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## The Division of the Transjordan

### 32: 25-42

**The divisions of the Transjordan DIG:** What similar bargaining scene comes to mind here? Who were they negotiating with? Moses? ADONAI? Both? How so? How was this scene similar to that of the daughters of Zelophehad? What did the Reubenites and the Gadites promise to do? What were Moshe's conditions for them to settle in the Transjordan?

**REFLECT:** When did you last bargain with the Lord? How did that turn out? Do we really bargain with Him? Why? Why not? The Torah is our blueprint for living today. The closer we follow Torah the better our life will go. What are the natural consequences of us not following Torah today? Torah was never meant for salvation, so what happens if we stray?

**Moshe gave the descendants of Gad and of Reuben, and also to the half-tribe of Manasseh, the whole Transjordan and its cities within its borders, along with their surrounding towns.**



**Reuben and Gad accept Moshe's revisions (32:25-27):** The Reubenites and Gadites said to Moses, "We, your servants, will do as our lord commands." The bargain was struck, but not without a strong warning of the seriousness of the matter if **the people** failed to live up to **their word**. **Build cities for your little ones and enclosures for your sheep; then do what you said you would do.** In the permission **Moses** granted to **them**, we sense the negotiation that was possible in **Isra'el**, even from the hand of **the LORD** (34:13-15). The account of **Abraham's** and **ADONAI's** bartering over the fate of **Sodom** comes to mind (see the commentary on **Genesis**, to see link click [Ew](#) - **Abraham Intercedes**). In a sense, the bargain with **Moshe** was a bargain with **God**. Like **the daughters of Zelophehad** (see [Eu](#) - **The Daughters of Zelophehad**), these **men** had come to **Moses** in order to come to **YHVH**. When **they** agreed with **Moses**, **they** said: **Your servants will do as my lord orders.** They were also saying that **they** would do as **the LORD** commanded. The specific elements, **our little ones, wives, flocks and livestock** were part of the bargain, and would stay **in the cities of Gilead**. **But your servants will cross over the Jordan River, every man armed for war, before ADONAI to do battle, as our lord says.** The language was like that of a **legal document**; the agreement was completed (see [Gi](#) - **Isra'el's Land**).<sup>739</sup>

**Moshe grants the land (32:28-32):** So **Moshe** wouldn't be alive when the nation crossed over the Jordan River, so **he** told **Eleazar the high priest Joshua the son of Nun** and the

clan leaders of the tribes of the people of Isra'el about the agreement. Eleazar took priority over Joshua, also in appointing the land assigned to each tribe (34:17) and in war (27:21), where the Urim and Thummim needed to be employed (see Exodus [Gb](#) - The Urim and Thummim: The Means of Making Decisions). Moshe said to them, "If the descendants of Gad and of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle, before ADONAI; and if the Land is conquered before you, then you are to give them the land of Gilead as theirs to possess. But if they refused to join the rest of Isra'el in their battles, then, as a punishment, they would be forced, with their families and flocks, to live on the west side of the Jordan River. What the tribes of Reuben and Gad had promised Moses privately (32:16-19), they now repeated publicly before Eleazar and Joshua, and the clan leaders of the tribes, presumably under oath. The descendants of Gad and of Reuben answered, "We will do as ADONAI has said to your servants. We will cross over into the land of Canaan armed before ADONAI, and the Land we will possess for inheritance will be on this side of the Jordan."

**The allotment of the Land (32:33-42):** The nation lingered long enough for the two-and-a-half tribes to move into their land, defeat the enemies that remained, and get their families and flocks settled safely. So Moshe assigned the descendants of Gad and of Reuben, and also to the half-tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites (see [Dk](#) - The Defeat of Sihon of Heshbon) and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan (see [Dl](#) - The Defeat of Og of Bashan) - the whole country and its cities within its borders, along with their surrounding towns (Numbers 32:33; Deuteronomy 3:12-15, 4:43, and 29:7-8; Joshua 12:6, 13:29-31, 14:3 and 18:7).

The descendants of Gad rebuilt the fortified cities of Dibon, 'Ataroth, 'Aro'er, 'Atroth-Shophan, Ja'zer, Jogbehah, Beth-Nimrah and Beth-Haran; and also enclosures for sheep (32:34-36).

The descendants of Reuben rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, as well as Nebo, Ba'al-Meon (these names have been changed) and Sibmah; they renamed the cities they built (32:37-38).

The descendants of Makir, the first-born son of Manasseh, went to Gilead and conquered it (apparently during the conquest of Sihon and Og), driving out the Amorites who were there. Moshe gave Gilead to Makirites, the son of Manasseh, and they settled there. Ja'ir the son of Manasseh went and captured its villages and

called them Havvoth-Ja'ir [villages of Ja'ir]. And the Nobah clan of Manasseh went and captured Kenneth with its villages and named it Nobah after himself (32:39-42).

## Haftarah Matot: Jeremiah 2: 2-3

(see the commentary on [Deuteronomy Af](#) - Parashah)

The Haftarah for the next twelve weeks relates to calendar days. Tradition attributes the apostasy of the golden calf to 17 Tammuz, the same day that the outer walls of the Temple were breached by the Romans (see the commentary [Jeremiah Ga](#) - [The Fall of Jerusalem](#)). Then follow 21 days to 9 Av, the day when both Temples were destroyed (see the commentary on [Jeremiah Gb](#) - [The Destruction of Solomon's Temple on Tisha B'Av in 586 BC](#)). During these three weeks, "the Haftarah of Affliction" warned of the impending doom. In today's Haftarah, read the week of the 17 Tammuz, **Jeremiah** warns of catastrophe: **Today I have placed you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant (Jeremiah 1:10).** Though **God** remembered **Isra'el's** devotion as a bride, first following **Him (Jeremiah 2:2)**, now **Isra'el** has bowed to other gods and to idols (**Jeremiah 1:16**). Even so, **she** remains holy. Those who devour **her** will incur **God's** wrath for eating **His** firstfruits (**Jeremiah 2:3**).

## B'rit Chadashah Matot: Acts 9: 20-22

**Sha'ul** obtained letters from the high priest to arrest and persecute the Messianic Jews of his time (**Acts 9:1**). Zealous for **God**, but blind to **Messiah**, **Sha'ul** bore the fruits of the **partial hardening** upon **Isra'el (Isaiah 6:10)**. As **Sha'ul** journeyed en route to **Damascus**, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard **Yeshua** saying: **I am Yeshua, and you are persecuting Me (Acts 9:3-5)**. **Sha'ul** stood up, but **he** could not see. He followed **Yeshua's** direction to go to a **believer's** house on **Straight Street** in downtown **Damascus**. There **Ananias** prayed for **him**, as instructed in a vision from **Yeshua (Acts 9:10-17)**. As **Ananias** prayed for **Sha'ul's** filling by the **Ruach Ha'Kodesh**, actual scales fell from **Sha'ul's** eyes (**Acts 9:18**). **Sha'ul** entered the waters of purification and immediately **began preaching in the synagogues that Yeshua is the Son of God**. All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this Name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests? Yet, **Sha'ul** grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that **Yeshua is the Messiah (Acts 9:20-22)**."<sup>740</sup>

Dear Heavenly **Father**, praise **You** that **You** are always loving and kind, even when **You** must **discipline** (**Hebrews 12:5b-6**). **Moses** was a great leader! For 40 years **Moses** led a complaining people (**Numbers 14:11**) around in the wilderness. That was a very hard job. In our human thinking, it seems harsh that you would not allow **him** to enter the Promised Land because of his sin of hitting the rock instead of speaking to it. Yet when I wisely look at the situation through **Your** holy and pure eyes, **You** were actually being kind and gentle. It really was a very important and new way of thinking to show people that **You** are not just a **God** mighty in heaven, but **You** also are a **God** that I can communicate with! Thank you, **Father**, that **You** are not a **God** who is merely far off (**Romans 10:6-11**), but you are a **God** who is close by, a heavenly **Father** listening and caring for me.

As a result of **Your** gracious love you forgave **Moses**, even though **he** didn't get to enter the Promised Land, **You** allowed **him** to see it (**Deut 3:27** and **34:4**) and later **Moses** and **Elijah** would stand on the Mt. of Transfiguration in **Isra'el** with **Yeshua** (**Mt 17:2-3**). **Your discipline** is never too harsh, but it is always right in line with the severity of the sin. I need to realize how awful sin is and how it breaks my relationship with **You**. When I sin and repent, **Your** love steps in to wake the relationship that has been broken. **Your discipline** is a means to guide me away from the terrible consequences of sin and back to the joy of walking in **Truth** with **You**. Thank **You** for being such a compassionate and loving heavenly **Father** that forgives those who **fear Him** (**Psalms 103:11-12**). What mercy **You** show me. **If I confess my sins, You are faithful and righteous to forgive my sins and purify me from all unrighteousness (First John 1:9)**. I love **You** and delight in pleasing **You**. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen