

Joshua 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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 valour, and help them;

Analysis

Joshua outlines the practical arrangement: families remain in Transjordan while warriors cross to help their brothers. The phrase 'mighty men of valour' (giborei hechayil, גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִּל) describes seasoned warriors, not mere able-bodied men. The command 'pass before your brethren armed' (thoveru lifnei acheikhem chamushtm, תַּעֲבְרוּ לִפְנֵי אֶחְיֵיכֶם חֲמִשָּׁתִּים) means march in battle formation leading the advance. This demonstrates covenant solidarity—those with secured inheritance lead dangerous missions helping brothers gain theirs. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates stronger believers sacrificially serving weaker ones, and those who received grace first ministering to others.

Historical Context

Numbers 32:17 records this same commitment. The Transjordan warriors numbered approximately 40,000 (Joshua 4:13), forming a significant portion of Israel's fighting force. Their willingness to leave families and livestock vulnerable while fighting years away demonstrated remarkable faith and covenant loyalty. They faithfully served throughout the seven-year conquest before returning home (Joshua 22:1-4).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What sacrifices is God calling you to make to help spiritual siblings succeed?
2. How does leading 'before your brethren' challenge you to take difficult assignments rather than seeking comfort?
3. What does leaving family secure to help others reveal about covenant priorities?

Interlinear Text

נְשִׁיכֶם	טַפְּכֶם	וּמִקְנֵיכֶם	יֵשְׁבוּ	בְּאֶרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר
Your wives	your little ones	and your cattle	shall remain	in the land	H834
H802	H2945	H4735	H3427	H776	
נָתַן	לְכֶם	מֹשֶׁה	בְּעֵבֶר	הַיַּרְדֵּן	וְאַתֶּם
gave	H0	which Moses	you on this side	Jordan	H859
H5414		H4872	H5676	H3383	but ye shall pass
					H5674
חֲמֹשִׁים	לִפְנֵי	אֶחֱיֶיכֶם	כָּל	גִּבּוֹרֵי	הֵם
armed	before	your brethren	H3605	all the mighty	men of valour
H2571	H6440	H251		H1368	H2428
וְעֻזָּתָם	אֹתָם:				
and help	H853				
H5826					