

BORDERLAND CHRISTIANITY

Numbers **32** The Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were suitable for livestock. ² So they came to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the community, and said, ³“Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon— ⁴the land the LORD subdued before the people of Israel—are suitable for livestock, and your servants have livestock. ⁵ 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.**”

The borderland Christian is won that does not claim God’s best for their life. Second best is well enough. We see this illustrated by the Rubenites and Gadites. Consider...

I. THE PEOPLE- vs 1

A. The descendants of Reuben.

1. Reuben was **the eldest son** of Jacob.

2. **Jacob’s prophecy toward Reuben** is accurate.

Gen 49 ³ Reuben, thou *art* my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: ⁴ **Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;**

B. The descendant of Gad

Gen 49 ¹⁹ Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.

II. THE PLACE-

Num **32** The Reubenites and Gadites, who had very large herds and flocks, **saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were suitable for livestock.**

A. They were at the border of the Promised Land.

B. They were willing to settle for second best.

C. They were thinking only of themselves and not the nation.

Phi 2 ²¹ For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.

These people were like Lot. They were enticed by...

1. Lust of the eye- ...they saw the land was good for livestock.

2. Pride of life-

- a. They had large herds and flocks.
- b. Reuben had lost his birthright

Reuben was the first-born of Israel, but he had lost his birthright. Several of the tribes, and Judah especially, had risen above him, so that he could not expect the best lot in Canaan; and therefore, to save the shadow of a birthright, when he had forfeited the substance, he here catches at the first lot, though it was out of Canaan, and far off from the tabernacle.

III. THE PLAN

v 5 **Do not make us cross the Jordan.”**

- A. They thought **their plan was better** for there future than God’s plan.
- B. They want **possession** more than **profession**.
- C. **They would not have to fight the giants of the Promised Land.- easy way out.**

IV. THE PLIGHT

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? ⁸ This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to look over the land. ⁹

- A. Will **you sit** while **others fight** the battle?
- B. Don’t you know that your choice causes others to be **discouraged.**
- C. You are **following the path of your fathers** who died in **unbelief.**
- D. **God becomes angry.**

¹⁰ The Lord ’s anger was aroused that day...

¹¹ ‘Because **they have not followed me wholeheartedly**, not one of the men twenty years old or more who came up out of Egypt will see the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—

The end result is they agree to help drive out the giants but it took till the time of David before all of the giants were destroyed. They helped Israel but was not impassioned for the best. Where are you in your Christianity? Are you comfortable and content or passionate about the will of God for your life?