

Numbers 32-36 Belonging

We are family

Joh 1:11-13 ESV He [*Jesus*] came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, **he gave the right to become children of God**, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- Our relationship with Jesus has to do with **FAMILY** - and family has to do with **BELONGING**
- When He taught us to pray he said say "**OUR** Father" (He didn't say "**MY** Father")

Psa 68:5-6 NIV A father to the **fatherless**, a defender of **widows**, is God in his holy dwelling. 6 **God sets the lonely in families**, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Chap 32 Background

- The people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad had much cattle
- The land on THIS side of Jordan (not the promised land) was good for grazing, they wanted this as their inheritance

When you belong - your decisions do not take place in isolation

Num 32:6-12 ESV But Moses said to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben, "**Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here? 7 Why will you discourage the heart of the people of Israel from going over into the land that the LORD has given them? 8** Your fathers did this, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. 9 For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, **they discouraged the heart of the people of Israel from going into the land that the LORD had given them. 10 And the LORD's anger was kindled** on that day,..... 14 And behold, **you have risen in your fathers' place**, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the LORD against Israel! 15 For **if you turn away from following him, he will again abandon them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all this people.**"

- **YOU can discourage the heart** of others
- "**YOU will destroy all this people**" vs 15
- Num 32:16-18 ESV Then they came near to him and said, "We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, 17 but **we will take up arms, ready to go before the people of Israel, until we have brought them to their place.** And our little ones shall live in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. 18 **We will not return to our homes until each of the people of Israel has gained his inheritance.**

Rom 12:5 NIV so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and **each member belongs to all the others.**

- When you get married your decision affects 2, children? A few more, church? - the body

Chap 33 Because you belong - Your life proves the faithfulness of God

There was a record of 40 years (42 different camps) - logged and remembered

- Some of the places mentioned were periods of great failure for Israel,
 - The **LORD never reminded them of their failures** again in this history
- It's simply a record of God's faithfulness in that - He never left them nor did He forsake them

Here are a few

- Marah - where the LORD made bitter waters sweet by tossing a tree into it
- Rephidim - where the LORD brought water out of a rock
- Sinai - where the LORD came down on the mountain and gave them the 10 commandments
- Kibrothhattaavah - where the people were buried who lusted after meat
- Hazeroth - where Miriam and Aaron rebelled against Moses' leadership - Miriam became leprous
- Kadesh - where the spies brought back the evil report
- Edom - where they were bitten by serpents and the LORD raised the serpent on the pole
- Hor - where Aaron died
- Mountains of Abarim - where Moses saw the promised land, but couldn't go in

Rom 8:28 ESV And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

34 Over time belonging becomes a priority over having - (see Joshua 22)

This chapter describes the division of the land...(what section belonged to each tribe) BUT --- in the end there is more to life than owning property ... There was another element -- **IDENTITY -- a sense of belonging** - that of being an Israelite (Joshua 22) - those on the other side of the Jordan wanted to make sure that no one ever forgot they are part of this - after the fighting - those on the other side of Jordan set up an altar

- Jos 22:24-27 ESV No, but we did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel? 25 For the LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you people of Reuben and people of Gad. You have no portion in the LORD.' So **your children might make our children cease to worship the LORD**. 26 Therefore we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, 27 but **to be a witness between us and you**, and between our generations after us, that we do perform the service of the LORD in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, **so your children will not say to our children in time to come, "You have no portion in the LORD."**

- AT first they wanted the LAND, (maybe a selfish motivation)
- But they risked, they committed, they fought for their brothers on the other side
- NOW, they want to BELONG - don't forget --- WE ARE BELONG TO YOU!!!

35 Belonging to God means we follow God's prescription for life

Num 35:6 ESV "The cities that you give to the Levites shall be the **six cities of refuge**, where you shall permit the manslayer to flee, and in addition to them you shall give forty-two cities.

In those days, the AVENGER of BLOOD, was the person (usually a family member) who would seek to execute the murderer of someone in his family. (Vengeance often ruled - the cities of refuge were established to be a sort of off limits to the avenger of blood until murder or accidental death could be determined.) THERE ARE WAYS WE MUST TREAT EACH OTHER IF WE BELONG

He shall remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest

- Num 35:25-28 ESV And the congregation shall rescue the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to his city of refuge to which he had fled, and **he shall live in it until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.** 26 But if the manslayer shall at any time go beyond the boundaries of his city of refuge to which he fled, 27 and the avenger of blood finds him outside the boundaries of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood. 28 For **he must remain in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest**, but after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.

36 The value of belonging to a family

The daughters of Zelophehad were those women whose father died and they asked Moses if they could own the land...

Family / clan identity

- Num 36:6-9 ESV This is what the LORD commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad: 'Let them marry whom they think best, **only they shall marry within the clan of the tribe of their father.** 7 The inheritance of the people of Israel shall not be transferred from one tribe to another, for every one of the people of Israel shall hold on to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. 8 And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the people of Israel shall be wife to one of the clan of the tribe of her father, so that every one of the people of Israel may possess the inheritance of his fathers. 9 So no inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another, for **each of the tribes of the people of Israel shall hold on to its own inheritance.**'"

You belong ---

Eph 3:14-15 ESV For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named

- You are part of your nuclear family (whatever the makeup of that family is)
- If God is your father, you are part of the great big family of God (millions of people)
 - Have you received Jesus?
- You are part of a local church family (or should be)
 - Relationships are essential for this...If you want friends - show yourself as friendly
 - Small groups will play a critical part in our future