

Joshua 22:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

Analysis

But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us—The altar's true purpose is revealed: it functions as a witness (witness, ed), a memorial testimony to covenant unity despite geographical separation. The phrase "our generations after us" shows multi-generational thinking—they built for children not yet born.

That we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings—The eastern tribes affirm they WILL perform all these sacrifices, but at the legitimate tabernacle in Shiloh, not at this memorial altar. The altar testifies to their right and intent to worship at the central sanctuary.

That your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD—The altar serves as physical evidence of covenant membership, preventing future exclusion based on geography.

Historical Context

Memorial stones and altars were common in Ancient Near Eastern culture as witnesses to treaties and covenants (Genesis 31:45-52, Joshua 4:4-7). This altar follows that pattern—a visible reminder of invisible covenant bonds.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do physical memorials (baptism, communion, church buildings) serve as witnesses to spiritual realities?
2. What steps can we take now to ensure future generations maintain both doctrinal purity and covenant unity?
3. How does this altar model the difference between biblical symbolism and unbiblical innovation?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	עַד	וְהָיָה	בֵּינָנוּ	וּבְיִנְיָךְ	וְיִן
H3588	But that it may be a witness	H1931	H996	H996	H996
	H5707				
דְּרוֹתֵינוּ	אֲחֵרֵינוּ	לְעֵבֶד	אֶת		
between us and you and our generations	after	us that we might do	H853		
H1755	H310	H5647			
תַּעֲבֹד	בְּיְהוָה:	לִפְנֵי	בְּעֹלוֹתֵינוּ		
the service	in the LORD	before	him with our burnt offerings		
H5656	H3068	H6440	H5930		
וּבְזִבְחֵינוּ	וּבְשָׁלְמֵינוּ	וְלֹא	יֹאמְרוּ		
and with our sacrifices	and with our peace offerings	H3808	may not say		
H2077	H8002		H559		
לְבָנֵינוּ	מָהֵר	לְבָנֵינוּ	אֵין	לָכֶם	יֵה לָקֶם
that your children	in time to come	that your children	H369	H0	Ye have no part
H1121	H4279	H1121			H2506
בְּיְהוָה:					
in the LORD					
H3068					

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 24:27 (Witness): And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

Genesis 31:48 (Witness): And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

Deuteronomy 12:11 (Sacrifice): Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I

command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:

Joshua 22:34 (Sacrifice): And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God.

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