



## [Numbers 33:53-54](#)

(53) you shall dispossess *the inhabitants* of the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess. (54) And you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone's *inheritance* shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers.

*New King James Version*

The eighth commandment is the law that guarantees individuals the right to own property. This, by very strong implication, removes any doubt about whether communism—in which property is owned collectively by the state—is a God-approved form of economics. [Numbers 33:53-54](#) shows [God](#) intended the Israelites to own property individually.

When we combine this with the tithing laws in Numbers 18, we can easily see that God expected the Israelites to work the land to produce wealth for their families. From what they produced, they were to pay tithes. The Levites, however, received no land from which they could produce wealth and pay tithes, so they tithed on the tithes they received from the other tribes.

The conclusion is inescapable that the ownership of property and the production of wealth is a God-given privilege. The inequities in the systems and ways by which men produce wealth are givens regardless of when one lives. However, to steal what rightfully belongs to another violates this God-given privilege no matter how one justifies his actions.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[The Eighth Commandment \(1997\)](#)**

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