

*1 Then Joshua summoned 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. 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. **Faithful men, listened to Moses & Joshua not run in time of war 1cor4:2 moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful.** 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. 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." 6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to 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 blessed them, 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." 9 And 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.*

After conquering the land soldiers dismissed & those E side Jordan river had fulfilled word to Moses, now go back w/ families to enjoy land given to them—faithful men. Promised Moses **Nu 32:32**; renewed to Joshua **1:16**
Pr 28:20 A faithful man will abound with blessings....25:19 Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.

Work of God and welfare of people higher priority than comfort & affections of home. Serving Christ is highest calling in life for as & until w/ Him.

Dismissed before or after division 6-7yrs ? Not needed after conquest.
 Concern for family & desire to return second to commitment to God's call.
 Don't know if men able go for short visit then back to battle or boys who

came of age (20 yrs Nu1:3) during 6-7 yr warfare sent as replacements-- 40,000 troops from E side. We to stay in battle til God calls us home.

Unity of Israelites was solid, tho 21/2 tribes separated on E side of Jordan River & 91/2 tribes on other side. **Japan--International conf.**

Notice those inherited land first & crossed over to battle & were last to enjoy their possession :4 **last first & first last** But they returned w/ riches, plunder from the enemies :8 **to your tents** could be mansions but Joshua calls them tents, temporary dwelling. As Paul **2 Cor 5:1 For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

:5 Joshua gave spiritual instruction not **How to succeed in business** or **How to win friends and influence people** or **How to be more effective in life & at work** or **Be the best you can be #1 LOVE YOURSELF. This is the first & one of the most important aspects of becoming the best version of yourself, to appreciate & love yourself** Joshua knew if you **seek first the K of G He will add all things.** Keep His word in good times & bad--hold on to Him & serve others.

They were sent off w/ blessing :6 especially Manasseh, close family ties— Joshua an Ephraimite--same family Joseph the father E/M--Joshua gave extra blessing. Return home to domestic life—can be difficult from battle field to plowing a field--routine married life. But home is the place God calls them back to. Sometimes absence takes a toll—**Pr 27:8 As a bird that wanders from her nest, So is a man that wanders from his nest/home.**

10 And 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. 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." 12 And

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. **Assumption they have nefarious motives-by presumption comes nothing but strife pr 13:10** 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, 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. **Official but intimidating** 15 And 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, 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? 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, 18 that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? And it will come about if you rebel against the LORD today, that He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel tomorrow. **Accusatory w/o knowledge or evidence--Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.1Cor 13:7** 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.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.'" **Good will appeal to repent and come over to our side**

The altar on the boarder of Jordan was a witness as to who they were-Israelites, servants of Jehovah, but misinterpreted by their brethren. To them it like Gilgal stones, to reminder & connection to the tribes W of Jordan in things of Lord. We can do a thing innocently but not prudently which can have a negative effect on others and give offense. **Wisdom in multitude of counselors Israel near-beer**. Like Peter-impetuous-it was not held against them **God does, & men should, overlook the weakness of honest zeal**.

Other tribes ready to act for God's sake & His honor, even tho against family-God commanded offering at Shiloh Dt 12:5-7 & 9 1/2 tribes willing to enforce against brothers. From appearances it looked like an altar for

worship (**Jeroboam**) *By presumption comes nothing but strife* Confusion on both sides could end badly—but *come let us reason together says the Lord*. God is a jealous God so should we be for the things of God. So many churches are biting the dust endorsing what is called Indecent, shameful, deformity Rm1:27 to God the gay agenda, transgender.

Takes courage to stand for biblical principles even when family is on opposite side. Here willing to take up arms so fellow countrymen not pollute whole—must cut off infected limb that it not destroy whole body. Corruption of doctrine needs immediate attention before it becomes non-Christian cult.

Prudently they send ambassadors, respected man from each tribe
Phinehas at the head to find out what is going on

Much division & strife can be avoided when parties come together for a meeting of the minds to settle issues. Some people cheat--others are simply unwise and innocently reckless.

Accusation Peor-Phinehas head & hero **Nu 25:7** of the incident--24,000 died & some *not cleanse to this day*--still cling to in mind. Good to give examples of what sin does & consequences as reminder today.

So the construction of another altar is a temptation to those not thoroughly cleansed. Plus the whole nation at risk--example of Achan—sin in the camp and defeat at Ai. So to make peace willing to have them resettle close to Shiloh if thought land unclean where they were and needed an altar.

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. 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 Thou save us this day! 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. **We accept an deserve punishment & God's wrath if we've purposed this against the Lord** 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? **Next generation could disown our sons because we don't live on W side** 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**.' **If there is bad blood from your sons it could discourage our sons from fearing the Lord** 26 "Therefore we said, 'Let us build an altar, not for burnt offering or 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, and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, that your sons may not say to our sons in time to come, "You have no portion in the **LORD**." ' **Instead of an altar that separates it an altar to unite sons to sons** 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." ' **A witness, memorial, Statue of Liberty, Declaration of Independence, Constitution to say we are one** 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." **Never would we violate God's command for worship and sacrifice**

When misunderstood & accused of wrong, **a soft answer turns away wrath**, not retaliation, or eye for eye, fight w/ fire, **Jesus when reviled did not revile in return but kept entrusting Himself..1Pet 2:23**

They explained themselves, why the altar... **'come let us reason together...**

Did not use the Lord's name in vain¹⁶ x's but meant what they said which brought reconciliation. Giving glory to God was not a smoke screen to hid wickedness. God knows if we are true or not. Those who are true first approve themselves to God if He approves me. Told why it was built not in competition to Shiloh but as a symbol & representation of their dedication and communion w/ Nation on W and dedication to altar of God at Shiloh.

Plus fear their children's children be looked upon as aliens and strangers to Israel, so here a memorial and reminder. Plus that generation prone to forget the fear of the Lord so altar to keep them in remembrance & recognize their right to the original in Shiloh

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. No prejudice but open mind 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." We know by experience, sensing & discerning the presence of the Lord 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. Cautious anticipation—war or peace 33 And 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. Sigh of relief, good news, hearts full of peace & joy at news 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." Their motive all along but w/ rough beginnings

Grace & cool heads prevailed *Ja 3:16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. 18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

Satisfied w/ their answer & not the opposite of those w/ a suspicious & perverse minds who make unjust accusations & stick by them to the end not accepting a reasonable & honest explanation being unwilling to take back their unfair opinion.

