

Joshua 22:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you:

Analysis

And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you:

Joshua's commendation addresses both aspects of their obedience: to Moses' original command and to his own ongoing leadership. The phrase "kept all" (shamartem et kol, שָׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת כָּל) uses the comprehensive term shamar (שָׁמַר), meaning to guard, observe, or preserve carefully. This wasn't partial obedience but complete fulfillment of covenant obligations. Moses is honored as "the servant of the LORD" (eved Yahweh, עֵד יְהוָה), the highest designation of faithfulness, linking his authority to divine command.

The parallel structure—"kept all that Moses...commanded" and "obeyed my voice in all that I commanded"—establishes continuity between Mosaic and Josuanic leadership. The Transjordan tribes didn't exploit the leadership transition to abandon difficult commitments. "Obeyed my voice" (shema'tem beqoli, שָׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקֹלִי) uses shema (שָׁמַע), meaning to hear with the intent to obey—the same word in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4). True hearing produces action, not merely intellectual assent.

Historical Context

Numbers 32:20-32 records Moses' conditional agreement: if the Transjordan tribes fought alongside their brothers until Canaan was subdued, they could possess the eastern territory. Deuteronomy 3:18-20 and Joshua 1:12-18 reiterated this obligation. For approximately seven years, these warriors fought in campaigns across Canaan while their families remained in fortified cities east of the Jordan. This required extraordinary sacrifice—prolonged separation from families, risk of death in battle for land that wasn't their own inheritance, and delayed enjoyment of their granted territory. Ancient Near Eastern warfare was brutal and casualty rates high. That all these troops remained faithful without desertion demonstrates exceptional covenant loyalty.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when obedience to God requires prolonged sacrifice without immediate personal benefit—with faithfulness or with resentment?
2. What does it mean to truly 'keep all' God's commands rather than selective obedience in convenient areas while ignoring difficult ones?
3. How does the continuity between Moses and Joshua's commands illustrate that God's moral requirements don't change with new leadership or generations?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר כֹּל אֲתָּה שְׁמַרְתָּם לֵי אָמַר

And said H413 unto them Ye have kept H853 H3605 H834

H559 H8104

יְהִי הַצְוָויָה אֲתֶכְכֶם מִשְׁנָה עַבְדָךְ צְוָוֵי

commanded H853 all that Moses the servant of the LORD

H6680 H4872 H5650 H3068

אֲתֶכְכֶם: צְוָוֵי וְתָשִׁמְעָו

you and have obeyed my voice commanded

H8085 H6963 H3605 H834 H6680 H853

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