

Dr. David Howard, Joshua - Ruth, Session 20, Joshua 22 – Farewell to Trans-Jordan Tribes Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 20, Joshua 22 – Farewell to Trans-Jordan Tribes, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. David Howard's lecture analyzes Joshua 22, focusing on the **Transjordan tribes' farewell** and subsequent **altar construction incident**. The lecture **interprets the altar** not as an act of rebellion, but as a **gesture to maintain unity** between the tribes east and west of the Jordan River, emphasizing their shared faith and covenant. The **narrator highlights the theme of obedience**, contrasting the Transjordan tribes' faithfulness with past instances of disobedience, such as Achan's sin. Ultimately, the **lecture resolves the apparent conflict**, showcasing the tribes' commitment to their covenant and their successful reconciliation.

2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 20 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Historical Books → Joshua-Ruth).



**Howard_Josh_Ruth
_Session20.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 20, Joshua 22 – Farewell to Trans-Jordan Tribes

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Howard_Josh_Ruth_EN_Session20_Josh22.pdf":

Briefing Document: Joshua 22 - Farewell to the Transjordan Tribes

Overview:

This document analyzes Dr. David Howard's lecture on Joshua chapter 22, focusing on the farewell address to the Transjordan tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh) and the subsequent conflict over the altar they build. Howard uses this passage to explore themes of obedience, unity, and the potential for division within the covenant community.

Main Themes and Key Ideas:

1. Joshua's Farewell Addresses:

- Joshua's farewells are structured across the final three chapters of the book of Joshua (22-24), culminating in his death and the title "Servant of the Lord."
- Chapter 22 focuses on the Transjordan tribes, while chapters 23 and 24 address the entire nation. These addresses involve blessings, urging obedience, warnings about disobedience, reviewing God's faithfulness, and reaffirming the covenant.
- Quote: *"In three separate addresses, he blesses the people. He urges them to follow the Lord. He warns them of the consequences of disobedience. He reviews God's faithfulness to them and challenges them to follow. He reaffirmed the covenant with them."*

1. The Transjordan Tribes' Obedience:

- The Transjordan tribes initially demonstrate remarkable faithfulness by fulfilling their commitment to fight alongside the other tribes and assist in the conquest of Canaan.
- Joshua acknowledges their obedience, highlighting the positive example they set.
- Quote: *"You have kept all that Moses, the servant of the Lord commanded you and obeyed my voice and all that commanded you. You've not forsaken your brothers."*

- This initial obedience contrasts with the subsequent conflict regarding the altar.

1. The Cis-Jordan vs. Transjordan Divide:

- Howard points out the distinction between "Cis-Jordan" (west of the Jordan) and "Trans-Jordan" (east of the Jordan) tribes. While all are part of Israel, this geographical distinction becomes a point of tension.
- The text refers to only the tribes west of the Jordan as "the people of Israel" in chapter 22, illustrating the potential for a perceived separation.
- Quote: *"But the text through this chapter calls only the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan, the people of Israel. And it kind of illustrates the potential divide between those to the west and those to the east."*

1. The Altar Incident:

- The Transjordan tribes, after returning home, build a large altar near the Jordan River on the Cis-Jordan side.
- This act is immediately perceived by the other tribes as rebellion and a breach of faith, reminiscent of Achan's sin and the incident at Peor.
- The Cis-Jordan tribes gather at Shiloh to prepare for war, indicating the seriousness of the perceived transgression.
- Quote: *"The building of an altar in rebellion against them... Haven't we had enough of the sin of Peor...did not Achan the son of Zabdi break faith?"*

1. The Transjordan Tribes' Explanation:

- The Transjordan tribes respond by emphasizing their devotion to the true God using an unusual stacking of names of God.
- They explain that their reason for building the altar was to create a witness to their unity with the rest of Israel, preventing future generations from regarding them as separate.
- The altar was not intended for sacrifices but as a symbolic representation of their shared faith and connection to the Tabernacle.
- Quote: *"No, we did it out of fear that in time to come, your children might say to our children, what do you have to do with the Lord out of Israel? Because the Lord has made the Jordan a boundary between us."*

1. Resolution and Reconciliation:

- The explanation offered by the Transjordan tribes is accepted by the leaders of the other tribes.
- The conflict is resolved, and the unity of Israel is restored.
- The altar is renamed "Witness," symbolizing their commitment to each other and the Lord.
- Quote: *"Today we know, verse 31, we know that the Lord is in our midst because you have not, you have not committed this breach of faith against the Lord."*
- The story ends with a sense of restored unity and the continued blessing of God.

1. Communion Connection (Incidental Story):

- Howard shares a personal story about using the passage to connect the unity of the tribes with the idea of unity in the church when administering communion.
- He highlights Paul's emphasis on unity in 1 Corinthians when dealing with communion.

Key Takeaways:

- The chapter showcases the importance of obedience and faithfulness to God and the covenant community.
- It also emphasizes that appearances can be deceiving, and it's important to seek clarification and understanding before making judgments.
- The story warns of the dangers of division and highlights the necessity of maintaining unity within a community of faith, even in the face of geographical and cultural differences.
- The resolution of the conflict demonstrates the value of communication and reconciliation.
- The story serves as a reminder that true unity comes from shared faith, commitment, and understanding, not just physical proximity.

Conclusion:

Joshua 22 is a crucial chapter in the book of Joshua, not just because it marks the farewell to the Transjordan tribes, but also because it highlights the complexities of maintaining unity within a covenant community and the vital importance of reconciliation. It underscores the need for open communication, understanding, and shared commitment to God to overcome potential divisions.

4. Study Guide: Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 20, Joshua 22 – Farewell to Trans-Jordan Tribes

Joshua: Farewell Addresses and the Transjordan Tribes Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What are the three farewells Joshua gives in the final chapters of the book, and where do they take place?
2. What is the significance of Joshua being called “Servant of the Lord” at the end of the book?
3. What initial concern did Moses have about the Transjordan tribes settling east of the Jordan River?
4. How does the text differentiate between “Israel” and the Transjordan tribes in chapter 22, and why is this significant?
5. What prompts the people of Israel to gather at Shiloh, prepared to make war against the Transjordan tribes?
6. What specific past sins do the tribes west of the Jordan accuse the Transjordan tribes of potentially repeating?
7. What is the significance of the Transjordan tribes’ use of God’s names when they respond to the accusations?
8. Why did the Transjordan tribes build the altar near the Jordan River, according to their explanation?
9. What was the purpose of the altar built by the Transjordan tribes, according to their explanation, and why was it not for sacrifice?
10. How does the conflict between the Transjordan tribes and the rest of Israel end?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Joshua gives three farewells: first to the Transjordan tribes in chapter 22, then to the entire nation at Shiloh in chapter 23, and again to the nation at Shechem in chapter 24. These farewells mark the end of Joshua's leadership and are meant to ensure continued faith and obedience to God.

2. The title "Servant of the Lord" is a significant marker for Joshua because, despite his important role as Moses's successor, he only receives this designation at the very end of the book, signifying the culmination of his faithful service to God and the nation.
3. Moses was initially angry with the Transjordan tribes for wanting to settle east of the Jordan because he thought they were trying to avoid participating in the upcoming battles for the rest of the land of Canaan.
4. The text uses the term "people of Israel" in chapter 22 to refer only to the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan, emphasizing the potential divide between these tribes and those on the east side of the river. This distinction is significant as it highlights the tension that could lead to disunity and separation.
5. The tribes of Israel gathered at Shiloh, prepared to make war against the Transjordan tribes, because they heard the Transjordan tribes had built an altar near the Jordan River, which they viewed as an act of rebellion and apostasy.
6. The tribes west of the Jordan accuse the Transjordan tribes of potentially repeating the sins of Peor, where the Israelites were enticed into idolatry and whoredom, and of Achan's sin, which brought divine wrath on Israel for breaking faith with God.
7. The Transjordan tribes' use of a large number of names of God is a deliberate act to emphasize their fidelity to Yahweh and to assure the rest of Israel that they worship the same God. They use the names to emphasize their commitment to the covenant.
8. The Transjordan tribes built the altar near the Jordan out of concern that their descendants would become separated from the rest of Israel over time due to the geographical boundary of the river and might be forgotten or rejected.
9. The altar built by the Transjordan tribes was not for sacrifice but rather to serve as a witness, a visible symbol of their connection and unity with the tribes west of the Jordan and their commitment to their shared history, traditions, and covenant with God.
10. The conflict ends when the Transjordan tribes explain their true intentions to the rest of Israel, and the rest of Israel accepts that the altar was not built as an act of rebellion. The rest of Israel was satisfied with the explanation, and the people returned to their own lands in peace.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the significance of the farewell addresses in the book of Joshua. How do they serve to emphasize the themes of obedience, faithfulness, and covenant that are central to the narrative?
2. Discuss the reasons behind the conflict that arises between the Transjordan tribes and the rest of Israel in chapter 22. What does this conflict reveal about the importance of unity and shared identity within the community of Israel?
3. Explore the concept of obedience as it is presented in Joshua, particularly in the actions and responses of the Transjordan tribes. How does their initial obedience, compared to their later actions, contribute to the overall message of the book?
4. Examine the role of the covenant in the book of Joshua. How does the covenant inform the actions of Joshua and the people of Israel, and how is this evident in the farewell speeches?
5. Compare and contrast Joshua's leadership in the book as a whole. How does he emulate or differ from Moses? What is the significance of Joshua finally being called "Servant of the Lord?"

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Transjordan Tribes:** The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh who settled on the eastern side of the Jordan River.
- **Cis-Jordan Tribes:** The nine and a half tribes of Israel who settled on the western side of the Jordan River, also referred to in the text as the "people of Israel."
- **Shiloh:** The location where the Tabernacle was set up and where the tribes gathered.
- **Shechem:** Another location where Joshua addresses the people, reinforcing the covenant they had made to follow God.
- **Breach of Faith:** A violation of a covenant or an act of unfaithfulness, often having serious consequences.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief or principle.
- **Altar:** A structure on which sacrifices or offerings are made to God, central to worship.

- **Servant of the Lord:** A title of honor signifying faithful service to God, used to describe Joshua at the end of the book.
- **Sin of Peor:** The historical incident in which the Israelites were led into idolatry and immorality by the Moabites and Midianites.
- **Achan's Sin:** An example of disobedience and a breach of covenant. Achan stole items devoted to God, bringing judgment on Israel.
- **Tabernacle:** The portable sanctuary where God was worshiped and the Ark of the Covenant was kept before the building of the temple in Jerusalem.
- **Covenant:** A sacred agreement or promise between God and his people, outlining their responsibilities and blessings.
- **Witness:** A person or thing that serves as evidence or proof of something, including the large altar built by the Transjordan tribes.

5. FAQs on Howard, Joshua-Ruth, Session 20, Joshua 22 – Farewell to Trans-Jordan Tribes, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Okay, here's an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source, formatted with markdown:

FAQ: Joshua 22 and the Farewell to the Transjordan Tribes

- **What is the significance of Joshua 22 in the book of Joshua?**
- Joshua 22 marks the farewell of Joshua to the Transjordan tribes (Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh), who were settled east of the Jordan River. It is one of three farewell addresses in the final chapters of Joshua, dealing with themes of obedience, unity, and the potential for division within the Israelite community after the conquest of Canaan. The chapter highlights both the faithfulness of the Transjordan tribes in fulfilling their initial commitments and the tensions that arose from their geographical separation.
- **Who are the Transjordan tribes, and why were they settled east of the Jordan?**
- The Transjordan tribes are Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. They requested to settle east of the Jordan River because they found the land suitable for their livestock. Initially, Moses was skeptical, but after the tribes pledged to assist in the conquest of Canaan and then return, he agreed. This arrangement is a key part of the backstory for the events in Joshua 22.
- **How does the text distinguish between "Israel" and the Transjordan tribes?**
- Throughout the main conflict in Joshua 22, the text refers to the tribes west of the Jordan as "the people of Israel," while the Transjordan tribes are distinguished by name. This terminology highlights the potential for division and the perception of the Transjordan tribes as somewhat separate from the main body of Israel. This distinction underscores the Transjordan tribes' concern that their descendants would not be seen as truly part of Israel in the future.

- **What prompted the conflict in Joshua 22?**

- The conflict arose when the Transjordan tribes built a large altar near the Jordan River on the western side, in the land of Canaan. The other tribes viewed this as an act of rebellion and apostasy, a breach of faith. They felt it violated the law in Leviticus that altars should only be near the Tabernacle and they believed it could signal that the transjordan tribes were turning away from Yahweh to other gods, like the Canaanites, or a return to the sins of Peor. This action threatened to ignite a civil war, ironically after they had just finished conquering the Canaanites.

- **What was the purpose of the altar built by the Transjordan tribes?**

- The Transjordan tribes built the altar, not for making sacrifices, but as a "witness" between themselves and the rest of Israel. They feared that future generations, geographically separated by the Jordan River, would lose their sense of connection to their brothers and sisters and see them as separate. The altar was intended to be a visual reminder of their shared covenant with the Lord and their unity as part of Israel.

- **How did the conflict in Joshua 22 resolve?**

- The conflict was resolved when the Transjordan tribes clarified that the altar was not for sacrifice or rebellion against God, but as a symbolic reminder of their unity with the rest of Israel. The leader of the western tribes sent a delegation and heard the explanation of the intentions of the altar and the delegation was satisfied. After they were satisfied, the western tribes celebrated the reconciliation with the eastern tribes and the potential civil war was averted. This explanation was accepted by the other tribes, preventing a civil war and restoring unity.

- **What are some of the key themes highlighted in Joshua 22?**

Key themes in Joshua 22 include: the importance of obedience to God's commands, both in letter and spirit, the need for unity within the people of God, the dangers of division and misinterpretation, and the importance of understanding the heart behind actions as well as their outward appearance. The episode also illustrates the impact of historical events (like the sin of Peor and Achan) on the consciousness of the people and the persistent concern to avoid repeating past mistakes and ensure they continued to be the people of God.

- **How does the resolution of the conflict relate to the idea of communion and unity?**
- The sermon described in the text relates the story to the idea of communion as a symbol of unity within the Christian community. Like the unity among the tribes of Israel, the participants of communion, despite their differences, are unified by their shared faith. The resolution of the conflict, particularly the Transjordan tribes' explanation for the purpose of their altar, emphasizes the importance of communication, understanding, and reconciliation in maintaining unity, both in ancient Israel and in a modern church setting.