

Joshua 22

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[0 : 00] The book of Joshua, Joshua chapter 22, Joshua chapter 22 is where we'll be at this evening. We'll look at the word, try not to spend too much time there, and then we'll take some time to discuss our business, and then we'll go to our prayer time.

So Joshua chapter 22. Let's open up with a word of prayer. Let's pray together. Lord, we thank you so much, Lord, just for allowing us the opportunity of gathering together. We thank you for the great blessing of taking time to be in your word, taking time to fellowship with one another. Lord, we pray your hand would rest upon us this evening. Lord, we pray that we would understand the truth of scripture, and we would take that truth and apply it to our life. Lord, we pray that you would lead us as we go through our business discussions. Lord, we pray that you'd be with us during our prayer time. Lord, we pray that you would be with those who are working with the youth and the children in the back. Lord, we pray your hand would rest upon them. God, we just ask that in every way and in all manners, you would be glorified and honored.

[1 : 07] Your name would be exalted. We ask it all in Jesus' name and amen. If you remember, or if you weren't here just to kind of get you caught up, we've covered a lot of territory in the last couple of weeks or a couple of times together in the book of Joshua.

Particularly, we looked at, last time we were together on Sunday night, we looked at chapters 13 to 21.

Broad section of scripture. And while I didn't really like covering it in one message, we thought it would be better to look at its broad scope, gain some applications that we could from there. And then, what Lord ever calls us to, we go back and really dive into it. But Joshua 13 through 21 is the division of the land. Actually, 13 through 19 is the division of the land. 20 is the cities of refuge. And 21 is the Levitical cities. So you get 13 through 19, the distribution of the land.

[2 : 14] And we saw how God worked that out. And we saw the promises there. That's his title deed to the land. Israel's title deed in this land.

This is their boundary markers, if you will, where they live. And we have all these locations listed for us, and these cities, and things that really don't seem to have much weight with us.

But we know historically they bear a lot of weight for the nation of Israel because this is their claim upon the inheritance. That one word that keeps being repeated in those chapters is the inheritance. And that's important to understand because they didn't earn the land.

They didn't deserve the land. They were given the land. It is their inheritance. Which, by the way, makes a lot of gospel sense because we have an inheritance in Christ.

Right? We don't gain our reward. We don't earn our reward. We don't deserve our reward. Our inheritance is in Christ. So over and over again we read of their inheritance.

[3 : 19] And then we transition into the cities of refuge, which we had already looked at in detail in the book of Numbers, in the book of Deuteronomy, the repetition of them. Those are important.

The roads are paved and the signs are posted so that any may go. The Levitical cities are there to scatter the priests throughout the nation. But we end that section of the book of Joshua with that grand statement that of all the good things the Lord had promised, not one of them failed.

Everything that God had promised had come to pass. All that God had said was fulfilled. And then we come to Joshua 22 and we'll read it and then we'll flesh it out.

Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh and said to them, You have kept all that Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you and have listened to my voice and all that I commanded you.

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. 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 : 29] Only be 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.

So Joshua blessed them and sent them away and they went to their tents. Now to the other half-tribe of Manasseh, Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other half, Joshua had given a possession or gave a possession among their brothers westward beyond the Jordan.

So when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them 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.

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.

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. 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 their frontier of the land of Canaan in the region of the Jordan on this side, on the side belonging to the sons of Israel.

[5 : 57] 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. Then the sons of Israel sent to the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and to the half-tribe Manasseh and to the land of Gilead and to the land of Gilead Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, 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.

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

Is not the iniquity pure enough for us from which we have not cleansed ourselves to this day, although a plague came on the congregation of the Lord, 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. 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. Do not Achan the son of Zerah act unfaithful in the things under the ban and wrath fall on all the congregation of Israel?

[7 : 22] And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity. 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, 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 an unfaithful act against the Lord, do not save us this day. If we have built us an altar to turn away from following the Lord, or if it is to offer a burnt offering or grain offering on it, or if it is to offer sacrifices of peace offerings on it, may the Lord Himself require it.

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? For the Lord has made the Jordan a border between us, and you, your 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. Therefore we said, let us build an altar, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice, 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.

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.

[8 : 52] 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.

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.

And Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the priest said to the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and 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.

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. 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.

The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar a witness for they said it is a witness between us that the Lord is God. I know it's a rather long chapter.

[9 : 59] I thought we needed to read it in its entirety so that, well that mic is very sensitive. I'm sorry, I keep hitting it. So that we can get it in its proper context. And just to be honest with you, there's a chapter in which we have to wrestle back and forth with because there are a number of ways in which we can interpret this.

One way in which we can interpret this passage, or I don't want to say interpret, apply this passage, we will actually see being fleshed out if the Lord allows us to continue our course on Sunday morning where we open up Matthew 18 and we begin to look at what many refer to as church discipline, right?

When you go to a brother, brother to brother, or two witnesses go and you go ask the questions. And we see this kind of being played out here among the nation. There are people who kind of vary in their direct application of this and we kind of have to dig down to see exactly what's going on. And I think that's why we need to understand this because there's a lot going on within the text. We are reminded of the faithfulness of the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. We are reminded of the charge they're given.

All of a sudden we see Phineas showing back up and he is the delegation, a part of the delegation that's being sent to question them. And we need to pay attention to that because Phineas is also the one who took the spear during the sin of Peor and he's the one who stopped the plague.

[11 : 14] Remember that, right? He is zealous for the Lord. So if you're going to send a man who really has God's holiness and reverence for his ways and to ask the question, Phineas is the man because he's already demonstrated he has no fear in opposing those who oppose God's will.

We see a lot that is happening here and all these things that are going on and really we just try to wrap our mind around it. But not that we're going to take time to look at each bit of it because we would have to come back to that.

I don't think we have that much time tonight. But what I want us to see from the text in particular is the problem of borderline living. The problem of borderline living.

And the reason we come to this is because, now again, scholars will argue with you and I understand this too, that they are very much living within the boundaries of the promised land. That the eastern border of the promised land was actually the mountains, not the Jordan River. And the mountains are on the eastern side, even of where the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh live.

[12 : 20] But over and over and over again, we have this repetition in the word of God and that crossing the Jordan River is what is opening up their entrance into the promised land.

And when we go back to the book of Numbers and Numbers 32 and we see where these two and a half tribes decide to settle here, we have to be caught with the familiarity of the events with what happens between Abraham and Lot.

We know that Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh settle here not because this is land promised, but that this land looks good. Right? They have a lot of livestock, they have a lot of people, and they see a land that's fruitful and it's pleasant to their eyes and it's pleasing.

And they say, hey, we want this because it looks good. And Moses gets angry with them at first and then they kind of work out a deal. And I went back and reread it. One thing that you find, we need to pay attention to scripture, not only what it does say, but also what it doesn't say.

And the whole kind of going back and forth between, are they going to stay there or they're not going to stay there? Moses gets upset because they're not fully entering into the promised land. And therefore, they're putting the rest of the people at jeopardy.

[13:33] Kind of, and he goes back and he relates it to the sins of Kadesh Barnea and their rebellion to go into the land. So then we have to say, okay, in light of that, this must not be entering into the promised land.

It's stopping short. But what we don't see is Moses ever consulting the Lord's desire, the Lord's will here. We see an agreement being made because they agree to go fight.

He says, okay, if you'll do that, then you can have the land. Now put that in connection with the man who had nothing but daughters and they wanted an inheritance in the land. Moses sought the Lord's direction there, right?

Now I'm not saying Moses is wrong. I'm just saying we have to be careful how we interpret this because no matter how we look at it, the reality is, is these two and a half tribes stopped short of what God had promised.

They got close to the promised land, but they didn't go all the way in. They left their families behind. They left a few behind to protect the cities and they went and fought. And then they went back home.

[14:33] As some say, it is the borderline believer who wants one foot in the world and one foot with Christ wants to be close enough to Christ to experience his blessing, but not all the way in to stand out and to be completely separate from the world.

By the way, I think that's the admonition that we find in Hebrews chapter six of those who go back. They've got close enough to Christ to experience his blessing, the taste of the spirit, to see his faithfulness.

But then they once again go back to the world. It is that borderline living. And we see this now being played out and we see what happens.

Historically, you need to understand that when you open the book of first Chronicles, first Chronicles is written after the Babylonian captivity. Okay. So first and second Chronicles are, though they seem repetitive of first and second Kings and they are, it is also a retelling of the history for the nation after they come out of Babylonian captivity so that they can know how things happened.

That's important. That's why when you open up first Chronicles, they don't spend a lot of time with Samuel or with Saul. They go through Saul pretty quick and then it gets to David and they spend a little bit of time on David and they start working its way down between the division of the Kings.

[15:47] But when you go into first Chronicles, you only get to the fifth chapter and they're telling you, looking back, how this thing happens. In the fifth chapter, you are told of the division of the land of the sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

And at the end of the fifth chapter, before they even discuss the Davidic kingdom, before they even talk about the procession of the Kings, they stop short in their history and they tell you, and when these people were king, Jeroboam was king in Israel, these nations played the harlot and God called the king of Assyria to lead them into captivity.

So historically what we find, the first to fall among the inhabitants of Israel are these people. They fall first.

They're led captive, not to Babylon, but to Assyria. And then Babylon would eventually capture the Assyrian Empire and that's when they fall as well. So we look at all this and it's historical context and we want to see what's going on in this chapter.

I just want you to see three problems I see in the chapter with borderline living and we'll work our way through them quickly and we'll do our business meeting. Number one, the past is easily forgotten.

[17:05] Past faithfulness is easily forgotten when we're living on borderline faith. These men are sent home with a blessing, right?

We're not going to reread it. But Joshua calls them to himself and he commends them. He said, everything that you promised Moses, you did. You were faithful. You said you would come fight and you have fought.

Who crossed the Jordan River first? Anybody remember? The sons of Reuben, the sons of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. Right after the priest stepped in, they were the first to cross. Why were they the first to cross? Because they had something to go back to, right?

They said, let's get this over with, right? Let's fight this battle. For seven years they have fought the battle. He says, everything you promised Moses, you did. And everything I've asked you to do, you have done. You've been faithful.

You have fought hard. And he blesses them and he sends them home and he sends them home with riches, right? He says, go with all of your spoil, with all of your livestock, your cattle, your clothing, and all the silver and the gold and the iron, and take it back and share it with those who are back home.

[18:12] And go back enriched with the spoils of your labor. This isn't accidental. Here we are told they were faithful. These men were faithful to do everything they committed to do.

Everything they promised before the Lord their God to do, they did it. And Joshua says, you're free to go back. Your brothers have been given rest. Now you go back to your possession.

And he blesses them, right? He sends them out what you would say an honorable discharge, right? They are commended. They are thanked. They are blessed. And they are not dishonorably discharged.

They are honorably discharged. They can go home with their heads held high because they have served well. We don't have to get halfway through the chapter before we find the nation of Israel as a whole is getting ready to go fight against them.

Why? Because when we separate ourselves, and we're living on borderline faith, very quickly can others forget how faithful we were in the past.

[19:16] Because, I mean, just to put it blunt, the grand question is not what have we done in the past. The grand question is how are we living in the present.

And all of a sudden, these people who were honorably discharged, the other nine and a half tribes have gathered together at Shiloh, and they're getting ready to go wage war with them.

We see a civil war in the book of Judges, but there's almost one right here in the book of Joshua. And they haven't even got home. Right?

They haven't even made it home. It's a journey of about 55 miles. They haven't made it there yet.

And all of a sudden, everybody else is ready to fight them. They've forgotten the last seven years of faithfulness.

They've forgotten the last seven years of battle. And we get a hint as to how they forgot that there in about the eighth or ninth verse. The ninth verse, it says, The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, look at this, returned home.

[20:24] Now, look at this wording. 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.

Anytime you begin to have ours and theirs, you're beginning to create a schism. They're no longer in the possession of Israel.

They're in their possession. They departed from the sons of Israel. They left the land of Canaan. They went to what was theirs.

In the kingdom of God, there should never be his and hers or mine and yours or ours and theirs. Right? They owned something else.

That was their possession, not their inheritance. Again, the word matters. And they went away. Because borderline living doesn't stay connected to.

[21:22] It always separates from. And the moment we begin to separate from and to live on the fringes of faith, it is very easy for others to forget what we've done in the past. Very easy.

And that's one of the dangers we see. One of the great problems that we find in this passage is these that have been so faithful, these who have fought so hard, now all of a sudden are perceived to be their enemies.

Because faithfulness is forgotten when we separate ourselves. Second, we see the possibility of misunderstanding.

In the text, we find that as they're on their way home, before they actually cross the Jordan River, some scholars will tell you that they did this on the western side of the Jordan River in the inheritance of that western portion of Manasseh.

Because Manasseh lived on the eastern side and the western side. There was a half tribe on each side. Depending on where they would have forded the river, most people believe that one of the easiest crossings would have been where the western tribe of Manasseh had their land.

[22 : 30] So they stopped on the western side of the Jordan River and they constructed an altar. And it says it's a large altar, a prominent altar, one that is very big. And they took their time and they built this altar.

And now all of a sudden we come upon this and the text doesn't reveal the reasoning behind it until we get to the end of it. So if we'd have stopped halfway through, we would have said, yeah, there's a problem here because God had told them not to construct any other altars, right?

God had very clearly told them, you can't build an altar wherever you want to build an altar. The inhabitants of Canaan had been doing that all along. And God says, you can't do that. God says, there should be one altar that is before me. Now, where had God chosen to put his name? Shiloh, right? There was an altar at Shiloh. And they had just left Shiloh. And now all of a sudden they go over here and they build an altar. And this is what causes the rift between the nation because they hear about that.

They don't even get into their land until the rest of the nation of Israel hears the reality. They've built another altar. Now, from the outside looking in, that's a problem. And the reason that's a problem is because the corporate body matters.

[23 : 31] And so they send Phinehas. Thankfully, the nation of Israel handles this right. They could have just said, this, by the way, would be our Matthew 18 principle being fleshed out. They could have said what we find in the book of Judges, right?

They could have said, whenever man does what's right in his own eyes, hey, let's gather for battle and let's go kill them all. That's what they do at the end of the book of Judges. But they don't, right? They gather together. They're ready to fight war. They want to go fight these people because all of a sudden, but they say, wait a minute, let's get all the facts first.

So they send Phinehas. And Phinehas is the right man, as we've said. He's very zealous for the Lord. He's going to make sure that you do things right. His dad is the priest, Eleazar. And Phinehas, he's a battler.

He doesn't mind. If you're messing around, he'll stick a spear through you. I hate to say it that way, but I mean, that's exactly what had happened. And the very first sin that's brought up is the sin of Peor, in which Phinehas was the one who stopped the plague that came.

But if you remember in that day, 23,000 people died that day. In total, 24,000 people died. And they said, you know, as a nation, we got ourselves in trouble once before, and we're still feeling the effects of that.

[24 : 36] So we're not going there again. Why are you building this altar? That shouldn't happen. And then in case this two and a half tribes think, well, as a nation, we haven't sinned. They've narrowed it down.

They remind them of the sin of Achan, and that Achan did not die alone in his sin, right? Because as we saw in the story of Achan, an individual's sin can affect, or not can, will always affect other people.

They reminded them that Achan didn't die alone. And they're looking at this, and let's just go ahead and admit, they have a legitimate right to investigate the matter, because from the outside, it looks bad.

It's wrong. It's sinful. And you're putting everybody else in jeopardy, because when you begin to behave however you want to behave, when you begin to make decisions that you want to make, you are putting the corporate body of God's people under his condemnation of judgment.

And they said, hey, by the way, hold on to that. We'll see this again. In case we want to say, man, that's an Old Testament principle. The Lord has so ordained. We'll be in Matthew 18 this week, and we get to that passage where it starts talking about that second mentioning of the church, and most people don't like that second mentioning of the church in Matthew 18, because that's church discipline.

[25 : 58] Why? Because individuals' lives matter to a corporate body. Right? And they did this right, and they're asking these questions, and now we know, because we've read the rest of the

stories, Paul Harvey would say what they were doing, but they don't know that, because see, the problem is, is when we live on borderline faith, even our best of intentions can be misunderstood.

When we're not really connected to the body, you know, when we just want to be kind of bits and pieces with it, even our best intentions are misunderstood.

Most misunderstandings in church life can be resolved if the church body would just spend time together. That's just an honest reality.

I've talked to a number of pastors. I've talked to a number of church members. Most divisions, schisms, arguments, issues, happen in churches where someone's good intentions were misunderstood, and they chose rather to fight about it than to spend time together.

And usually it was those kind of on the outside. Kind of on the outside. Because see, one of the problems with borderline living is there's a possibility of being misunderstood or the possibility of misunderstanding what is going on.

[27 : 37] And we see here, this is a great danger. The third thing that we see that is a problem, and we'll be through with our text after this, is that when we live on borderline faith, we are putting ourselves in a position of isolation.

We are putting ourselves in a position of isolation. The tribe of Reuben, and the tribe of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh should not have ever had to felt the need to build the altar.

They admit, they call on God as a witness, as a matter of fact, repeating three names of God twice. And essentially they're saying, if we're wrong, let God himself judge us.

So we'll give them that. So we have to go with the sincerity of their confession here, and we have to go with that. But this is one of the problems that arose, is that they felt so isolated, that because of, never miss this, because of where they chose to live, they thought that things could happen.

They chose that land. It was not given to them by lot, right? Because by lot, God chooses where you live. They took it by choice.

[29 : 04] They said, this land's good. We want this land. You remember the distribution of the other lands? It was by lot, right? They would cast lots for it, and it was distributed among them. Judah didn't take his land by lot.

He took it by promise, because God said, Judah took his land, because there's this man named Caleb, who said, God promised me I would have this land, some 38 years ago, or some 45 years ago.

I'm coming here to claim that promise, and Caleb from the tribe of Judah, right? So Judah took theirs by promise. Everybody else's was distributed by lot, which means that God gave them this land. Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, took theirs by choice.

And they chose to live over there, so stay with me on this train of thought. And since where they chose to live, isolated them, they felt the need to construct something, to remind everybody, we are a part of y'all.

By the way, if we ever have to remind people, that we're a part of the people of God, we're already in trouble. I used to have a t-shirt, I didn't wear it very much, because it offended too many people.

[30 : 06] I was a very young pastor at that time, and I really liked the shirt. People got really offended. It says something on the back, like live in such a way, that the pastor doesn't have to lie at your funeral. Something like that.

And then, you've seen that shirt? And then, you know, that reality that we need to ensure that we don't have to set up memorials so that people know we're a part of the people of God.

And that's exactly what they did. They said, hey, we don't want y'all to forget we're a part of y'all too. So what we're doing, and by the way, look at how, look at how these tribes shift the blame. Because they said, your sons will tell us, our sons, that we're not a part of y'all.

So we want to tell your sons that we are a part of y'all, even though we made the choice to live over here. And the Lord has set the Jordan River as a boundary between us. And now, all of a sudden, it's God's fault for putting the Jordan River there when they chose to live over there.

Be mindful of this as well. God had commanded them at least three times a year, every male was to go gather where the Lord God chose to put his name and to worship. And in those journeys, they were to take their families back with them.

[31 : 12] Remember those sacrifices, those celebratory meals, those fellowship meals, they were to bring a sacrifice of peace offering in which they were to bring every member of their household. Remember when we went through all that in the book of Numbers, how boring it was, at least we

thought maybe it was, that they were to take their families back with them and they were to sit at the door of the tabernacle and to eat this sacrificial meal.

You know what that did? That created an identity with everybody else. And if they were going to be faithful over the years going back to the position of where God chose to put his name and if they were going to take their children back and if they were going to take every member of their household back with them, if they planned on doing this, friend, listen to me, year after year, after year, after year, after year, everybody would know those people living over there, they're part of us too.

But they thought it would be easier to put up a memorial so that nobody would forget. You know what that is? We think it's better to put up a sign than it is to dedicate our life. Instead of going through all the efforts and making sure we're there and making sure we're connected and making sure we're making this journey, that journey's a long way.

That's 55 miles. Instead of going 55 miles on foot three times a year and taking our kids there, let's just build an altar. That way nobody forgets.

See the problem? They were supposed to be connected by fellowship, not by stone memorials. And when we choose to live on borderline faith, we put ourselves in a position of isolation, which as we've already said, and I'm closing, historically didn't work out too well for them.

[32 : 55] By the way, go read 1 Chronicles chapter 5. You know what you find? When the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh started increasing and growing, just in case we ever feel like, well, they were living in the boundaries of the promised land, and if we want to interpret it that way, that's fine.

We can say that. But look at what it says. They began to increase and they continued to push east. Continued to push east. Continued to push east.

And they finally went so far east that they infringed upon the Assyrian empire and the Assyrians came and took them captive. Now what was that law of first mention we saw six years ago, six and a half years ago?

I won't take you back. Every time man goes east, he what? Goes away from the presence of God in scripture. When Adam and Eve sinned, he put them out towards the east.

Towards the east. And when you read in 1 Chronicles, because they had put themselves in a position of isolation, shallow was to the west. The tabernacle of God was to the west.

[34 : 10] About even in that time that is being recorded to us, wherever God's presence was to the west. But when they increased, they decided to go more east, more east, more east. They were going away from the presence of God.

And it says, and they played the harlot and started worshiping the other gods of that land. So God called Tiglath-Pilzer, the king of Assyria, to lead them captive.

Put yourself in isolation long enough and you'll eventually move far enough away that God lets you go. Because there's great problems with borderline living.

And we see this in Joshua chapter 22. Thank you, brothers. Thank you. Thank you.