

After the battles, Joshua called a meeting of all the people from the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh. He said to them, "You have obeyed everything Moses told you to do. He was a servant of the Lord. And also, you have obeyed all my commands. Now he has kept his promise; you may go back to your homes across the Jordan River. But continue to obey the teachings Moses gave you. That law is to love the Lord your God and obey his commands. Continue to follow him and serve him the very best you can." Then Joshua said good-bye to them, and they left. They went away to their homes

10 The people of Reuben, Gad and the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh traveled toward their land. But before crossing the Jordan, they built a giant altar. But when the other Israelite tribes heard about the altar, they became angry thinking the Eastern Tribes were going to disobey God by using an altar other than the one in the Temple. So the Western tribes, prepared to go to war!

They went to talk to the people of Reuben, Gad and the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh and asked them 'Why did you turn against the God of Israel? Why did you build an altar for yourselves? You know that this is against God's law to offer sacrifices in any altar other than the one in Jerusalem!

Are you refusing to follow the Lord?

21 The people from Reuben, Gad and the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh answered them saying, "The **Lord is our God!** And we'll SAY it AGAIN, **the Lord is our God!** God knows why we did this. We want you to know also. You can judge what we did. If you believe we have done something wrong, then we deserve to be punished!

" We did not build it for sacrificing. We built it to show our people that we worship the same God as you. ***This altar is a witness to you and us. And to our children who will come after us*** that we worship the Lord.

When Phinehas the priest and the ten leaders of the Western Tribes heard these things, they were very happy because they realized the altar was built as a memorial to give God Glory. So Phinehas the priest, said, "Now we know the Lord is with us. And we know you didn't turn against him. We're happy that the Israelites will not be punished by the Lord."

Then Phinehas and the leaders went home. They left the people of Reuben and Gad, and went back to their own lands. There they told the Israelites what had happened. They were also pleased, and they thanked God that they didn't have to fight their own people!

And the people of Reuben and Gad gave the altar a name. They called it **Proof that We Believe that the Lord Is God.**