

## **BELIEVERS BEYOND THE BORDERS**

Joshua 1:10-18, Internet Joshua01\_\_10serwpd.wpd, January 30, 2001, new

**(Josh 1:10-15)**, "Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, {11} Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it. {12} And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, {13} Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. {14} Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and help them; {15} Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising. {16} And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. {17} According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. {18} Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage."



### **S A SHORT HISTORY REGARDING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL IS HELPFUL:**

- IN GENESIS 12 GOD CALLED ABRAHAM out of Ur. By faith he followed God's directions and traveled to **THE LAND OF CANAAN**
- IN THE LAND OF CANAAN GOD MADE A PROMISE to Abraham.

### ***GENESIS 15***

**(V. 7)**, "And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, **TO GIVE THEE THIS LAND TO INHERIT IT.**"

S God promised A SPECIFIC LAND to Abraham and his descendants.

S That land has had a variety of names attached to it:

- **Land of Canaan**
- **Promised Land**

- Israel
- Palestine
- Holy Land

GOD DEFINED THE BORDERS

**(GEN 15:18)**, “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, **UNTO THY SEED HAVE I GIVEN THIS LAND**, FROM THE RIVER OF EGYPT unto the great river, THE RIVER EUPHRATES:”

**NUMBERS 34** GAVE FURTHER DEFINITION FOR THE BOUNDARIES. The only time those borders were ever realized was during the reigns of **David** and **Solomon**.

- **NORTH** — Entrance to **HAMATH**
- **EAST** — Euphrates River and the Syrian & Arabian Deserts.
- **SOUTH** — Kadesh Barnea and the River of Egypt (not the Nile)
- **WEST** — The Great Sea (Mediterranean)

GOD SPOKE RELATED TO **ABRAHAM’S DESCENDANTS**:

**(GEN 15:13-14)**, “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be **A STRANGER IN A LAND THAT IS NOT THEIRS**, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them **FOUR HUNDRED YEARS**; { 14 } And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward **SHALL THEY COME OUT WITH GREAT SUBSTANCE.**”

WITH TIME THAT WORD CAME TO PASS

- S **ABRAHAM** had a son named
- S **ISAAC**. Isaac had a son named
- S **JACOB**. Jacob had **12 SONS** who became **THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL**. One of those sons, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers. To make a long story short, he ended up **second in charge OVER THE LAND OF EGYPT**.
- S **A DROUGHT** came to the land of Israel that lasted seven years. Jacob and his sons **HAD TO MOVE TO EGYPT** in order to survive the seven year drought. They ended up living there for the next **FOUR HUNDRED YEARS**.

AT THE CLOSE OF THAT TIME

**(Exo 12:41)**, “And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all **THE HOSTS OF THE LORD WENT OUT FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT.**”

- **MOSES** led the hosts of Israel through the wilderness for **FORTY YEARS**. Moses died before he entered the Promised Land.
- God appointed **JOSHUA** to lead the twelve tribes after Moses passed away.

**OUR TEXT** takes place **ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE JORDAN RIVER** with Joshua making preparation for Israel to cross the Jordan River and **ENTER THE PROMISED LAND**. The iniquity of the **AMORITES WAS FULL** (Gen 15:16) and **THE TIME OF CONQUEST** of the Land God promised **HAD ARRIVED**. God was about to **FULFILL HIS PROMISES** to Abraham. **THAT BRINGS US TO THE TEXT OF THIS MESSAGE:**

**(Josh 1:10-12)**, “Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, {11} Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for **WITHIN THREE DAYS YE SHALL PASS OVER THIS JORDAN**, to go in **TO POSSESS THE LAND**, WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVETH YOU TO POSSESS IT. {12} And to the **REUBENITES**, and to the **GADITES**, and to **HALF THE TRIBE OF MANASSEH**, spake Joshua, saying,”

- S **THOSE THREE NAMES: REUBEN, GAD, and MANASSEH**, are three of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- S **THIS MESSAGE** deals primarily with **TRUTHS RELATED** to those **THREE TRIBES APPLIED TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**.
- S **(1 Cor 10:5-6)**, “But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. {6} Now these things were **OUR EXAMPLES**, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”

- I. **CONCESSION**
- II. **CONSEQUENCES**
- III. **CAUSES**

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

### I. CONCESSION

(V. 13-15), "REMEMBER THE WORD WHICH MOSES the servant of the LORD COMMANDED YOU, saying, 'The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. {14} Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but **YE SHALL PASS BEFORE YOUR BRETHREN ARMED**, all the mighty men of valor, and help them; {15} **UNTIL** the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: **THEN YE SHALL RETURN** unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you **ON THIS SIDE JORDAN** toward the **SUNRISING**." (The sun rises in the **EAST**)

S THAT IS A QUOTATION FROM MOSES FOUND IN DEUTERONOMY 3:18-20. BEFORE MOSES DIED he gave instruction to the tribes of the **Reuben, Gad**, and to half the tribe of **Manasseh** regarding their particular responsibilities.

(Deu 3:18-20), "And I commanded you at that time, saying, The LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all that are meet for the war. {19} But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (for I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you; {20} Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and until they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you."

S THE DETAILS OF THE COMMAND ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) **THE ABLE MEN** from the three tribes were to be **armed for war** and were to be **FIRST TO CROSS OVER** in conquest of the Promised Land.
- 2) They were to **LEAVE THEIR WIVES, CHILDREN** and **CATTLE** on the eastern side of the river.
- 3) They **COULD RETURN** to their families east of the Jordan River **ONLY AFTER THE CONQUEST WAS COMPLETE**.

S PERHAPS SOMEONE IS ASKING "**WHY DID THEY HAVE TO GO FIRST?**" Why were those three tribes singled out? Why were they first in battle?

S IT WAS ALL PRECIPITATED BY A CONFLICT FOUND IN THE BOOK OF NUMBERS, CHAPTER 32.

(**NUMBERS 32:1**), "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**;

THE TRIBES OF **GAD AND REUBEN SPOKE UNTO MOSES**, and to Eleazar **THE PRIEST**, and unto **THE PRINCES** of the congregation, **AND SAID**

**(V. 4-5)**, “. . . The country {*east of the Jordan*}. . . is **A LAND FOR CATTLE, AND THY SERVANTS HAVE CATTLE**: {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.**"

#### **S MOSES WAS NOT AT ALL HAPPY**

**(V. 6-16 NIV)**, “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} After they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and viewed the land, **THEY DISCOURAGED** the Israelites from entering the land the LORD had given them. {10} **THE LORD'S ANGER WAS AROUSED** that day and he swore this oath: {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-- {12} not one **EXCEPT CALEB** son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and **JOSHUA** son of Nun, for they followed the LORD wholeheartedly.' {13} The Lord's anger burned against Israel and **HE MADE THEM WANDER** in the **DESERT FORTY YEARS**, until the whole generation of those who had done evil in his sight was gone. {14} **"AND HERE YOU ARE, a brood of sinners, standing in the place of your fathers and making the LORD even more angry with Israel.** {15} **IF YOU** turn away from following him, **HE WILL AGAIN LEAVE ALL THIS PEOPLE IN THE DESERT, and YOU WILL BE THE CAUSE OF THEIR DESTRUCTION.**"

#### **S THE TRIBES REPLIED TO MOSES**

- {16} "We would like to **BUILD PENS** here **FOR OUR LIVESTOCK** and **CITIES** for our women and children.
- {17} But we **ARE READY TO ARM OURSELVES** and **GO**

**AHEAD OF THE ISRAELITES** until we have brought them to their place.

- Meanwhile our **WOMEN AND CHILDREN** will live in fortified cities, for protection from the inhabitants of the land.
- {18} We will **NOT RETURN** to our homes **UNTIL** every Israelite has received his inheritance.
- {19} **WE WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY INHERITANCE WITH THEM ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE JORDAN,** because our inheritance has come to us on the east side of the Jordan."

## S **MOSES MADE A CONCESSION**

- {20} **"IF YOU WILL DO THIS** -- IF you will **ARM** yourselves before the LORD for battle, {21} and **IF** all of you will go armed over the Jordan before the LORD **UNTIL** he has driven his enemies out before him-- {22} **THEN WHEN** the land is **SUBDUED** before the LORD, **YOU MAY RETURN** and be free from your obligation to the LORD and to Israel. And **THIS LAND WILL BE YOUR POSSESSION** before the LORD.
- {23} **"BUT IF YOU FAIL TO DO THIS,** you will be **SINNING AGAINST THE LORD;** and you may **BE SURE THAT YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT."**

## S **THE TRIBES SAID**

{25} . . . "We your servants will do as our lord commands."

- **THEY DID OBEY!** They kept the letter of the law. **NUMBERS 26:7, 18, 34 REVEALS** those three tribes had the ability to muster **136,930** men twenty years and older capable of bearing arms. Only **40,000** warriors from the two and one-half tribes actually crossed into Canaan and fought. It seems **the others** stayed to protect the women, children and elderly in the cities they had taken east of the Jordan. They also had to take care of the flocks and herd. Every person had their responsibilities.
- **ONCE COMPLETED, THE WARRIORS RETURNED** to their families east of the Jordan River.

IT HAS BEEN SAID A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS. The following MAP is of the assigned lands for the twelve tribes.

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AS YOU LISTENED to the exchange BETWEEN MOSES and the TRIBES, DID YOU SENSE THE REQUEST by the two tribes DID NOT MATCH GOD'S ORIGINAL INTENT FOR THEM? Their decision to live east of the Jordan was not outside the original borders God had established with Abraham, BUT IT DOES APPEAR their request WAS OUTSIDE GOD'S IMMEDIATE WILL for them.

THEIR REQUEST HAD THE SAME RING AS ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR A KING in 1 Samuel 8.

#### S ISRAEL SAID TO SAMUEL

(1 Sam 8:5-9), "... Behold, THOU ART OLD, and YOUR SONS WALK NOT in thy ways: now MAKE US A KING to judge us like all the nations. {6} But THE THING DISPLEASED SAMUEL, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And SAMUEL PRAYED unto the LORD. {7} And THE LORD SAID unto Samuel, HEARKEN unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected THEE, but they have rejected ME, that I should not reign over them.

{8} ACCORDING TO ALL THE WORKS which they have done SINCE THE DAY THAT I BROUGHT THEM UP OUT OF EGYPT even unto this day, wherewith THEY HAVE FORSAKEN ME, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. {9} Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet PROTEST SOLEMNLY unto them, and SHOW THEM the manner of the king that shall reign over them."

#### THE CONSEQUENCES

- {11} HE WILL TAKE YOUR SONS and make them serve with his chariots and horses,
- {12} ... assign to be COMMANDERS of thousands and commanders of fifties,
- {12} ... others to PLOW his ground and REAP his harvest,
- {12} ... and still others to MAKE WEAPONS of war and equipment for his chariots.

- {13} He will take **YOUR DAUGHTERS** to be **perfumers** and **cooks** and **bakers**.
  - {14} He will take the best of **YOUR FIELDS** and **VINEYARDS** and **OLIVE GROVES** and give them to his attendants.
  - {15} He will take a tenth of **YOUR GRAIN** and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants.
  - {16} Your menservants and maidservants and the best of **YOUR CATTLE** and **DONKEYS** he will take for his own use.
  - {17} He will take a tenth of **YOUR FLOCKS**, and **YOU** yourselves will become **HIS SLAVES**.
  - {18} **WHEN THAT DAY COMES, YOU WILL CRY OUT FOR RELIEF** from the king **YOU HAVE CHOSEN**, and **THE LORD WILL NOT ANSWER YOU IN THAT DAY.**"
  - {19} **BUT THE PEOPLE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO SAMUEL.** "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. {20} **THEN WE WILL BE LIKE ALL THE OTHER NATIONS**, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles."
  - {21} When Samuel heard all that the people said, **HE REPEATED IT BEFORE THE LORD.** {22} The **LORD** answered, "**LISTEN TO THEM AND GIVE THEM A KING.**"
  - **THAT IS CALLED "CONCESSION."** **GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN** for Israel **did not include a king.** God's plan was they use judges and God would be their king. It was **NOT** a **MONARCHY**; not a **DEMOCRACY**, but a **THEOCRACY.** **Because of the stubbornness** of their heart, God conceded and let them have their way, even though God knew their way was going to be harder and more difficult.
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**GOD'S CONCESSION TO ISRAEL REGARDING A KING HAS IMPLICATIONS REGARDING GOD'S CONCESSION TO THE TRIBES OF REUBEN, GAD & MANASSEH** living east of the Jordan River. THERE IS STRONG REASON TO BELIEVE that **GOD'S ORIGINAL INTENT WAS THAT ALL TWELVE tribes LIVE WEST** of the Jordan To put it another way, THEIR DESIRE WAS NOT GOD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN. God had not planned that they live east of the Jordan at that time; perhaps later, but not then. It was their desire, not God's design. God did not suggest the idea; they brought the idea up. In fact, when they brought it up, it was strongly resisted at first. Once God observed their **UNRELENTING PERSISTENCE & DETERMINATION, GOD ALLOWED THEM TO PURSUE THEIR OWN PLANS, EVEN THOUGH THEIR PLANS APPEARED TO BE LESS THAN GOD'S PERFECT PLAN.**

S **LISTEN AGAIN TO WHAT GOD SAID REGARDING ISRAEL:**

**(1 Sam 8:8),** "According to all the works which **THEY HAVE DONE SINCE THE DAY** that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith **THEY HAVE FORSAKEN ME**, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee."

S **SOME FOLKS** have made A DISTINCTION BETWEEN **GOD'S PERFECT WILL** and **GOD'S PERMISSIVE WILL.**

- **GOD HAD A PERFECT PLAN FOR ISRAEL** related to **the matter of a KING**, but God also had a permissive will.
- **GOD HAD A PERFECT WILL FOR THE TRIBES** of Israel, but he also had a permissive will.
- **GOD HAS A PERFECT PLAN FOR US. IF** we follow God's perfect plan, we will find God's best for our lives. **HISTORY** has taught us that **folks often rebel** against God's best plan and seek to establish their own plan. God sometimes allows His people to **choose second best.** It is **not what God would have chosen**, but God allows it none the less.

S **LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I THINK REVIVAL IS.** Revival is where God's people begin to search the heart of God in prayer to **find God's perfect plan**, and with God's help, **move back**

from God's second and third best **AND MOVE BACK TO GOD'S BEST.**

- Have we **SUBSTITUTED COFFEE & NEWSPAPERS** in the place of **PRAYER**?
- Have we **SUBSTITUTED TELEVISION** in the place of **MINISTRY**?
- Have we **SUBSTITUTED CONVENIENCE** in the place of **THE GREAT COMMISSION**?
- Have we **SUBSTITUTED LUXURIES** in the place of **TITHING**?
- etc.?

**S REVIVAL IS MOVING BACK INTO GOD'S BEST**

**S (Mat 22:37-38)**, "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God **WITH ALL THY HEART**, and with all thy **SOUL**, and with all thy **MIND**. {38} This is the first and great commandment."

## **I. CONCESSION**

## **II. CONSEQUENCES**

- **THE STORY CONTINUES**
- **THE 2½ TRIBES OBEYED THE LORD!**

**(V. 16-18)**, "And **THEY ANSWERED JOSHUA**, saying, 'All that thou commandest us **WE WILL DO**, and whithersoever thou sendest us, **WE WILL GO**. {17} According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, **SO WILL WE HEARKEN** unto thee: only the **LORD** thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. {18} Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, **HE SHALL BE PUT TO DEATH**: only be strong and of a good courage."

- They prepared their **FOOD** as instructed (v. 11). What do you suppose their food consisted of? **MANNA** had to be in their bag somewhere. They had **BA'MANNA BRED** and **MANNA BAGELS**. But the manna stopped once they crossed the Jordan River. What would they eat after the manna stopped? God had worked that out as well.
- **IT WAS HARVEST TIME** according to (Joshua 3:15). Grain **WAS** standing in the fields in the Promised Land. It is an excellent example of "**WHEN GOD GUIDES, GOD PROVIDES.**"

- **ONCE THREE DAYS HAD PASSED**, REUBEN, GAD and MANASSEH sent **40,000** soldiers into Canaan to battle on the front lines. They crossed over first Just as they had been commanded. With the passing of the days and the land was conquered, they **CROSSED BACK OVER** the Jordan and went to live with their families and raise their cattle on the spacious pasture lands of the east. They obeyed the command of Moses just as they said they would. **THEY KEPT THEIR WORD!**
- **AS A RESULT THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER - RIGHT? WRONG!** REMEMBER living east of the Jordan was their desire, **not God's**.
- CONSIDER *TWO CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR CHOICE*:

#### **#1. THEY RECEIVED ONLY FRINGE BLESSINGS**

- S THE TWO AND ONE HALF TRIBES **had chosen GOD'S SECOND BEST, NOT HIS BEST**. God still **loved them** and God still **HAD A PLAN** for their lives. They were **just as SPECIAL** to God **east** of the Jordan as they would have been west of the Jordan. **BUT GOD'S PRIMARY PLAN WAS FOR THE LAND WEST OF THE JORDAN. AND IF** God's primary plan is some place other than where we are, we are going to be on the outskirts of the blessing that will fall in the primary place.
- S **BECAUSE GODS' PRIMARY FOCUS WAS WESTERN PALESTINE, FEW DETAILS** are given regarding **THE EASTERN TRIBES**. The details are **very SKETCHY**. Those two and one half tribes **ARE NOT the center of attention** in the Scripture because they were not in the land that was the center of God's attention.
- S **THEY CHOSE** to live on **the PERIPHERY, EDGE, BORDERLINE OF GOD'S FOCUS. THE PROBLEM WITH** living on the on the periphery of God's blessing is **one only receives the sprinklings** of God's blessing. They received only fringe blessing.

#### **#1. THEY RECEIVED ONLY FRINGE BLESSINGS**

## #2. THEY WERE FIRST TO FALL

### SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO KNOW ABOUT THE THREE TRIBES:

- S We do not know many of the details of their demise. **THEIR HISTORY IS VERY SKETCHY.** We know they **PLAYED THE HARLOT** and **TRESPASSED** against God by going after the gods of the peoples of the land.
- S We know they lived in **CONSTANT STRIFE** with the neighboring peoples. As a result, **THEIR BORDERS WERE CONSTANTLY BEING CHANGED.**
- S **IN 734 B.C., TWELVE YEARS BEFORE** the fall of Israel, **TIGLATH-PILESER CONQUERED ALL EASTERN PALESTINE.** The inhabitants were **CARRIED AWAY CAPTIVE** (2 Ki 15:29; 1 Ch 5:25ff).
- S **THE NEIGHBORING PEOPLES** used their demise as AN OPPORTUNITY TO OCCUPY THE LAND east of Jordan.
- S THESE ONCE POWERFUL TRIBES **SANK INTO RELATIVE INSIGNIFICANCE.**

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CONSEQUENCES! There are always consequences to our choices.

- S **GALATIANS 6:7**  
(Gal 6:7), "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
  - WE REAP **WHAT** WE SOW
  - WE REAP **MORE** THAN WE SOW
  - WE REAP **LATER** THAN WE SOW most often.
- S I THINK OF **LOT.**

- I. CONCESSION
- II. CONSEQUENCES

## III. CAUSES

- S What brought about **THEIR EARLY DESTRUCTION,**

## CAPTIVITY & GREAT LOSS?

### S THREE CAUSES

#### #1. SOFT CHOICES

- SERVING GOD OFTEN REQUIRES HARD CHOICES
- THEY **OPTED FOR THE EASY ROAD**. They referred to their cattle and pasture lands three times in Numbers 32.

**(Num 32:1)**, "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;"

**(Num 32:4)**, "Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is **A LAND FOR CATTLE**, and thy servants have cattle:"

**(Num 32:16)**, "And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here **FOR OUR CATTLE, AND CITIES FOR OUR LITTLE ONES**:"

S They liked it east of Jordan because there were **WONDERFUL PASTURE LANDS** for cattle. They wanted what their eyes saw, rather than what God wanted.

S **FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR CATTLE THEY CHOSE GOD'S SECOND BEST.**

S **WARREN WIERSBE WRITES:**  
**"THEIR FIRST CONCERN WAS MAKING A LIVING, NOT MAKING A LIFE."** They **REPRESENT** the **MANY "BORDERLINE BELIEVERS"** in the church today who get close to the inheritance but never quite claim it, no matter how successful they may seem to be. They are **WILLING TO** serve the Lord and help their brethren for a time; but when their appointed job is finished, they head for home to do what they want to do."

**PERHAPS THAT IS WHY GOD SAYS SO MUCH TO US ABOUT MAKING THE HARD CHOICES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

- S **(Mat 6:33)**, "But **SEEK YE FIRST** the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
- S **(Luke 9:23)**, "... If any man will come after me, let him **DENY HIMSELF**, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
- S **(Mat 16:25)**, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

### #1. SOFT CHOICES

### #2. ISOLATION

- S They were **EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER**. They were **CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF ISRAEL**. The **RIVER** itself made a barrier between those east and west. There was **A GREAT RIFT VALLEY** that had to be crossed to get to the west. They were **FORBIDDEN TO BUILD A TEMPLE** to worship in east of the Jordan. God made provision for only one temple. If they sought to build a temple east of the Jordan it would have provoked a war.
- S **CUT OFF FROM WORSHIP**, it was **JUST A MATTER OF TIME** until they began to worship other gods.

GOD SAYS TO US

- S **(Heb 10:25)**, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
- S **DON'T CUT YOURSELF OFF FROM WORSHIP** and from **GOD'S PEOPLE**
- S **(1 Cor 10:11)**, "Now all these things happened unto them for **ENSAMPLES**: and they are written for **OUR ADMONITION**, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

### #1. SOFT CHOICES

### #2. ISOLATION

### #3. ASSIMILATION (ABSORPTION)

- S **THERE WERE FEWER NATURAL BARRIERS** that separated them from their enemies.

S They had to constantly deal with the **MOABITES and AMMONITES**. No wonder they soon fell into **IDOLATRY**.

GOD SAYS TO US

S **(2 Cor 6:14)**, “**BE YE NOT UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER WITH UNBELIEVERS**: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

S **(2 Cor 6:17)**, “Wherefore **COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM**, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

S NOW WE MUST CARRY OUT **THE GREAT COMMISSION** (Matt 28:18-20, Acts 1:8), but in the process we must heed the words of **JESUS**:

**(John 17:15-16)**, “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. {16} They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

S DID YOU KNOW that **FIVE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN REVELATION** were **TOLD TO REPENT**.

S **ONE CHRISTIAN LEADER WROTE**:

"I'm frustrated preaching a message to the church, challenging Christians to make an impact for Christ in every walk of life, and seeing crowds respond enthusiastically - and yet every moral indicator shows we're going down the tubes. It's like shoveling sand against the waves"

S **DONALD BLOESCH WROTE**:

"Before the church can make an impact on the culture, it must break with the idolatries and misconceptions that dominate culture. Where secularism so often dons the guise of religiosity, the primary danger is, not persecution by culture, but seduction"

- I. CONCESSION
- II. CONSEQUENCES
- III. CAUSES

### III. CONCLUSIONS

- S How do we **KEEP THIS FROM HAPPENING** to us?
- S How do we keep **FROM BEING ASSIMILATED** into ways of the world?

#### #1. LIVE WITHING GOD'S BOUNDARIES

- S **RATHER THAN HUNGERING FOR THE BEST LAND** for our sheep and cattle, we should **HUNGER FOR A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP** with God. A right relationship with God is called "**RIGHTEOUSNESS.**"
- S **GOD'S BOUNDARY IS CALLED "RIGHTEOUSNESS"**
  - **(Mat 5:6)**, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after **RIGHTEOUSNESS**: for they shall be filled."
  - **(Mat 6:33)**, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
- S **A simple definition** of righteousness: "**TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD.**" When we are right with God we are **LIVING IN GOD'S SET BOUNDARIES.**
- S **ENVISION A MOTHER** defining the boundaries for her children. She tells her children they can go outside and play, but the only place they can play is in the yard inside the fence that is around the house. As long as they stay in the **YARD**, they will be O. K. They could play until their heart is content.

We all know kids who were told something like that by their mother and who did not obey. It may not have been a yard, but there was a defined boundary of some kind. Do you know why kids sometimes get out of the boundaries mom sets? The same reason Adam & Eve stepped outside the boundary that God set by eating from the forbidden tree.
- S **PICTURE** God defining **THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR SPIRITUAL APPETITE.** God says I have created you with desire, a creature with a spiritual appetite, but because of your fallen nature you will desire things you ought not to desire. So God says, "Let Me define for you what things you should hunger and thirst for. I will set the boundaries. I will **DEFINE THE PERIMETER.** I will **BUILD THE FENCE** around the yard of your life so there will not be any question as to what should or should not be pursued. As long as you seek after the things I say

everything will be O.K. I will make it simple. One word is sum it all up. Here is what you are to hunger and thirst after: you are to hunger and thirst after "**RIGHTEOUSNESS.**" The **PROPER FOOD** for the hunger of your **SOUL** is "**RIGHTEOUSNESS.**"

**S** **MANY FOLKS** spend their life **SEEKING HAPPINESS** and contentment in **all the wrong places**. Like **THE PRODIGAL SON** who wasted his life in the far country they end up **empty, disappointed** and **disillusioned**. They experience the pleasures of Sin **FOR A SEASON** but in the end **THEIR SATISFACTION** was only **TEMPORARY**.

### **#2. DON'T SETTLE FOR GOD'S SECOND BEST**

**(Num 32:23)**, "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the **LORD**: and **BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT.**"

**S** It may take years, but it will eventually manifest itself

### **#3. IF YOU HAVE FAILED, THAT FAILURE NEED NOT BE FINAL**

**(2 Chr 7:14)**, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

- **REVIVAL IS** where God's people begin to search the heart of God in prayer to **find God's perfect plan**, and with God's help, **move back from God's second and third best AND MOVE BACK TO GOD'S BEST.**