

Joshua 22:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice:

Analysis

Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice—The eastern tribes explicitly state their intent: this altar's purpose is NOT sacrificial. The Hebrew phrase "not for burnt offering" (לא ל'olah, lo l'olah) and "nor for sacrifice" (וְלֹא לִזְבָּח, v'lo l'zevach) categorically excludes the altar from Levitical cultic use.

The verb "prepare" (עָשָׂה, asah, to make or do) indicates deliberate planning—this was not an impulsive decision but a carefully considered strategy to preserve covenant identity for future generations.

Historical Context

This verse begins the explanation of the altar's true purpose. By denying sacrificial intent upfront, the eastern tribes remove the legal basis for the accusation while preparing to reveal the altar's memorial function.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does their careful planning demonstrate wisdom in anticipating future challenges to faith?
2. What does this teach about the difference between preserving truth and innovating worship contrary to God's commands?
3. How can we create 'memorials' that preserve biblical faith without violating biblical worship patterns?

Interlinear Text

המִזְבֵּחַ	מִ	אֶת	לְבָנָה	וְ	לְ	אָמֵר	נָעָשָׂה	לְ	אַ	בְּ	זֶה	אָמֵר
Therefore we said		Let us now prepare			H4994	H0	to build		H853	us an	altar	
H559		H6213					H1129			H4196		
לֹא	לְ	הַ	לְעֹלֵל	אַ	וְ	לִזְבְּחָה						
H3808		not for burnt offering		H3808		nor for sacrifice		H2077				
		H5930										

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