

Joshua Lesson #16, Chapter 22

So the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it. And the Lord gave them rest on every side, according to all He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them: the Lord gave all their enemies into their hands (Josh. 21:43-44). At long last, the major battles for settling the land were over. In Chapter 22 we read about the 2 ½ tribes being released from their promise to help the other tribes conquer the land.

1. In Chapter 22 Joshua releases the 2 ½ tribes from their promise to help their brothers possess the land. What was his commendation to them (verses 2-3)? What charge did he give them (verse 4)?

2. What 6 exhortations does Joshua urge the 2 ½ tribes to do in verse 5?

3. Look back over the list of exhortations from the question above. Those commands are for us too. Are you *careful* to do them? How can you grow in your obedience, love, fellowship and service to the Lord? What busyness needs to be cut out of your life in order for you to be more careful about these things? If something needs to go in order to make God the priority, make the changes necessary and be blessed by obedience.

4. As the 2 ½ tribes return to their homes and families, what are they returning with (verses 7-8)?

5. Notice in verse 8 Joshua tells the fighting men to *divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers*. What does this tell you about the importance of those on the home front? See also Deut. 20:5-8 for clues as to who “the brothers” were who stayed home.

6. As the 2 ½ tribes prepare to cross back over the Jordan to their own territory, what do they do in verse 10? Where is it and what is its physical description?

7. Their actions cause an immediate reaction from the other tribes. What are the other tribes prepared to do? Why? See Lev. 17:8-9 and Deut. 13:12-16.

8. In verses 13-14 who is sent to visit the 2 ½ tribes?

9. How does the delegation from Canaan view the altar built by the 2 ½ tribes (verses 15-20)?

10. What examples of unfaithfulness do they link this act with (verses 17, 20)? See Num. 25:1-9 and Josh. 7 for the background of these examples. In light of Num. 25:1-9, what do you learn about Phinehas?

11. What is the delegation afraid might happen with the building of the altar by the 2 ½ tribes (verses 18, 20)?

12. What generous conciliatory offer did the delegation propose (verse 19)?

13. What do the 2 ½ tribes have to say and to whom do they appeal concerning their innocence (verses 21-23)?

14. What reason(s) do they give for building the altar (verses 24-29)?

15. Eager Beaver: What command did God give in Ex. 23:17 that would be another factor in maintaining the kinship between the Israelites on both sides of the Jordan river?

16. The Israelites reacted quickly and decisively against the 2 ½ tribes when they believed them to be unfaithful to the Lord. They were ready to go to war against their brothers because of the apparent sin of the 2 ½ tribes. While it is commendable that they wanted to deal quickly with this sin, they moved so quickly that they didn't gather all the facts. Imagine what the outcome would have been if the delegation hadn't taken the time to ask a few questions! Even in dealing with sin, there is wisdom in gathering all the facts. What do the Scriptures have to say about acting rashly? See Prov. 14:16-18, 29; 16:32; 25:8; James 1:19; 3:17-18.

17. How often do you react to what you see and think you know, only to later discover the true facts? What relationships have been damaged or strained because you reacted before getting all the details first? What are some steps you can take to prevent more rash acts based upon the verses we looked at in question #15?

18. The 2 ½ tribes respond commendably to the false accusations of their brother tribes, seeking only to explain their actions. They didn't respond with anger or hurl accusations back. How do you respond to loving confrontation or admonishment, even if you are wrongly accused? What example does Jesus set for us in 1 Pet. 2:21-24?

19. What is the response of the 9 ½ tribes after hearing the 2 ½ tribes' reason for building the altar (verse 30)?

20. How was this peaceful resolution an indication that *the Lord is in our midst* (verse 31)?

21. The 9 ½ tribes are to be commended for the zeal and fear of displeasing God, so much so that they would go to war against their brothers. How can their example be a model for you to follow in rebuking someone for sin?

22. Summarize the reasons given in this chapter why the 2 ½ tribes wanted to build the altar.

23. The 2 ½ tribes were active in making sure that they would be considered part of the nation of Israel in the years to come. They didn't want their future family members to be cut off from the covenant relationship with God because of distance and time. They were self-accountable to the rest of the nation. This pleasing attitude is necessary for us today when we place ourselves under the leadership of a local church and become part of a local body. What are some ways you can be *self-accountable* to others at church so that you will continue to be considered part of the "family?"

24. The actions of both sets of Israelites are to be commended in this chapter. Both had honorable motives and actions. What was most encouraging or convicting for you to read and study about this week?