

JOSHUA AND THE TWO
AND A HALF TRIBES

Joshua 1:11-16

- *"So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: 11 "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own."*

12 But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, 13 "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land.' 14 Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan , but all your fighting men, fully armed, must cross over ahead of your brothers. You are to help your brothers

15 until the LORD gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise." 16 Then they answered Joshua, "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go."

Setting the Stage

Reubenites

Gadites

Half Tribe of Manasseh

Joshua- *"Be Strong and Courageous"*

Then Joshua gave instructions to the tribes about entering *"The Promised Land"*.

The Reubenite, Gadites and Manasseh tribes remain behind.

Why do these tribes not want to join their brothers in the crossing over the Jordan?

Numbers 32:5-7 "If we have found favor in your eyes," they said, "let this land be given to your servants as our possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan." 6 Moses said to the Gadites and Reubenites, "Shall your countrymen go to war while you sit here? 7 Why do you discourage the Israelites from going over into the land the Lord has given them?"

They had large numbers of sheep and cattle and were content to be near the promised land.

They argued that it would be better for them to raise their livestock east of the Jordan than to cross over to a more rugged uncertain terrain.

Joshua reminds them of the failure of their forefathers. The spies saw the promised land but they listened to a bad report.

Yet they still would rather be part of Israel from a distance.

Also, they knew that the manna was still coming but would stop when they crossed over.

Joshua confirms what Moses said to them. You can have the land you requested but you have the responsibility to *"help your brothers"* (v. 14).

They answered Joshua just as they answered Moses.

"Wherever you send us, we will go."

Joshua's command

1. Be ready for what God will do.

"Get your supplies ready." (v. 10-11)

2. Recall the rest you already have.

"The Lord has given you rest..." (v. 13)

3. Remember the duty to help others
have rest.

"until the Lord gives them rest." (v. 15)

The two and a half tribes kept their promise to help. Now look at their commitment!

Israelite men twenty years and older were called to join the war effort. Between these two and a half tribes, there were 136,930 men available (Numbers 26) but only 40,000 men actually crossed the Jordan and fought in the Promised Land (Joshua 4:13)

When Jesus sent out the 12 disciples, he told them what to do and then gave them the reason.

Matthew 10:8 *"Freely you have received, freely give."*

The writer of Hebrews says that some believers were beginning to doubt their faith and says, *"Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience."* (4:11)

What are the key lessons in this narrative that teach us about ourselves?

1. We must choose as believers whether we will be self-centered or God-centered.

2. We must choose as believers
whether we will make a living or
make a life.

3. We must choose whether or not we will help provide rest for one another. (to accomplish their rest)

4. We must choose to look upon our mission for Christ as one body all working toward one goal.
(to seek rest for all).



