

JOSHUA 22



WHEN

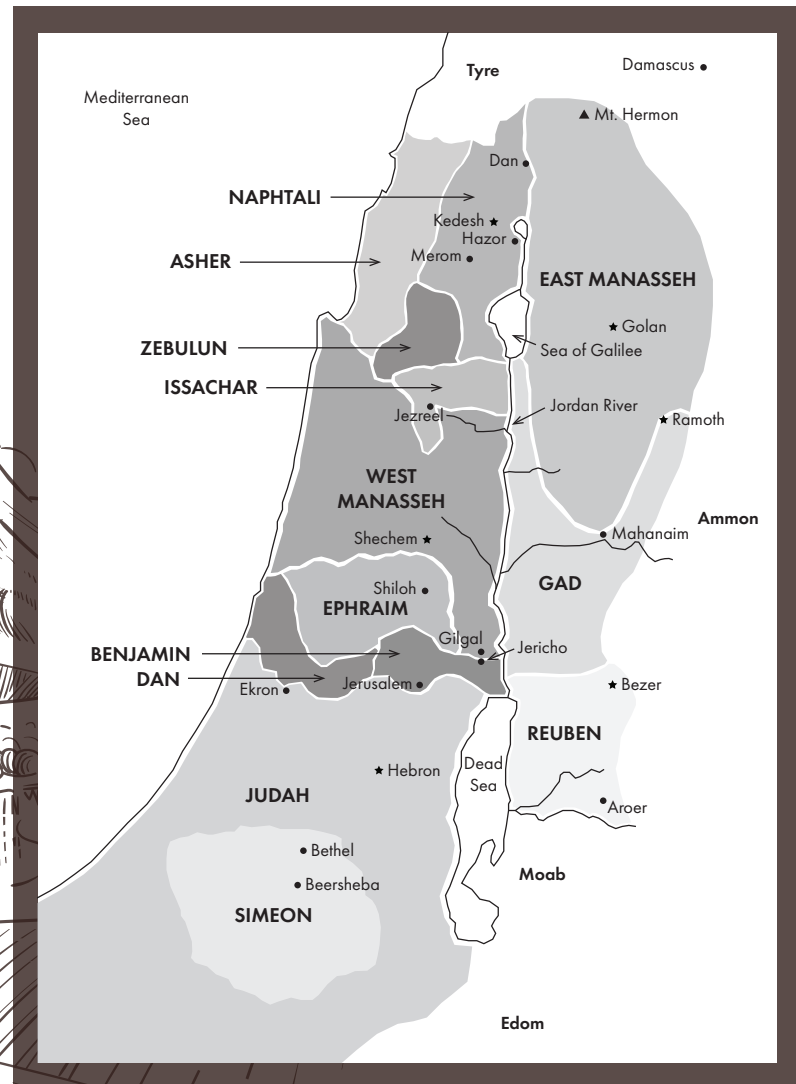
- Israel's conquest of the Promised Land began around 1450 B.C. and lasted approximately 5-7 years.
- The events of Joshua 22 took place at the very end of the conquest period.

CHARACTERS

- **Joshua** – The leader of the Israelites.
- **Eleazar** – The High Priest of Israel. He was the son of Aaron and nephew of Moses.
- **Phinehas** – The son of Eleazar. He served the Lord as a priest.
- **Reuben, Gad, and Half of Manasseh** – These 2 ½ tribes were unique in that they received a land inheritance on the east side of the Jordan River.

WHERE

- Joshua and the Israelites were camped at Shiloh (22:9).
- Joshua 22 centers around the tribes who lived on the east side of the Jordan River, Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.





OUTLINE

- REUBEN, GAD, AND HALF OF MANASSEH RETURN TO THE EAST (22:1-9):
 - + Moses gave the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh land on the east side of the Jordan River, but it was with the stipulation they help their fellow countrymen fight for the land west of the river (Num 32).
 - + In Joshua 22, Joshua acknowledged that the 2 ½ tribes had kept their word and fulfilled Moses' instructions.
 - + Joshua gave them leave from their military service and sent them to settle in their land.
 - + Before they left, Joshua reminded them to serve God with all their heart and soul.
- CONTROVERSY AND CONFUSION SURROUNDING THE ALTAR OF WITNESS (22:10-34):
 - + When the 2 ½ tribes crossed the Jordan, they constructed an altar of "imposing size" by the river.
 - + When the other tribes heard about the altar, they gathered in Shiloh to declare war on the 2 ½ tribes, assuming the altar was a place of pagan worship.
 - + They met with the 2 ½ tribes and accused them of a breach of faith and rebellion against the Lord.
 - + They compared their actions to the sins of Balaam (Num 25; 31:16) and Achan (Jos 7), two notorious figures who brought God's judgment on the camp of Israel.
 - + When the leaders of the 2 ½ tribes heard the accusations of their countrymen, they immediately attempted to clarify the situation.
 - + They told their accusers the altar they constructed near the Jordan River was never intended for sacrifices nor to replace the altar at the Tabernacle.
 - + Their altar was designed as a memorial, an altar of witness, to remind all the tribes of Israel that, although they lived east of Jordan, they were just as much a part of God's covenant as the tribes who lived on the west side.
 - + They feared the tribes in the west would one day try to ostracize them from Tabernacle worship, and the altar was meant to be a declaration to them and their children that they had always been united in the worship of the God of Israel.
 - + When Phinehas and the chiefs of Israel heard the explanation of the 2 ½ tribes, they called off the war and blessed the 2 ½ tribes.
 - + Phinehas and his men returned to the people at Shiloh, explained the situation to them, and the people gave thanks to God.

APPLICATION

- Let actions follow understanding.
- Be careful about assuming the motives of others when you aren't informed about their perspective.
- Assuming people's motives can destroy friendships, ruin unity, and crumble churches.
- There is a reason Jesus commanded us to talk one-on-one with people who have sin against us, or who we assume have sinned against us (Mat 18:15-20).
- A lot of problems in the church would be resolved if people assumed less and communicated more.

