

## **221012-4 Jos 16, 17, Ephraim & Manasseh's Inheritance Described—CThurman**

In the previous chapter begins the specific details of the land which each tribe shall receive for land in Canaan. The boundaries of each tribe are marked out by cities, mountains, seas, and rivers. And so the first borders to be defined are Judah's. This tribe's portion is in the southernmost area of Canaan. It is too large for Judah alone so Simeon's lot will be within Judah's. (cf. Jos.19.1, 9)

There was Caleb's military campaign against the hill country of Hebron. During this time the giants of the Anakims were slain, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, men that Caleb had seen 40 yrs. earlier when Moses had sent out the twelve spies to survey the land of Canaan.

At this time Caleb offered his daughter, Achsah, to wife to the man that conquered the city of Kirjathsepher, the City of Books, also shall be called Debir. (cf. Jos.15.15; Jud.1.11, a city about 10 mi. south, southwest of Hebron) Othniel Caleb's nephew won the right to marry Achsah. Than as Achsah came to be Othniel's wife she moved him to ask her father for springs of water too. So Caleb granted her request and gave them the upper and lower springs.

Finally, a number of the cities are named which are counted to the tribe of Judah, but of these ten shall be given to Simeon. (cf. Jos.15.26-32; 19.2-7)

Note: Simeon was the second son of Jacob. The tribe of Simeon numbered 59,300 warriors at the beginning of the 40-yr. sojourn. At the end of this time it only numbered 22,000. Simeon was reduced more in number than any other tribe at the end being reduced in number by -37,100 warriors and is now the smallest tribe in Israel.

The 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> chapters define the land allotments of Canaan for both the tribes of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh.

### **Chapter 16**

The southernmost border for 'Joseph.' (vss.1-4)

**1 ¶ And the lot of the children of Joseph fell from Jordan by Jericho,**  
went out

proceeded

*and ... fell*, the Hebrew verb נָצַח, yah-tzah, v.1, Qal fut. **and fell**; v.2, Qal pret. **goeth out**; vss. 6, 7, Qal pret. **went out**.

**by Jericho** – because Jericho is allotted to the tribe of Benjamin. (cf. Jos.18.12) So this boundary only comes by Jericho.

**unto the water of Jericho on the east,**

I think there's a river that runs past Jericho. It is flowing toward the Jordan River and is the water that runs eastward by and beyond Jericho. So, follow this river upstream and continue past Jericho ascending out of the Jordan River valley.

**to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Bethel,  
2 And goeth out from Bethel to Luz,**

The ascent past Jericho continues to the height of the mountain upon which Luz is situated. The city of Luz is also called Bethel.

*Ge 28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.*

I can only assume that where the city Luz or Bethel is located is the same area called *mount Bethel*.

**and** **passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth,**  
(the southern border)

For what it is worth the LXX has, Achatarothi, and so this possibly a single place. At least we know these are in the same vicinity, but where that might be is unknown. But it seems that the border is up in the hills running a little jaunt southward.

**3 And goeth down** **westward to the coast of Japhleti, unto the coast of**  
descends the hills border

***Bethhoron the nether, and to Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the sea.***

***and the goings out thereof are at the sea*** – might mean if you went on from this point at Gezer you would come to the Mediterranean Sea.

The border runs from the lower Bethhoron to Gezer. Gezer is about 10 mi. S.W. of lower Bethhoron and very likely marks the southwest corner of Joseph that runs along Benjamin's and Dan's borders.

***4 So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.***

... north of this line.

***5 ¶ And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was thus: even the border of their inheritance on the east side was Atarothaddar, unto Bethhoron the upper;***

Seems to say that in the north at Ataroth, even over to the Jordan River down to the upper Bethhoron runs like this:

***6 And the border went out toward the sea***  
(from Ataroth?) in the direction of (Mediterranean)

In a westerly direction.

***to Michmethah on the north side;***

Though we do not know where Michmethah we do get a sense of the area being described. Michmethah is somewhere south of Shechem.

*Jos 17:7 And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lieth before Shechem (as if heading north) ...*

In vss. 6, 7, from Michmethah it seems the directions take us east to the Jordan, then southward along the Jordan until we come to the to a level where is located the city of Jericho.



***the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had***  
the area of  
***Gilead and Bashan.***

Of Machir it is very likely that he died in Egypt before the exodus. That he is called a man of war must be reference to something Moses knew of him then, and this spirit continued in the sons of Machir.

‘[W]hich (Gilead & Bashan,[added]) were given to his posterity by Moses, and lay on the other side Jordan, see #De 3:13,15. This Machir very likely had shown his warlike disposition and courage in Egypt, and had fought under the kings there against the common enemy of that country; for it is highly probable he was dead before the children of Israel came out from thence, but the same warlike spirit continued in his posterity; they had their part assigned them on the other side Jordan, to defend that country, while the tribes of Reuben and Gad attended to the care of their flocks and herds.’  
*Exposition of the Old & New Testaments, vol. 2, p.245*

Machir evidently had more children than Gilead referred to as Machirites. (cf. Nu.26.29) These were valiant men and apparently received the land on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

*Nu.32.39 And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it.  
40 And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein.  
41 And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havothjair.  
42 And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.*

These Machirites are the half tribe of Manasseh that received land on the eastern side of the Jordan. The other half of the tribe of Manasseh received land in Canaan, and are now named.

***2 There was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families;***

These will be the children of Gideon. (cf. Nu.26.30-32)

A lot ...

***for the children of Abiezer,*** ***and for the children of Helek,***  
aka Jeezer (Nu.26.30)

***and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hopher,***

As we shall read, evidently Hopher's only son, Zelophehad, died and left only daughters. (v.3)

***and for the children of Shemida: these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.***

Here we read the unusual phrase here, *male children*. And this is because of something unique that had taken place a few years ago and the time to put it into effect has now come.

***3 But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.***

***4 And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun,***

(at Gilgal)

***and before the*** ***princes, saying, The LORD commanded***  
(ten, [cf. Nu.34.18])

***Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.***

Remember that the land is being distributed among all of the males that are 20 years of age and older, so the warriors of the tribes.

*Nu.26.2 Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.*

...

*52 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*

*53 Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names.*

*54 To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.*

Nu.27.1-4 gives an account of Zelophehad's daughters with Moses and the result of it. Zelophehad was of age and his sons should have received an inheritance but he died without sons, and died as most of his brethren died in the wilderness sojourn. The daughters asked of Moses.

*Nu 27:4 Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father.*

Their question resulted in a statute which allowed the father's land to be inherited by the daughters in the event that he had no sons. And that statute in turn brought another which prevented the transference of land from tribe to tribe. That would have happened in instances when the daughter married a man of another tribe. So, by statute daughters inheriting land were bound to marry only to those of the same tribe. In this way the land always remained with the original tribe. I think the implication is that if a daughter married to a man outside of her tribe she would forfeit her land inheritance. (cf. Numbers 28)

***5 And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan;***

(which went to the Machirites)

***6 Because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons:***

The consideration now involves the sons of Gilead inheriting in the land of Canaan. Gideon had six sons: Jeezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Shemida and Hopher. All of these had sons to inherit except for Hopher, whose son Zelophehad died. So, into Zelophehad's place step his daughters, Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Together, these are the ten portions.

Six sons of Gideon	Hopher, 6 <sup>th</sup> son of Gideon could not pass his part to Zelophehad because of death, now passes it to his granddaughters.
Jeezer (Abiezer)	Mahlah
Helek	Noah
Asriel	Hoglah
Shechem	Milcah
Shemida	Tirzah
Hopher in his place ...	= ten portions in Canaan

**and the rest of Manasse's sons had the land of Gilead.**

Referring to the Machirites which constitute the one-half tribe of Manasseh on the other side of the Jordan River.

**7 ¶ And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah,**  
(a city of this name [v.9 these cities]?)

**that lieth before Shechem; and the border went along on the right hand unto the inhabitants of Entappuah.**

אֶרְצָא

**8 Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but Tappuah**  
[the city of]

**on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim;**

**9 And the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river:**  
border

**these cities of Ephraim are among the cities**  
(Asher, Michmethah, Entappuah, Shechem and Tappuah)



**of Manasseh: the coast of Manasseh also was on the north side of the river,  
border**

**and the outgoings of it were at the sea:**  
(Mediterranean Sea)

Manasseh's border was on the south side of the river Kanah as the border ran along with Ephraim's, and on the north side as the border ran along with Dan's border until it reached the Mediterranean Sea.

**10 Southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the**

**sea is his border; and they**  
(Mediterranean) (Manasseh's) (to the west) (the sea & Manasseh)

**met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.**  
(above) (in the northern quarter)

**11 And Manasse had in Issachar and in Asher Bethshean**  
(delineating the norther border)

As Ephraim has cities in Manasseh, so Manasseh had cities in Issachar and in Asher.

**and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns,**

Bethshean and Ibleam evidently were within the limits of Issachar's lot. And Dor in Asher's lot.

**and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.**  
(or, high places [?])

*countries*, fem. sing. noun תְּפֹת, neh-pheth, and only this once in the OT; the verb תָּפַח, nooph, is tss. *to to lieft up, to wave, to strike, to*

*offer, to sift, to move, to send, to perfume; perhaps the idea is of a high place.*

These cities, at least the two that appear to be located, appear to be high-places which fall within that part which belongs to the tribe of Asher.

**12 Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.**

**13 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.**

*tribute, מְכֶסֶת, meh-kes, a masc. noun always tss. tribute; the fem. noun מְכֶסֶתָּהּ, is tss. number, worth.*

**14 ¶ And the children of Joseph *spake unto Joshua,*  
(of the tribes of Ephraim & Manasseh, v.17)**

***saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit,***

Perhaps the complaint is that they have been treated as if they have only one part located centrally in Canaan.

***seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?***

While it is true that the combined population of these two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, according to the census taken in Nu.26.7-51, is greater than any other *single* tribe, as individual tribes though their population is average. But I would point out at this place that the family of Joseph has outnumbered all of the other families of the sons of Jacob. Joseph, יִסָּחַר, yah-saph, *to increase, to add.*

Ephraim at the end of the sojourn numbered	32,500
Manasseh ...	52,700
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Total warriors (20 yrs. of age and upward warriors)	85,200

Reuben	43,730	Simeon	22,000	Gad	40,500
Judah	76,500	Issachar	64,300	Zebulun	60,500
Benjamin	46,600	Dan	64,400	Asher	53,400
Naphtali	45,400				

**15 And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood [country],**

*wood*, an Hebrew masc. noun יָעַר, yah-[g]ar, also tss. *forest* and [honey]comb; v.18, *wood*.

**and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.**

**mount Ephraim** – perhaps could be referred to as the ‘hill country’ of Ephraim; a major division of the central highlands.

**16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are of Bethshean and her towns, and they who are of the valley of Jezreel.**

It looks to me that Joshua is saying to them, this land is sufficient for you but you’re not willing to do what it takes to take possession of it all. The city of Jezreel (not the Jezreel in Judah which is thought to be located just below Hebron) looks like it is on the border that is between Manasseh and Issachar and appears to unclaimed territory.

*Jos.19.17 ¶ And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families.*

*18 And their border was toward Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and Shunem...*

This valley descends from the city of Jezreel city down to Bethshean, and continues down and into the Jordan River valley.

**17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only:**

**18 But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down:**  
forest

**and the outgoings** **of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive**  
(the whole valley down to the Jordan[?])

**out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.**

The warriors of the nation had corporately gone through the land and fought to a great extent making room for every tribe so that each could settle into their own portion. But the work was not complete. Every tribe had enemies that remained in their portion to fight against. Here it seems that they wanted land they didn't have to fight for. They wanted a place that was free of conflict. In a perfect world, right? There wasn't any such place then for them, and there isn't such a place today for us. In every place we're going to have to fight our flesh, our adversaries, and the devil. If we want more ground, more area to minister, to serve, to live, to do just about anything as a Christian, we're going to have to fight to keep that to which we have attained, and if we will grow and increase it will be because we strove according to the grace of God to do so.