### Joshua

## Chapter 22

1Then JoShua called the sons of ReuBen, the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh together 2and said to them:  
  
 ‘You’ve [obeyed] all that Moses (the servant of Jehovah) commanded you to do, and you’ve paid attention to everything that I told you about his instructions, 3for you haven’t deserted your brothers during all this time and you’ve followed the commandments of your God Jehovah.  
  
 4‘So, now that our God Jehovah has given our brothers [a place] where they can rest (as He promised), you can return to your land and to the homes that Moses gave to you on the other side the JorDan.  
  
 5‘However, be careful to obey the Commandments and the Law that Moses (the servant of Jehovah) gave you… Love Jehovah your God, walk in all His paths, keep His commandments, stick with Him and serve Him with your whole minds and souls.’  
  
6Then JoShua blessed them and dismissed them, and they returned to their homes.  
  
  
7Now, Moses had given a portion of the land of BaShan to half of the tribe of ManasSeh, and JoShua gave the other half a portion with their brothers on the west side of the JorDan... And when JoShua sent them home, he blessed them 8with much wealth; For he divided the loot that they’d plundered from their enemies among them and their brothers, which included great numbers of cattle, as well as silver, gold, iron, and clothing.  
  
9So at that, the sons of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh left the children of IsraEl in ShiLoh (in the land of CanaAn) and they headed towards GileAd and the land that they’d inherited at the command of Jehovah through Moses.  
  
  
10Then, when they got to GileAd near the JorDan (in the land of CanaAn), they built a huge altar there next to the JorDan. 11And when the [other] children of IsraEl heard about it, they said,  
  
 ‘Look! The sons of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh have built an altar at the border of the land of CanaAn – at GileAd next to the JorDan – directly across from [the rest] of the children of IsraEl!’  
  
12And as a result, they[, that is, the tribes west of the Jordan] all gathered at ShiLoh to go and fight against them.  
  
13But first, the children of IsraEl sent PhiNeas (son of EliEzer and grandson of Aaron the Priest) to talk to the sons of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh in the land of GileAd, 14along with 10 of the chiefs... One chief from each of the households of the rest of the tribes of IsraEl, who were generals over thousands in IsraEl.  
  
15So when they got to the sons of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh in the land of GileAd, they said:  
  
 16‘This is what the whole gathering of Jehovah wants to know:  
  
 ‘What is this sin that you’ve committed before the God of IsraEl by building yourselves an altar? Did you do this so that you could turn away from Him?  
  
 17‘Was the sin at PhoGor – from which we’ve yet to be cleansed – that insignificant to you, despite the fact that it brought a plague among the entire gathering of Jehovah?  
  
 18‘So, now that you’ve revolted against Jehovah, you’ll come to know the wrath of all IsraEl!  
  
 19‘If your land has become too small for you, then you should cross [the JorDan] and come into into the land that Jehovah [has given to us] and where the Tent of Jehovah stays, so you can receive an inheritance here among us... You must not turn away from God by building an altar apart from the Altar of Jehovah!  
  
 20‘For look! Didn’t Achar (son of ZaRa) sin by taking things that were cursed and bring the wrath [of God] on the whole gathering of IsraEl? And [remember] that he died for his sin!’  
  
21However, the sons of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh replied to the generals of the thousands of IsraEl:  
  
 22‘God – our God – is Jehovah.  
  
 ‘As God Himself knows, and as IsraEl knows; if we’ve broken away from Jehovah and become apostates, He won’t save us today.  
  
 23‘But we didn’t build an altar for ourselves to turn away from Him or to sacrifice whole burnt offerings or peace offerings on it (those things that Jehovah requires). 24Rather, we [built this Altar] as a testimony… We did it because we were afraid that sometime in the future, your sons might ask our sons what portion we have in Jehovah, the God of IsraEl!  
  
 25‘For now that Jehovah has set a boundary between you and us (the JorDan), we don’t want your sons to alienate our sons and keep them from worshiping Jehovah. 26So, this is why we gave orders to build this altar… Not for burnt offerings or for meat offerings, 27but as a witness between you and us and between our children, that we do serve Jehovah, and that we’ll sacrifice our burnt offerings, meat offerings, and peace offerings to Him.  
  
 ‘Then your sons won’t be able to say to our sons that we don’t [belong to] Jehovah.  
  
 28‘Therefore, it was in order to prevent them from ever saying such a thing to us and our descendants [that we want them to] see our representation of the altar of Jehovah. It wasn’t built for the sake of burnt offerings or meat offerings, but as a witness between you and us and between our sons.  
  
 29‘Far be it from us to turn away from Jehovah today by building an altar for burnt offerings or peace offerings separate from the Altar of Jehovah that stands before His Tent.’  
  
30And when PhiNeas the Priest and all the chiefs of the gathering of IsraEl that were with him heard what the children of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh said, they were pleased.  
  
31Then PhiNeas the Priest said:  
  
 ‘Today we know that Jehovah is with us, because you aren’t guilty of a serious sin against Jehovah and you’ve saved the children of IsraEl from the hand of Jehovah.’  
  
32So, PhiNeas (the Priest) and the leaders left the children of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh at GileAd and they all returned to the land of CanaAn, where they reported what was said to the children of IsraEl, 33and everyone was very pleased.  
  
Then they spoke to the children of IsraEl and praised them [for their zeal], and told them not to go to war against the children of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh, or to destroy their land… And they all agreed.  
  
34Thereafter, JoShua named the altar of the children of ReuBen, Gad, and the half tribe of ManasSeh, and said:  
  
 ‘It’s their testimony that Jehovah is their God.’