

# Joshua 13 - Remaining Land to be Conquered; Allocation of Land to Trans-Jordan Tribes

II. Division of Canaan (Joshua 13:1—21:45)

- (1) The land still to be conquered (13:1-7)
- (2) Transjordan division (13:8-33)

II. Division of Canaan (Joshua 13:1—21:45)

The next 9 chapters document the division of the Promised Land to the 12 tribes of Israel. See [12 Tribes of Israel](#) for more information.

- "Inheritance" is found over 50x in these 9 chapters
  - They didn't "win" their land as spoils of battle or "purchase" the land as a business transaction: the Lord, the sole Owner, leased it to them as tenants (Lev 25:23).  
Imagine having God as your Landlord.
  - Their "rent" was obedience. Their possession and enjoyment depended upon their submission and obedience (Cf. Lev 26; Deut 27-30).
- Two dominant themes found woven throughout the Bible:
  - The origin, mission, and destiny of the nation Israel
  - The Messiah

At the end of the seven-year period of conquest, Israel occupied very little of the Promised Land. "Very much" of it remained for them to possess (v1). Consequently, dividing all the land among the tribes required great faith, that God would eventually "give" His people *all* of it. Joshua had removed the significant military threats to Israel's existence. From now on, each tribe was responsible to conquer and colonize its own designated territory.

The Israelites came to look on the presence of the Canaanite remnant in the land as normal. Christians look on carnal, half-hearted Christian living, as the best they can expect of themselves and others.

## Joshua 13

- (1) The land still to be conquered (13:1-7)

1 Now Joshua was old *and* advanced in years when the LORD said to him, "You are old *and* advanced in years, and **a very large amount of the land remains to be possessed.**

1 Now Joshua was old *and* advanced in years when the LORD said to him, "You are old *and* advanced in years, and very much of the land remains to be possessed.

1 When Joshua had grown old, having lived many years, the LORD told him, "You are old and have lived many years, but much of the land still remains to be possessed.

1 Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

- Joshua was close to 90-years-old at this time (Joshua 23:1-2; 24:29), but God did not see Joshua's age as a reason for him to stop working

— If you are a believer and still breathing, God has work He desires to accomplish through you

— At this time, seven years had passed since Joshua led Israel across the Jordan into the Promised Land (Deut 2:14; Joshua 14:7,10)

— God probably reminded Joshua of his old age to motivate him to divide the remaining land before his death

- "...a very large *amount* of the land remains to be possessed" - interesting assessment by God, especially in light of 10:40-43; 11:16-23

— Even though much of the land had been conquered, much of it remained to be possessed (occupied)

In this passage, God articulates a daunting list of unconquered areas spanning from the far south to the far north, particularly on the Coastal Plain and in the Jezreel and Beth Shean Valleys (13:1-6,13). Similarly, during the dividing of the land, other unconquered areas are noted (Cf. 15:63; 16:10; 17:11-16). Likewise, at the tent of meeting in Shiloh, the Israelites are rebuked for "neglecting to possess" the land, since there are still seven tribes that have not received their inheritance (18:1-3).

2 This is the land that remains: all the regions *of* the **Philistines** and all *those of* the **Geshurites**;

2 This is the land that remains: all the regions *of* the Philistines and all *those of* the Geshurites;

2 This territory remains: all of the Philistine regions, including all Geshurite holdings

2 This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri,

- "...Philistines" - not native Canaanite people; they migrated to Canaan from the northwest, and had displaced the Canaanites in the southwest portion of the Promised Land

— Since they possessed land that was part of what God promised Israel, the Israelites were responsible to drive them out too

— Unfortunately, the Israelites were not successful in doing this. The Philistines increased in power and influence over the Israelites, eventually become the major enemy of Israel

during King Saul's reign, more than three centuries later.

— In Joshua's time, they were a smaller, secondary target of the Israelites

— Today, the Philistine area is known as the Gaza Strip...

- "...Geshurites" - the Geshurites lived in Geshur, located northeast of Bashan, in Aram, later called Syria (Cf. 2 Sam 3:3; 13:37; 14:23,32; 15:8; 1 Chr 3:2)

3 from the **Shihor** which is east of Egypt, even as far as the border of Ekron to the north (it is counted as Canaanite); the five **governors** of the Philistines: the Gazite, the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite, the Ekronite; and the Avvite

3 from the Shihor which is east of Egypt, even as far as the border of Ekron to the north (it is counted as Canaanite); the five lords of the Philistines: the Gazite, the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite, the Ekronite; and the Avvite

3 from the Shihor east of Egypt as far as the border of Ekron on the north (which is considered part of Canaan). This includes the five rulers of the Philistines, the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, the Ekronites, and the Avvites.

3 From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites:

- "...Shihor" - probably the brook of Egypt or modern Wadi el Arish, which marked the southwestern border of the Promised Land

- "...governors" - translates a Philistine word, not a Hebrew word; it is the only clearly Philistine word recorded in Scripture

— It is related to the Greek word which means "tyrant"

4 to the south, all the land of the Canaanite, and Mearah that belongs to the **Sidonians**, as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorite;

4 to the south, all the land of the Canaanite, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorite;

4 "To the south, there remains to be conquered all the territory held by the Canaanites, Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorites,

4 From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites:

- "...Sidonians" - the inhabitants of the Phoenician coast and Lebanese mountains

5 and the land of the **Gebalite**, and all of Lebanon, toward the east, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

5 and the land of the Gebalite, and all of Lebanon, toward the east, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

5 including the territory of the Gebalites and all of Lebanon facing the east from Baal-gad at the foot of Mount Hermon as far as Lebo-hamath,

5 And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath.

- "...Gebalite" - refers to the city-state of Byblos

6 All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth-maim, all the Sidonians, I will drive out from the sons of Israel; only allot it to Israel as an inheritance as I have commanded you.

6 All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth-maim, all the Sidonians, I will drive them out from before the sons of Israel; only allot it to Israel for an inheritance as I have commanded you.

6 and all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, including all the Sidonians. I myself will drive them out in the presence of the Israelis.

6 All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim, and all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

- God's promise to drive out all the remaining Canaanites depended on Israel's obedience to the Mosaic Covenant

The Lord gave Joshua a long list of areas that Israel still had not possessed, which God had given them as their inheritance. Some of these lands remained outside their control through their history, even until today. Yet God's renewed call to conquest came with the promise of His power.

7 Now therefore, apportion this **land** as an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

7 Now therefore, apportion this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

7 You only have to allocate the land as an inheritance, just as I commanded you."

7 Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

- "...land" - refers specifically to the land west of the Jordan River

Because of v1-7, which deals with particulars related to the land of Canaan, let alone the added reference in 1:4 to the territory associated with the Euphrates that exists outside of the land that they currently occupied, it is beyond argument that Israel never possessed the land as stipulated in the Abrahamic Covenant during the days of Joshua. This obvious

lack of gaining all the land that God promised is a significant point in the eternality of the Abrahamic Covenant.

(2) Transjordan division (13:8-33)

**8** With the other half-tribe, the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance which Moses gave them beyond the Jordan to the east, just as Moses the servant of the LORD gave to them;

**8** With the other half-tribe, the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance which Moses gave them beyond the Jordan to the east, just as Moses the servant of the LORD gave to them;

**8** The descendants of Reuben and descendants of Gad, along with the other half-tribe of Manasseh, received their inherited portion that Moses the servant of the LORD had given them to the east beyond the Jordan River.

**8** With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them;

- These tribes saw the Amorites' good pastureland and wanted it as their inheritance, rather than the land God had promised in Canaan

— Moses reluctantly agreed, provided they helped the other tribes conquer Canaan (Num 32:1-42; Deut 3:12-20)

9 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain of Medeba, as far as Dibon;

9 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain of Medeba, as far as Dibon;

9 Specifically included was from Aroer on the banks of the Wadi Arnon, and the town that lies in the middle of the valley, including all the plains from Medeba to Dibon,

9 From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon;

10 and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the sons of Ammon;

10 and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the sons of Ammon;

10 all the cities pertaining to King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the boundary of the Ammonite territory,

10 And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon;

11 and **Gilead**, and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salecah;

11 and Gilead, and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salecah;

11 Gilead and the region belonging to the descendants of Geshur and Maacath, including all of Mount Hermon, and all of Bashan as far as Salecah.

11 And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah;

- "...Gilead" - included land on both sides of the Jabbok River, east of the Jordan

12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he *alone* was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); for Moses struck them and drove them out.

12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he alone was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); for Moses struck them and dispossessed them.

12 Also included was the entire kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei. (He was the sole survivor left of the Rephaim.) Although Moses had defeated these people and driven them out,

12 All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for these did Moses smite, and cast them out.

13 But the sons of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; instead, Geshur and Maacath live among Israel to this day.

13 But the sons of Israel did not dispossess the Geshurites or the Maacathites; for Geshur and Maacath live among Israel until this day.

13 the Israelis did not drive out the descendants of Geshur or the descendants of Maacath—Geshur and Maacath live within the territory of Israel to this day.

**13** Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

- The Israelites failed to annihilate and did not possess the land on the northern end of the Transjordan territory (land of the Geshurites and Maachathites)

— Today, this area is known as the Golan Heights...

14 Only to the tribe of Levi he did not give an inheritance; the offerings by fire to the LORD, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as He spoke to him.

14 Only to the tribe of Levi he did not give an inheritance; the offerings by fire to the LORD, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as He spoke to him.

14 Moses allotted no inheritance solely to the tribe of Levi. As he had mentioned to them, the offerings by fire to the LORD God of Israel are their inheritance.

14 Only unto the tribes of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

15 So Moses gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of the sons of Reuben according to their families.

15 So Moses gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of the sons of Reuben according to their families.

15 Moses allocated territory to the tribe of the descendants of Reuben according to their tribes.

15 And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families.

- Reuben inherited the southern-most portion of the Transjordan, northeast of the Dead Sea

16 Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley and all the plain by Medeba;

16 Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley and all the plain by Medeba;

16 Their allocation was from the border of Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley (including the city that is located in the valley, as well as the entire plain next to Medeba),

16 And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba;

17 Heshbon and all its cities which are on the plain: Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon,

17 Heshbon, and all its cities which are on the plain: Dibon and Bamoth-baal and Beth-baal-meon,

17 Heshbon and all of its cities that are on the plain, including Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon,

17 Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamothbaal, and Bethbaalmeon,

18 Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

18 and Jahaz and Kedemoth and Mephaath,

18 Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

18 And Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

19 Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley,

19 and Kiriathaim and Sibmah and Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley,

19 Kiriathaim, Sibmah, and Zereth-shahar on the hill in the valley,

19 And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zarethshahar in the mount of the valley,

20 Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth-jeshimoth,

20 and Beth-peor and the slopes of Pisgah and Beth-jeshimoth,

20 Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth-jeshimoth,

20 And Bethpeor, and Ashdothpishgah, and Bethjeshimoth,

21 even all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck with the leaders of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the leaders of Sihon, who lived in the land.

21 even all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck with the chiefs of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land.

21 all of the cities of the plain, the entire kingdom of King Sihon of the Amorites, who used to reign in Heshbon and whom Moses attacked, along with the chiefs of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, nobles of Sihon who lived in the land.

21 And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country.

22 The sons of Israel also killed Balaam the son of Beor, the diviner, with the sword among *the rest of their dead*.

22 The sons of Israel also killed Balaam the son of Beor, the diviner, with the sword among *the rest of their slain*.

22 The Israelis also killed Beor's son Balaam, the occult practitioner, executing him with a sword as one of those killed.

22 Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.

### **Balaam**

- A Gentile, yet a prophet (Num 22-24)
- The son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia (Deut 23:4)
- Soothsayer (Josh 13:22)
- Prophet (Num 24:2-9; 2 Peter 2:14,16)
- Counsel led to the occasion of corruption of Israel with the Midianites (Num 31:8,16; Rev 2:14-15)
- The Way of Balaam (2 Peter 2:15)
- The Error of Balaam (Jude 11)

- The Doctrine of Balaam (Rev 2:14)
- He dies with Moabites and Midianites (Num 22:7; 31:8)

23 The border of the sons of Reuben was the Jordan. This was the inheritance of the sons of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

23 The border of the sons of Reuben was the Jordan. This was the inheritance of the sons of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

23 The border of the descendants of Reuben was the Jordan River and its banks. This was the inheritance belonging to the descendants of Reuben, divided according to their families, cities, and villages.

23 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

**24** Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the sons of Gad according to their families.

**24** Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the sons of Gad, according to their families.

**24** Moses also allocated territory to the tribe of Gad, that is, to the descendants of Gad, according to their families.

**24** And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families.

- Gad's inheritance was in the middle of Israel's territory east of the Jordan, roughly between the Jabbok River and the northern edge of the Dead Sea

25 Their territory was Jazer and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the sons of Ammon, as far as Aroer which is opposite Rabbah;

25 Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the sons of Ammon, as far as Aroer which is before Rabbah;

25 Their territory included Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer which is located near Rabbah,

25 And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah;

26 and from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim as far as the border of Debir;

26 and from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim as far as the border of Debir;

26 from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, from Mahanaim as far as the border of Debir,

26 And from Heshbon unto Ramathmizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir;

27 and in the valley, Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a border, as far as the *lower* end of the Sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan to the east.

27 and in the valley, Beth-haram and Beth-nimrah and Succoth and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a border, as far as the *lower* end of the Sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan to the east.

27 the valley containing Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon, with the Jordan River as its border as far as the southern end of the Sea of Galilee beyond the Jordan River to the east.

27 And in the valley, Betharam, and Bethnimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward.

28 This is the inheritance of the sons of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

28 This is the inheritance of the sons of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

28 This was the inheritance belonging to the descendants of Gad according to their tribes, cities, and villages.

28 This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages.

**29** Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the half-tribe of Manasseh; and it was for the half-tribe of the sons of Manasseh according to their families.

**29** Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the half-tribe of Manasseh; and it was for the half-tribe of the sons of Manasseh according to their families.

**29** Moses also allocated territory to the half-tribe of Manasseh, that is, for the half-tribe of the descendants of Manasseh according to their tribes.

**29** And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families.

- The eastern inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh was the northern-most allocation east of the Jordan

— Their land was previously part of Bashan, the former kingdom of Og

30 Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities;

30 Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities;

30 Their territory extended from Mahanaim to include all of Bashan, all of the kingdom of King Og of Bashan, all of the 60 towns of Jair there in Bashan,

30 And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities:

31 also half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were for the sons of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the sons of Machir according to their families.

31 also half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were for the sons of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the sons of Machir according to their families.

31 half of Gilead, including Ashtaroth and Edrei. The cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan went to half of the descendants of Manasseh's son Machir, according to their tribes.

31 And half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.

**32** These are *the territories* which Moses apportioned as an inheritance in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan at Jericho to the east.

**32** These are *the territories* which Moses apportioned for an inheritance in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan at Jericho to the east.

**32** These were the allotments that Moses apportioned for an inheritance in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan River east of Jericho.

**32** These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward.

33 But to the tribe of Levi, Moses did not give an inheritance; the LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He had promised to them.

33 But to the tribe of Levi, Moses did not give an inheritance; the LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He had promised to them.

33 Moses allotted no inheritance to the tribe of Levi. The LORD God of Israel is their inheritance, as he promised them.

33 But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

- The Levites' inheritance was a special relationship with God rather than a tract of land

## Levi

- Levi does not inherit land as the other tribes; their inheritance was the God of Israel
  - They were given 48 cities (13:14,33; 14:3-4; 18:7); Detailed (21:1-42)
  - They were prophesied to be scattered (Gen 49:5-7; Cf. Gen 34) along with Simeon, who eventually was commingled with Judah.
- Lists of Cities of Refuge do not match, scholars attribute name changes or reassignments to these discrepancies.

The two and one-half tribes chose, as Lot did, on the basis of appearance (Cf. Gen 13:10-11), and their inheritance was ultimately lost to them [Cf. 1 Chr 5:26]. On the other hand the Levites, requesting no portion, were given an inheritance of abiding spiritual significance.

