of sexual sin. We must not weaken our biblical beliefs by compromising them with our culture's values. If we choose to let God lead our lives, we should not ignore his message in the book of Numbers.