

Joshua 22 - Eastern Tribes Return to Their Lands; Conflict Over Unauthorized Altar

III. The conclusion of Joshua's ministry emphasizing conditions necessary for Israel to stay in the land (Joshua 22:1—24:33)

(1) Transjordan tribes build an altar while returning home (22:1-34)

III. The conclusion of Joshua's ministry emphasizing conditions necessary for Israel to stay in the land (Joshua 22:1—24:33)

The division of the land ended with the appointment of the Levitical cities (Joshua 13-21). The rest of the book deals with settlement in the land (Joshua 22-24). There emphasis in these chapters on the importance of remaining faithful to God (22:5,16,18-19,25,29,31; 23:6,8,11; 24:14-16,18,21,23-24). This emphasis grows out of the record of God's faithfulness, that 21:43-45 affirmed.

Each of the final three chapters describes a single event. At first glance, these events seem to be random: a dispute between the tribes about an altar, a farewell address, and another covenant ceremony. However, upon closer examination, they all focus on a single matter: the proper worship of God—how to offer it and what will happen if Israel does not do so.

Joshua 22

(1) Transjordan tribes build an altar while returning home (22:1-34)

1 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

1 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

1 Later, Joshua called together the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh

1 Then Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

2 and said to them, "You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have listened to my voice in all that I commanded you.

2 and said to them, "You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have listened to my voice in all that I commanded you.

2 and told them, "You have done everything that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and you have listened to me in everything that I commanded you.

2 And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you:

3 You have not abandoned your brothers these many days to this day, but have **fulfilled the obligation** of the commandment of the LORD your God.

3 You have not forsaken your brothers these many days to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God.

3 You haven't abandoned your relatives these past days to the present, and you have met the obligation contained in the commands of the LORD your God.

3 Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God.

- "...fulfilled the obligation" - Cf. 1:16-18

4 And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, as He spoke to them; therefore turn now and go to your tents, to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan.

4 And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, as He spoke to them; therefore turn now and go to your tents, to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan.

4 Now the LORD has given peace to your relatives, just as he told them. Therefore, proceed to your tents—to the land that is yours to possess—that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you east of the Jordan River.

4 And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan.

5 Only be very careful to follow the commandment and the Law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God and walk in all His ways, and keep His commandments and cling to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

5 Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

5 Only be very careful to keep the commands and the Law that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you—that is, to love the LORD your God, to follow in all of his ways, to

keep his commands, to stay close to him, and to serve him with all your heart and soul."

5 But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.

- Their obedience included complete devotion to Yahweh

6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

6 That's how Joshua blessed them. Then he sent them on their way and they returned to their tents.

6 So Joshua blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents.

7 Now to the one half-tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a *possession* in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua gave a *possession* among their brothers westward beyond the Jordan. So when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he also blessed them,

7 Now to the one half-tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a *possession* in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua gave a *possession* among their brothers westward beyond the Jordan. So when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them,

7 Now Moses had made an allotment in Bashan to one half-tribe of Manasseh, but Joshua made an allotment west of the Jordan River to the other half-tribe of their relatives. So when Joshua sent them on their way back to their tents, he also blessed them by saying

7 Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possession in Bashan: but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them,

8 and said to them, "Return to your tents with great riches and with very many livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, iron, and with very many clothes; divide the spoils of your enemies with your brothers."

8 and said to them, "Return to your tents with great riches and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, iron, and with very many clothes; divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers."

8 "Return to your tents with great wealth, plenty of livestock, silver, gold, bronze, iron, and lots of clothing. Divide the spoil from your enemies among your relatives."

8 And he spake unto them, saying, Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.

9 So the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned *home*, leaving the sons of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the **land of Canaan**, to go to the **land of Gilead**, to the land of their possession in which they had settled, in accordance with the command of the LORD through Moses.

9 The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned *home* and departed from the sons of Israel at Shiloh which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, to the land of their possession which they had possessed, according to the command of the LORD through Moses.

9 The descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh went back to the land of Gilead, leaving the Israelis at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, for their territorial possession that they had inherited in accordance with the command of the LORD given through Moses.

9 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

- "...land of Canaan" - the land west of the Jordan

- "...land of Gilead" - the land east of the Jordan

10 When they came to the region of the Jordan which is in the land of Canaan, the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan, a large altar in appearance.

10 When they came to the region of the Jordan which is in the land of Canaan, the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan, a large altar in appearance.

10 After they arrived at an area of the Jordan River that is in the land of Canaan, the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh constructed an altar there by the Jordan River, and it was very large.

10 And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

- These tribes intended the altar they built to be a replica of the brazen altar in the tabernacle courtyard at Shiloh (Cf. v28)

— This was the reason the other tribes reacted so violently (v12), since they perceived it to be an idol, or at the least, an unauthorized altar for unauthorized worship

— God prohibited building altars apart from the ones He ordained (Deut 12:10-14)

— The Canaanites built many altars, but this was not to be Israel's practice

11 But the sons of Israel heard a report: "Behold, the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan, on the side *belonging to* the sons of Israel."

11 And the sons of Israel heard *it* said, "Behold, the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan, on the side *belonging to* the sons of Israel."

11 When the Israelis heard about it, they announced, "Look here, the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have constructed an altar in Canaan's frontier district of the Jordan River, on the side apportioned to the Israelis."

11 And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel.

12 And when the sons of Israel heard *about it*, the entire congregation of the sons of Israel assembled at Shiloh to go up against them in battle.

12 When the sons of Israel heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the sons of Israel gathered themselves at Shiloh to go up against them in war.

12 When the Israelis heard that announcement, the entire community of the Israelis gathered together at Shiloh in preparation for war.

12 And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.

13 Then the sons of Israel sent to the sons of Reuben, to the sons of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, **Phinehas** the son of Eleazar the priest,

13 Then the sons of Israel sent to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest,

13 Then the Israelis sent a delegation to the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead. They sent Eleazar's son Phinehas the priest,

13 And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest,

- Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed; they sent a delegation to discuss the matter rather than shooting first and asking questions later

- "...Phinehas" - his presence would have impressed the two-and-a-half tribes of the importance of the delegation and seriousness of the matter

— Phinehas was prominent in the war with the Midianites (Num 25; 31)

14 and with him ten leaders, one leader for each father's household from each of the tribes of Israel; and each one of them *was* the head of his father's household among the thousands of Israel.

14 and with him ten chiefs, one chief for each father's household from each of the tribes of Israel; and each one of them *was* the head of his father's household among the thousands of Israel.

14 and ten officials with him (one for each of the tribal families of Israel, each one of them a family leader among the tribes of Israel).

14 And with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

15 They came to the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying,

15 They came to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them saying,

15 They approached the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead and told them:

15 And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying,

16 "This is what the whole congregation of the LORD says: 'What is this unfaithful act which you have committed against the God of Israel, turning away from following the LORD this day, by building yourselves an altar, to rebel against the LORD this day?

16 "Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, 'What is this unfaithful act which you have committed against the God of Israel, turning away from following the LORD this day, by building yourselves an altar, to rebel against the LORD this day?

16 "This is what the entire community of the LORD has to say: 'What is this treacherous act by which you have acted deceitfully against the God of Israel by turning away from following the LORD today, and by building yourselves an altar today, so you can rebel against the LORD?

16 Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD?

17 Is the **wrongdoing of Peor** not enough for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves to this day, although a plague came on the congregation of the LORD,

17 Is not the iniquity of Peor enough for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves to this day, although a plague came on the congregation of the LORD,

17 Isn't the evil that happened at Peor enough for us, from which we have yet to be completely cleansed even to this point, and because of which a plague came upon the community of the LORD?

17 Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

- "...wrongdoing of Peor" - they compared the altar to the Israelite idolatry at Peor, which brought God's punishment through a plague (Num 25:1-9)

18 that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? If you rebel against the LORD today, He will be angry with the entire congregation of Israel tomorrow.

18 that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? If you rebel against the LORD today, He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel tomorrow.

18 Now then, are you turning away from following the LORD today? If you rebel against the LORD today, by tomorrow he will be angry with the entire community of Israel.

18 But that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the LORD, that to morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

19 If, however, the land of your possession is unclean, then cross into the land of the possession of the LORD, where the LORD'S tabernacle stands, and settle among us. Only do not rebel against the LORD, or rebel against us, by building an altar for yourselves besides the altar of the LORD our God.

19 If, however, the land of your possession is unclean, then cross into the land of the possession of the LORD, where the LORD's tabernacle stands, and take possession among us. Only do not rebel against the LORD, or rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves, besides the altar of the LORD our God.

19 If the land of your inheritance remains unclean, then cross back over into the land that the LORD possesses, and receive an inheritance among us. Don't rebel against the LORD and against us by constructing an altar for yourselves besides the altar of the LORD our God.

19 Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our God.

20 Did Achan the son of Zerah not act unfaithfully in the things designated for destruction, and wrath fall on the entire congregation of Israel? So that man did not perish alone in his guilt."

20 Did not Achan the son of Zerah act unfaithfully in the things under the ban, and wrath fall on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity."

20 Didn't Zerah's son Achan act treacherously with respect to the things banned by God, and as a result God became angry at the entire community of Israel? And that man was not the only one to die because of his iniquity!"

20 Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

- The delegation also mentioned the event with Achan to warn the Transjordan tribes that God would punish disobedience to the Law

— Achan chose treasures over obeying God's commands and brought about Israel's defeat in battle and death (7:19-26)

— The western tribes believed that the entire nation would experience God's discipline if this act of rebellion went unpunished

21 Then the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered and spoke to the heads of the families of Israel.

21 Then the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered and spoke to the heads of the families of Israel.

21 The descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered the officials of the tribes of Israel,

21 Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel,

22 **"The Mighty One, God, the LORD, the Mighty One, God, the LORD!** He knows, and may Israel itself know. If *it was* in rebellion, or if in an unfaithful act against the LORD, do not save us this day!

22 **"The Mighty One, God, the LORD, the Mighty One, God, the LORD!** He knows, and may Israel itself know. If *it was* in rebellion, or if in an unfaithful act against the LORD do not save us this day!

22 **"The God of gods, the LORD, the God of gods, the LORD is the one who knows!** And may Israel itself be aware that if this was an act of rebellion or an act of treachery against the LORD, may he not deliver us today!

22 The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day,)

- "The Mighty One, God, the LORD, the Mighty One, God, the LORD!" - *él élōhîm Yehōva él élōhîm Yehōva*

— *él*, the Mighty One

— *élōhîm*, the Supreme Being to be feared

— *Yehōva*, the truly existing One, the covenant God

23 If we have built us an altar to turn away from following the LORD, or if to offer a burnt offering or grain offering on it, or if to offer sacrifices of peace offerings on it, may the LORD Himself demand it.

23 If we have built us an altar to turn away from following the LORD, or if to offer a burnt offering or grain offering on it, or if to offer sacrifices of peace offerings on it, may the LORD Himself require it.

23 If we have built an altar for ourselves intended to turn us away from following the LORD, or to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, or peace offerings on it, may the LORD himself demand an accounting from us!

23 That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the LORD himself require it;

24 But truly we have done this out of concern, for a reason, saying, 'In time to come your sons may say to our sons, "What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?

24 But truly we have done this out of concern, for a reason, saying, 'In time to come your sons may say to our sons, "What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?

24 But we did this because we were concerned for a reason, since we thought, 'Sometime in the future your descendants may say to our descendants, "What do you have in common with the LORD, the God of Israel?

24 And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel?

- The Transjordan tribes explained that their motive was not to use the altar to promote departure from Yahweh or the tabernacle, but to memorialize the unity of the 12 tribes for future generations

— The altar was to serve as a witness of their loyal relationship with the tribes in Canaan so their place as part of God's people would not be disputed

— The Israelites had erected other memorials for this purpose (in the Jordan River, at Gilgal, Joshua 4; on Mt Ebal, 8:30-35)

— However, God had not ordered the building of this altar, as He had other monuments; He had also made provision for maintaining unity by calling back all the males to the

tabernacle three times per year

25 For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between us and you, *you* sons of Reuben and sons of Gad; you have no portion in the LORD." So your sons may make our sons stop fearing the LORD.'

25 For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between us and you, *you* sons of Reuben and sons of Gad; you have no portion in the LORD." So your sons may make our sons stop fearing the LORD.'

25 The LORD has established the Jordan River to be a territorial border between us and you. Descendants of Reuben and descendants of Gad have no allotment from the LORD." So your descendants may cause our descendants to stop fearing the LORD.'

25 For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the LORD: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD.

26 "Therefore we said, 'Let's build an altar, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice;

26 "Therefore we said, 'Let us build an altar, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice;

26 "That's why we said, 'Let's build an altar for ourselves, not for burnt offerings or sacrifice,

26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice:

27 rather, it *shall be* a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings, so that your sons will not say to our sons in time to come, "You have no portion in the LORD."

27 rather it shall be a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that your sons will not say to our sons in time to come, "You have no portion in the LORD."

27 but instead it will serve as a reminder between us and you and between our generations after us, that we are to serve the LORD with our burnt offerings, sacrifices, and peace offerings. That way your descendants will not say to our descendants in the future, "You have no allotment from the LORD."

27 But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

28 Therefore we said, 'It shall also come about if they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, then we shall say, "See the copy of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice; rather, it is a witness between us and you."'

28 Therefore we said, 'It shall also come about if they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, then we shall say, "See the copy of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice; rather it is a witness between us and you."'

28 "That's also why we said, 'It may be if they say these things to us and to our descendants in the future, so we will respond, "Look at this replica of the altar of the LORD that our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings or sacrifice, but rather as a reminder between us and you.

28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you.

29 Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD and turn away from following the LORD this day, by building an altar for burnt offering, for grain offering, or for sacrifice, besides the altar of the LORD our God which is before His tabernacle."

29 Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD and turn away from following the LORD this day, by building an altar for burnt offering, for grain offering or for sacrifice, besides the altar of the LORD our God which is before His tabernacle."

29 May we never rebel against the LORD today by building an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifice to replace the altar of the LORD our God which stands before his Tent."'"

29 God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.

30 So when Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the congregation, that is, the heads of the families of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words which the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the sons of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them.

30 So when Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the congregation, even the heads of the families of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words which the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the sons of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them.

30 When Phinehas the priest, the leaders of the community, and the heads of the families of Israel who were with him heard what the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the descendants of Manasseh said, they were pleased.

30 And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them.

- The explanation satisfied Phinehas and the delegation; they were glad that their brethren were not apostatizing, and that the nation would not fall under God's discipline

— The delegation allowed the altar to remain in place, apparently believing that it would do more good than harm

31 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and to the sons of Manasseh, "Today we know that the LORD is in our midst, because you have not committed this unfaithful act against the LORD; now you have saved the sons of Israel from the hand of the LORD."

31 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Manasseh, "Today we know that the LORD is in our midst, because you have not committed this unfaithful act against the LORD; now you have delivered the sons of Israel from the hand of the LORD."

31 So Eleazar's son Phinehas the priest replied to the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the descendants of Manasseh, "Today we've demonstrated that the LORD is among us, because you have not acted treacherously against the LORD. Now you have delivered the Israelis from the anger of the LORD."

31 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.

What kind of 'witness' (Cf. v34) was this huge pile of stones? Was it a witness to the unity of the nation and to the obedience of the Trans-jordanic tribes? No, it was a witness to *expediency*, the wisdom of man in trying to enjoy 'the best of both worlds.' The two and a half tribes talked piously about their children, but it was their wealth that really motivated their decision to live east of the Jordan.

This incident illustrates the fact that, sometimes, action taken with the best of motives and for worthy purposes, can result in *worse* rather than better conditions. This can be the outcome if people do not clearly understand and carefully obey the *whole revealed will of God*. This kind of mistake often results from enthusiasm over a previous blessing, as was true here.

32 Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders returned from the sons of Reuben and from the sons of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the

sons of Israel, and brought back word to them.

32 Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders returned from the sons of Reuben and from the sons of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the sons of Israel, and brought back word to them.

32 So Eleazar's son Phinehas the priest and the leaders returned from the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan and to the people of Israel, bringing back word to them.

32 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again.

33 The word pleased the sons of Israel, and the sons of Israel blessed God; and they did not speak of going up against them in battle to destroy the land in which the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad were living.

33 The word pleased the sons of Israel, and the sons of Israel blessed God; and they did not speak of going up against them in war to destroy the land in which the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad were living.

33 What they said pleased the people of Israel, so they blessed God and said no more about going up to attack them in war and to destroy the land where the descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad were living.

33 And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

34 And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar *Witness*; "For," they said, "it is a witness between us that the LORD is God."

34 The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar *Witness*; "For," they said, "it is a witness between us that the LORD is God."

34 The descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad named the altar "Witness," because they claimed, "It stands as a witness between us that the LORD is God."

34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God.