

Numbers 32 - Reuben, Gad & the 1/2 Tribe of Manasseh

III. Preparation of the second generation on the plains of Moab to enter Canaan (Num 26:1—36:13)

(2) Preparation for conquest of the land (Num 31:1—36:13)

(B) Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh received their inheritance on the Transjordan (32:1-42)

(a) Request of the tribes (32:1-5)

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Numbers 32

(B) Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh received their inheritance on the Transjordan (32:1-42)

(a) Request of the tribes (32:1-5)

1 Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had a very large number of livestock. So when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was indeed a place suitable for livestock,

1 Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had an exceedingly large number of livestock. So when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was indeed a place suitable for livestock,

1 Now, the descendants of Reuben and descendants of Gad happened to be joint owners of a very large herd of cattle. When they observed that Jazer and Gilead were good grazing lands for cattle,

1 Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle;

2 the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying,

2 the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the congregation, saying,

2 the descendants of Gad and descendants of Reuben approached Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community and said,

2 The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,

- A complete conquest had been made of the country east of the Jordan, comprising "the land of Jazer" which formed the southern district between the Arnon and Jabbok and "the land of Gilead" including Bashan, which lay on the north of that river

- In the camp of ancient Israel, Reuben and Gad were preeminently pastoral; and these two tribes, being placed under the same standard, had frequent opportunities of arranging their common concerns

3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon,

3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon,

3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon—

3 Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and Nimrah, and Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Shebam, and Nebo, and Beon,

4 the land which the LORD conquered before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock."

4 the land which the LORD conquered before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock."

4 the land that the LORD defeated in the sight of the community of Israel—is perfect for cattle and your servants have cattle.

4 Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle:

5 And they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as *our* property; do not take us across the Jordan."

5 They said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession; do not take us across the Jordan."

5 If we've found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as our possession instead of us crossing the Jordan River."

5 Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

- Gilead was bounded on the north by Bashan, and on the south by Moab (Gen 31:21; Deut 3:12-17)

- The deep ravine of the river Hieromax separated Bashan from Gilead, which was about 60 miles in length and 20 miles in breadth, extending from near the south end of the Sea of

Galilee to the north end of the Dead Sea

(b) Rejection by Moses (32:6-15)

6 But Moses said to the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, "Should your brothers go to war while you remain here?"

6 But Moses said to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben, "Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here?"

6 "Will your relatives have to go to war while you remain here?" Moses asked the descendants of Gad and descendants of Reuben in response.

6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?"

7 And why are you discouraging the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the LORD has given them?

7 Now why are you discouraging the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the LORD has given them?

7 "Why would you discourage the Israelis from crossing over to the land that the LORD has given them?"

7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?"

8 This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.

8 This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.

8 That's what your ancestors did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land.

8 Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land.

- Moses' initial reaction to Reuben and Gad's request was unfavorable because he was afraid that their unwillingness to cross the Jordan and dispossess the Canaanites would undermine the morale of the other tribes who might also want to stay where they were

- Their fathers (i.e., ancestors), he said, had done this very thing when they listened to the report of the spies and lost heart about the Conquest

- This had caused the Lord to be angry (v10), and He caused that generation to die in the wilderness (Cf. 14:1-35)

- Now, Moses said, they wanted to repeat the sin of their fathers and bring God's anger on Israel again

9 For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

9 For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

9 When they arrived in the Eshcol Valley and saw the land, they discouraged the Israelis from entering the land that the LORD had given them.

9 For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

10 So the LORD'S anger burned on that day, and He swore, saying,

10 So the LORD's anger burned in that day, and He swore, saying,

10 That's why the LORD's anger flared up that day and he promised by an oath that

10 And the LORD's anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying,

11 'None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; for they did not follow Me fully,

11 'None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they did not follow Me fully,

11 'Not one of the men who went up from Egypt, from 20 years old and above, will see the land that I promised to give to their ancestors, that is, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because none of them followed me wholeheartedly,

11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me:

12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun; for they have followed the LORD fully.'

12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have followed the LORD fully.'

12 except Jephunneh's son Caleb, the Kenizzite, and Nun's son Joshua. They've wholeheartedly followed the LORD.'

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

13 So the LORD'S anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD came to an end.

13 So the LORD's anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of

the LORD was destroyed.

13 "The LORD's anger had flared up against Israel so that he made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years until that whole generation, who committed evil in the eyes of the LORD, had died.

13 And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.

14 Now behold, you have risen up in your fathers' place, born of sinful men, to add still more to the burning anger of the LORD against Israel.

14 Now behold, you have risen up in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to add still more to the burning anger of the LORD against Israel.

14 And now, look! You're acting just like your ancestors, like a brood of sinful men, who are provoking the fierce anger of the LORD against the Israelis one step at a time.

14 And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.

15 For *if* you turn away from following Him, He will once more leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

15 For if you turn away from following Him, He will once more abandon them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

15 If you stop following him, he will once again abandon them in the wilderness. You'll end up destroying this entire people."

15 For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people.

(c) Pledge of the tribes (32:16-19)

16 Then they approached him and said, "We will build sheepfolds for our livestock here and cities for our little ones;

16 Then they came near to him and said, "We will build here sheepfolds for our livestock and cities for our little ones;

16 Then they approached him and said, "Here's where we're going to build corrals for our cattle and cities for our families,

16 And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones:

17 but we ourselves will be armed, hurrying ahead of the sons of Israel, until we have brought them to their place, while our little ones live in the fortified cities because of the

inhabitants of the land.

17 but we ourselves will be armed ready *to go* before the sons of Israel, until we have brought them to their place, while our little ones live in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land.

17 but we will keep ourselves armed and stay ready to go with the Israelis until we've brought them to their own places. Our families intend to live in fortified cities in the presence of the inhabitants of the land,

17 But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land.

18 We will not return to our homes until every one of the sons of Israel has gained possession of his inheritance.

18 We will not return to our homes until every one of the sons of Israel has possessed his inheritance.

18 but we won't return to our homes until every Israeli has taken possession of each of their inheritances,

18 We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.

- There was good policy in leaving a sufficient force to protect the conquered region lest the enemy should attempt reprisals; and as only forty thousand of the Reubenites and the Gadites, and a half of Manasseh, passed over the Jordan (Josh 4:13), there were left for the security of the new possessions 70,580 men, besides women and children under twenty years (compare Num 26:7,18,34)

19 But we will not have an inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on this side of the Jordan toward the east."

19 For we will not have an inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has fallen to us on this side of the Jordan toward the east."

19 since our inheritance will not be with them across the Jordan River and beyond. Instead, our inheritance is on this side of the Jordan River, facing eastward."

19 For we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward.

(d) Acceptance by Moses (32:20-32)

20 So Moses said to them, "If you will do this, if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the war,

20 So Moses said to them, "If you will do this, if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the war,

20 "If you do this," Moses replied to them, "that is, if you equip yourselves for war in the LORD's presence

20 And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war,

21 and all of you armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven His enemies out from Him,

21 and all of you armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven His enemies out from before Him,

21 and every one of your armed soldiers crosses over the Jordan River in the presence of the LORD until he has dispossessed his enemies ahead of him

21 And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him,

22 and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you may return and be free of obligation toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours as property before the LORD.

22 and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you shall return and be free of obligation toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours for a possession before the LORD.

22 and subjugated the land before him, then afterwards when you return, you'll be able to stand blameless before the LORD and before Israel. This land will then be your possession before the LORD.

22 And the land be subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD.

23 But if you do not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure that your sin will find you out.

23 But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out.

23 "But if you won't do so, look out! You will be sinning against the LORD. Be certain of this, that your sin will catch up to you!

23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.

- Any failure would be sin: Be sure that your sin will find you out

- These words have become a proverb in the English language

24 Build yourselves cities for your little ones, and sheepfolds for your sheep, and do what you have promised."

24 Build yourselves cities for your little ones, and sheepfolds for your sheep, and do what you have promised."

24 So after you've built cities for your families and corrals for your cattle, be sure to keep your promises."

24 Build you cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.

25 Then the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying, "Your servants will do just as my lord commands.

25 The sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying, "Your servants will do just as my lord commands.

25 Then the descendants of Gad and descendants of Reuben spoke up. "Your servants will do exactly what our master has commanded." They said.

25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.

26 Our little ones, our wives, our livestock, and all our cattle shall remain there in the cities of Gilead,

26 Our little ones, our wives, our livestock and all our cattle shall remain there in the cities of Gilead;

26 "Our children, wives, flocks, and all our cattle will be settled in the cities of Gilead,

26 Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead:

27 while your servants, *that is*, everyone who is armed for war, cross over in the presence of the LORD to battle, just as my lord says."

27 while your servants, everyone who is armed for war, will cross over in the presence of the LORD to battle, just as my lord says."

27 but every soldier that we've equipped for battle will cross the Jordan River in the presence of the LORD, as our master has spoken."

27 But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith.

28 So Moses gave the command regarding them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers' *households* of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

28 So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, and to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers' *households* of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

28 So Moses instructed Eleazar the priest and Nun's son Joshua, and the officers of the ancestral tribes of the Israelis,

28 So concerning them Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel:

29 And Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, everyone who is armed for battle, cross with you over the Jordan in the presence of the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as *their* property;

29 Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, everyone who is armed for battle, will cross with you over the Jordan in the presence of the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession;

29 telling them, "If the descendants of Gad and descendants of Reuben cross over the Jordan River with you, that is, all of their soldiers who've been equipped for battle in the LORD's presence, so that the land is subjugated right before your eyes, then you are to give them the land of Gilead as their possession.

29 And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession:

30 but if they do not cross over with you armed, they shall instead be settled among you in the land of Canaan."

30 but if they will not cross over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan."

30 But if the armed men don't cross over with you, then they won't have any possession in the land of Canaan."

30 But if they will not pass over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.

31 And the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben answered, saying, "As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do.

31 The sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben answered, saying, "As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do.

31 "We'll do just what the LORD told your servants," the descendants of Gad and the descendants of Reuben responded.

31 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the LORD hath said unto thy servants, so will we do.

32 We ourselves will cross over armed in the presence of the LORD into the land of Canaan, and the property of our inheritance *shall remain* with us across the Jordan."

32 We ourselves will cross over armed in the presence of the LORD into the land of Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us across the Jordan."

32 "We are to cross over in battle array in the LORD's presence into the land of Canaan, and afterwards the possession of our inheritance will be on this side of the Jordan River."

32 We will pass over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan may be ours.

(e) Division by Moses (32:33-42)

33 So Moses gave to them, to the sons of Gad, the sons of Reuben, and to the half-tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, the land with its cities with *their* territories, the cities of the surrounding land.

33 So Moses gave to them, to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben and to the half-tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, the land with its cities with *their* territories, the cities of the surrounding land.

33 So Moses gave to the descendants of Gad, to the descendants of Reuben, and to the half-tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh the kingdom of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, the whole land with its cities, and even the territories surrounding it.

33 And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about.

34 And the sons of Gad built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer,

34 The sons of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer,

34 The descendants of Gad rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer,

34 And the children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer,

35 Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah,

35 and Atroth-shophan and Jazer and Jogbehah,
35 Atrothshophan, Jazer, Jogbehah,
35 And Atroth, Shophan, and Jaazer, and Jogbehah,

36 Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified cities, and sheepfolds for sheep.

36 and Beth-nimrah and Beth-haran as fortified cities, and sheepfolds for sheep.

36 Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified cities with corrals for sheep.

36 And Bethnimrah, and Bethharan, fenced cities: and folds for sheep.

- Moses allotted to Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (first mentioned here in Numbers as part of the Trans-jordanian tribes) the areas that had formerly belonged to the Amorite kings Sihon and Og (Cf. 21:21-35)

- Sihon had ruled in the southern part (Gilead) and Og in the north (Bashan)

- The Gadites rebuilt cities in southern Gilead from Aroer on the Arnon River to the south to Jogbehah, 10 miles northwest of Rabbath Ammon to the north

- The Reubenite cities were generally from Heshbon west and southwest to the Jordan and the Dead Sea

- So Reuben was more or less a west-central enclave within Gad

37 The sons of Reuben built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim,

37 The sons of Reuben built Heshbon and Elealeh and Kiriathaim,

37 The descendants of Reuben rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim,

37 And the children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim,

38 Nebo, and Baal-meon—*their* names being changed—and Sibmah, and they gave *other* names to the cities which they built.

38 and Nebo and Baal-meon—*their* names being changed—and Sibmah, and they gave *other* names to the cities which they built.

38 Nebo, Baal-meon (after having changed their names), and Sibmah. The cities that they rebuilt were renamed.

38 And Nebo, and Baalmeon, (their names being changed,) and Shibmah: and gave other names unto the cities which they builded.

39 The sons of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.

39 The sons of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.

39 The descendants of Manasseh's son Machir attacked Gilead and then captured and dispossessed the Amorites who were there.

39 And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it.

- The half-tribe of Manasseh consisted of the clan of Makir and the Gilead clan (Cf. 26:29)

- Their territory, to the north of Gad and Reuben, consisted of a cluster of settlements named Havvoth Jair ("settlements of Jair") after a descendant of Manasseh (Cf. Deut 3:13-15)

- Another descendant, Nobah, captured Kenath and vicinity and renamed it Nobah after himself

— Kenath was in Bashan, about 60 miles due east of the Sea of Galilee

40 So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he lived in it.

40 So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he lived in it.

40 That's why Moses gave Gilead to Manasseh's son Machir, who lived there at the time.

40 And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein.

41 Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its towns, and called them Havvoth-jair.

41 Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its towns, and called them Havvoth-jair.

41 Manasseh's son Jair captured their towns and renamed them Havvoth-jair.

41 And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havothjair.

42 Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and named it Nobah, after his own name.

42 Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and called it Nobah after his own name.

42 Nobah captured Kenath and its towns and renamed it Nobah after himself.

42 And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.