

Numbers 32:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession:

Analysis

And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass over with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession—Moses establishes conditional grant: **if** (אם im) Reuben and Gad fulfill military obligations, **then** (אם־כֵּן unetatem, 'then you shall give') they receive Gilead. The repeated phrase **before the LORD** emphasizes divine witness to this covenant—God Himself oversees compliance and holds both parties accountable.

Conditional blessings pervade Scripture: 'If you love me, keep my commandments' (John 14:15); 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just' (1 John 1:9). Biblical promises often include conditional obedience clauses—grace is free, but blessing flow requires covenant faithfulness. The land grant wasn't unconditional entitlement but covenant reward for faithful military service.

Historical Context

This conditional land grant established precedent for Israel's covenant relationship with the land throughout history: obedience → blessing and possession;

disobedience → curse and exile. Deuteronomy 28 expands this principle; ultimately, northern Israel's exile (722 BC) and Judah's Babylonian captivity (586 BC) demonstrated that land possession depended on covenant faithfulness.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the conditional 'if... then' structure of the land grant illustrate that biblical blessings often require obedient participation?
2. What distinguishes unconditional promises (God's covenant faithfulness) from conditional blessings (dependent on human response)?
3. How can you discern which biblical promises are unconditional and which require responsive obedience for fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	מֹשֶׁה ה	אֵלֶּה ׀	אִם	יַעֲבֹר ו	וּבְנֵי
said	And Moses			will pass with you over	and the children
H559	H4872	H413	H518	H5674	H1121
כָּל	הַיָּרְדֵּן ׀	אֶת	אֶתְכֶם	רְאוּבֵן ׀	וּבְנֵי
of Gad	Jordan			of Reuben	and the children
H1410	H3383	H853	H854	H7205	H1121
וְכָל	אִישׁ	לְפָנֶיךָ ׀	יְהוָה ה	וְנִכְבְּשׁ ה	
every man	armed	to battle	before	the LORD	shall be subdued
H2502		H4421	H6440	H3068	H3533
אֶת	רֶגֶל	לְפָנֶיךָ ׀	וְנָתַתָּ ׀	אֶת	רֶגֶל
and the land		before	you then ye shall give		and the land
H776		H6440	H5414	H0	H776
הַגִּלְעָד	לְאֻחֲזָה:				
of Gilead	for a possession				
H1568	H272				