

Commander Joshua in the Promised Land - Lesson #58

“Epilogue – Part 1 of 3” • Chapters 16 thru 20•

•HANDOUT•

► This lesson represents the first part of the Epilogue of Joshua's story. We begin in Chapter 16 which gives us exacting details regarding each tribe's Land inheritance. This will be followed by God's command to finish establishing the Cities of Refuge, which He had originally commanded Moses to do.

The first Land distribution described was Joseph's inheritance, which was divided between his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. They are referred to as “half-tribes” because they are each inheriting half of what their father would inherit. As we were previously told, Manasseh elected to stay east of the Jordan. Ephraim will be given the vast mountainous north country. Joshua said he knew this would be a challenge to Ephraim, so he offered the tribe some wise advice: *“The work will be difficult, but you are a great people and have great power. As God is with you, you can overcome these challenges and fully live in what God has granted you.”*

Ephraim did, indeed, become a great force in Israel.

Q: Why is Ephraim's inheritance considered a challenge?

Q: This is Joseph's inheritance, which is being divided between his two sons. What happened to Joseph?

CHAPTER 17 ...

► It is interesting to note that not all of the Manasseh's tribe stayed on the East side. Some of the children and grandchildren chose to live on the West side of the Jordan with the other Israelites. They were given, by lot, Gilead and Bashan and the notable cities of EnDor, Beth Shean, and Megiddo.

Notably, one of Manasseh's great, great grandson, Zelophehad, had only daughters -- no sons. In accordance with the law that was made during Moses' leadership, Zelophehad's daughter each received an inheritance of land along with the men.

But ... since the Canaanites were determined to stay in the Land, the children of Manasseh claimed they were unable to drive the Canaanites completely from the land. Instead, once Manasseh's children became really strong, they were able to control the Canaanites, and ended up using them as forced labor.

Q: Was this a good solution, or was it a problem for the Children of Manasseh to control the Canaanites by using them as forced labor?

CHAPTER 18 ...

► **Joshua 18:1-6** • The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The country was brought under their control, but there were still seven Israelite tribes who had not yet received their inheritance.

So Joshua said to the Israelites: "How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you? Appoint three men from each tribe. I will send them out to make a survey of the land and to write a description of it, according to the inheritance of each. Then they will return to me. You are to divide the land into seven parts. Judah is to remain in its territory on the south and the house of Joseph in its territory on the north. After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God.

Q: What do we learn from the opening statement: *"The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there?"*

Q: How do we know that the entire camp has been moved from Gilgal to Shiloh?

Q: What is the issue that Joshua brings to Israel's attention?

Joshua's statement was delivered as a rebuke, followed by instructions to solve the situation ...

► **Joshua 18:8b-10** • ... Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land and write a description of it. Then return to me, and I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD." So the men left and went through the land. They wrote its description on a scroll, town by town, in seven parts, and returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh.

Joshua then cast lots for them in Shiloh in the presence of the LORD, and there he distributed the land to the Israelites according to their tribal divisions.

Q: What does it mean that they will cast lots in the "presence of the LORD our God?"

Once the men returned from their journey thru the land Joshua began the process of casting lots for the inheritance for the remaining seven tribes:

- ▶ [1] The first lot was cast for the tribe of Benjamin. They were given the land between Judah's land and Ephraim's. Some of the most notable cities within Benjamin were Bethel, the Jebusite city of Jerusalem, Gibeon and Ramah. This was the homeland of Israel's first king, Saul.
- ▶ [2] The second lot was cast for the tribe of Simeon. They were given land or "scattered" within the tribe of Judah which fulfilled the prophecy of their father, Jacob, in Genesis 49:5-7. Their most notable city was Beersheba, the most southern portion of the Promised Land.
- ▶ [3] The third lot was cast for the tribe of Zebulun. They were given twelve cities, which included Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem.
- ▶ [4] The fourth lot was cast for the tribe of Issachar. And their territory went to Jezreel, and included Chesulloth, Shunem, Haphraim, Shion, Anaharath, Rabbith, Kishion, Abez, Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pазzez. And the border reached to Tabor, Shahazimah, and Beth Shemesh; their border ended at the Jordan:
- ▶ [5] The fifth lot was cast for the tribe of Asher. And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it reached to Mount Carmel westward; It turned east to Beth Dagon; to the Valley of Jiphthah El, then northward. It bypassed Cabul, Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon. And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre; then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the region of Achzib.
- ▶ [6] The sixth lot was cast for the tribe of Naphtali. Nineteen cities in all: The border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaananim, Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan. From Heleph the border extended westward to Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok; it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side, and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise. And the fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh:
- ▶ [7] The seventh and final lot was cast for the tribe of Dan. They were given Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, Elon, Timnah, Ekron, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa. And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it.

Q: What is the purpose, today, of the minute details of this inheritance?

NOW IT IS TIME FOR JOSHUA TO RECEIVE HIS INHERITANCE ...

▶ **Joshua 19:49-50** • When they had finished dividing the land into its allotted portions, the Israelites gave Joshua son of Nun an inheritance among them, as the LORD had commanded. They gave him the town he asked for--Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim. And he built up the town and settled there. These are the territories that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the tribal clans of Israel assigned by lot at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. And so they finished dividing the land.

Q: What is remarkable about Joshua's inheritance?

Chapter 20: THE APPOINTMENT OF SIX CITIES OF REFUGE ...

► **Joshua 20: 1-3** • The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, that the slayer who kills a person accidentally or unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.’”

Q: If God had commanded Moses to establish the Cities of Refuges, why have they not been established?

Q: What is the purpose for the Cities of Refuge?

There was an established, but demanding, protocol for claiming refuge ...

► **Joshua 20:4-6** • “When he flees to one of these cities, he is to stand in the entrance of the city gate and state his case before the elders of that city. Then they are to admit him into their city and give him a place to live with them. If the avenger of blood pursues him, they must not surrender the one accused, because he killed his neighbor unintentionally and without malice aforethought.

He is to stay in that city until he has stood trial before the assembly and until the death of the high priest who is serving at that time. Then he may go back to his own home in the town from which he fled.”

Q: Why was the determination for the length of time one had to live in the City of Refuge to be the death of the High Priest?

► **Following the Establishment of the Cities of Refuge,
are the Cities appointed for the Levites.
This is where we will pick up next time ...**



Next Time • Lesson #59 •
“Epilogue – Part 2 of 3”

