

## In The Wilderness

### Numbers 32:1-42

- Earlier chapter thirty spoke of how the Lord told Israel how important it was to keep their word, vows and promises to Him, well God never teaches us something and doesn't expect us to follow through on what He has taught. Chapter thirty two is based on Israel keeping their word for this is the place where boundaries are going to be set for each of the 12 tribes.

#### V1-42

- **V1-5** after Israel had conquered the Moabites and Midianites on the Eastern side of the Jordan the tribal leaders of both Reuben and Gad had an idea, since they wanted to be herdsmen and this particular area was surrounded by rich pasture land for both the Cattle and the Sheep to graze on, why don't we ask permission to settle here instead of with the other tribes? From a business point of view this seems like a great idea, they've got plenty of Cattle and Sheep, there's lots of grass here to support it, why not make this area our home.
- The concept is brilliant, everything they needed to run a successful Cattle business was there, and once they've conquered the entire region and made peace with everyone, the folks all around them are going to need beef and lamb both Jew and gentile. Except God did not bring them here to scout out good business opportunities, He brought them here to conquer the land but instead of them focusing on that, they see a great place for economic prosperity, and so they are willing to stay on this side of the Jordan instead of crossing over it
- **V6-7** Moses upon hearing this tells them how the other tribes will hear about this and also not want to go over the Jordan and fight for what God has promised. Moses is always thinking about the entire nation and not just how something affects a few, so many make decisions solely based upon how they'll be impacted and not the people around them.
- **V8-15** he brings up there parents and grandparents, how it was this type of attitude that discouraged others from following the Lord, causing the last generation to fail to enter the Promise Land that you are now asking for permission not to go inside of? **V16-19** the leaders have a response that they believe is going to satisfy both parties, saying they fully intend to join the others in the battle, but once its over instead of them settling in the Promise Land, they'd rather settle here and raise their families while they are building up their business.
- **V20-24** after the request is made we see Moses reaction, now here is the agreement, Moses accepts their offer after they assured him that they would honor their word and fight with the rest of the tribes. But Moses also gives them a stern warning that if they don't follow through with what they've promised, they would be sinning against the Lord and their sin would catch up to them, if only we would actually believe that our sin would

find up out, then maybe we wouldn't have so many doing so much harm to the body and themselves.

- **V25-32** afterward Moses then calls Eleazer the Priest, Joshua, and the leaders of the other tribes and tells them of the agreement that's been made, he does this because he knows that he won't be alive when Israel does cross over, so he wanted everyone to know the exact details of what they agreed to do. Notice they include the Lord in their promise to fight with Israel, and not want any of the inheritance on the other side once its been conquered.
- **V33** so Moses divides the land on this side of the Jordan, and we see another tribe has decided to go into the Eastern Cattle and Sheep business with Gad and Reuben, and it's the half tribe of Manasseh, this is the very thing Moses warned against at the beginning its already started. I want to give three points here before we move any further.
- **1. V16-17** while everyone else is fighting with their families alongside them, Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh have left there's on the other side to build up what they've called Gadara, named after themselves of course. What's wrong with that? It shows they weren't all in, they were willing to give a helping hand, but not at the expense of their own dream being stalled for a time, so their bodies was going but their hearts was still in Gadara with their families.
- **2. V24** this shows that God will not take us one step further than we want to go, if you are satisfied with dwelling outside of God's people, God will let you live there, if you are tired of battling the enemy for more of what God has promised us then God wont force you to fight.
- **3. V33** make no mistake about it, others half heartedness does influence others not to walk by faith, when Israel was taken captivity because of idolatry this group was the first one taken. Later in **Mk 5** the story of Jesus casting out a legion of demons into a swine of pigs, something that the Jews weren't supposed to own, remember they went into the cattle, Sheep business, but there's a thriving pig industry? It is here that they asked Jesus to leave their area even after he performed a great miracle setting that man free from the demonic.
- **V34-42** in order to leave their families safely they go and clear out the remaining Amorites and warring nations and tribes around them. All these areas that we see being cleared out now will become havens for Gentile attack and infiltration later, because it was separated from the other tribes and therefore easy prey for Israel's enemies to attack.
- Also since they were separated from the other tribes these areas became well known for idolatry, it would take several days for them to get to, its in moder day Palestine now, so they weren't held accountable like the other tribes to keep the Laws Go had given them in the OT. So the people intermarried with unbeliever's, accepting idolatrous practices and worship, and they adopted Roman culture in order to gain commercial prosperity, sounds familiar!