

# The Allotment for the Remaining Tribes

## Introduction

### a. objectives

1. subject – Joshua describes the process of allotting space for the remaining seven tribes
2. aim – To cause us to be tangibly grateful for whatever the Lord has allotted to us, great or small
3. passage – Joshua 18:1-19:51

### b. outline

1. The Allotment Process for the Remaining Tribes (Joshua 18:1-10)
2. The Allotment for the Remaining Tribes (Joshua 18:11-19:48)
3. The Allotment for Joshua (Joshua 19:49-51)

### c. opening

1. the **substance** of **chaps. 18-19**
  - a. these chapters recount the *final allocation* of the land in Canaan to the tribes of Israel
    1. the process began in **chaps. 15-17**: the tribe of Judah is given the *first* and *largest* territory in Canaan; the people of Joseph (represented by the tribes of Ephraim and W Manasseh) are given a large section in the C of Canaan
  - b. these chapters complete the allocation of land in Canaan **to the remaining seven tribes**
    1. in *this* fashion: the unallocated space is *divided* into seven separate areas by representatives of the remaining tribes (**18:1-9**); the seven divisions are apportioned out *by lot* (**18:10-19:48**); an allotment for Joshua's posterity is provided (**19:49-51**)

## I. The Allotment Process for the Remaining Tribes (Joshua 18:1-10)

### Content

#### a. the tabernacle at Shiloh (v. 1)

1. this is the first mention of Shiloh in the OT – it becomes the *permanent* location of the tabernacle until the days of David, when the Philistines capture the ark from there (**1 Samuel 4**)
  - a. Shiloh is located in the hill country of Ephraim, about 20 mi. N of Jerusalem (**see map**)
  - b. the location of the tabernacle once the people arrive in Canaan was to be specified by the Lord himself (**Deut. 12:10f**) – the choice was *apparently* given by Yahweh as Shiloh (**Jer. 7:12**)
  - c. **i.e.** Shiloh becomes the “worship center” of Israel until the temple is built
2. this is where the allotment of the (remaining) land was to take place
  - a. **IMO**: Joshua includes this *here* in the narrative, but the tent was *probably* already set up at Shiloh
    1. the statement “*the land lay subdued before them*” is *probably* a reference to the end of the conquests in **chaps. 10-12**
    2. **IOW**: once the *initial* conquest is complete, the process of allocation can begin; the allotments of Judah and Joseph were *probably* done by lot before the tent (as well), but the *bulk* of the W tribes (**7 / 9½**) are yet to be completed, so this is mentioned to *clarify* that in *this process*

#### b. the survey of the remaining land (vv. 2-10)

1. Joshua *first* questions the people: how long will you “put off” going in to take possession of the land?
  - a. **i.e.** the land is *yours* – it’s time for you to apportion it and then go live in it
  - b. **i.e.** there seems to be some *hesitancy* amongst the tribes to divide up the remaining land
2. so ... Joshua instructs them to go “spy out” the territory and draw up a map of the remaining land in seven (7) portions, which will then be doled out *by lot* before the Lord (**v. 6**)
  - a. **i.e.** Joshua gives the remaining tribes a “stake” in the process by allowing them draw *their own boundaries* – unlike Judah and Joseph, their boundaries will *not* be decided by lot (just the order)
  - b. **i.e.** three (3) men from each of the remaining seven (7) tribes walked throughout the land, writing a description of what they saw, and divided it up in a “fair” manner (**vv. 4, 9**)
  - c. **e.g.** the picture is reminiscent of God instructing Abraham to “*walk through the land*” (**Gen. 13:17**)
    1. to observe the land, to see how prosperous it is, and to *claim it* for yourself
3. **reminder (v. 7)**: the Levites will receive no territory of land (although they will receive space within the other tribes; **chap 21**); Reuben, Gad, and E Manasseh are already settled in the Transjordan

## II. The Allotment for the Remaining Tribes (Joshua 18:11-19:48)

### Content

#### a. the allotment for Benjamin (18:11-28)

1. **note #1:** it will not be necessary to exegete all of the boundary lines and city names in each of the seven allocations (**see map**) – a simple *summary* of the area for each tribe will be sufficient
2. **note #2:** the order of the tribes is determined by lot – how the *area* for each tribe is determined is unknown (**i.e.** did they get to *choose* which area they wanted, or was that *also* decided by the lot?)
3. Benjamin is the *first* of the remaining tribes selected – the land allotted to them is “*between the people of Judah and the people of Joseph*” (**i.e.** Ephraim; **v. 11**; **see map**)
  - a. **i.e.** Benjamin is “sandwiched” between Judah S and Ephraim N, including Jericho E (**v. 21**)
4. **note #3:** how the area “around” Ephraim came to be “open” (for Benjamin and Dan) is unknown
  - a. **i.e.** like Simeon (**see next**), territory of Ephraim and Judah are “carved” out for these two tribes – why is not specified here, although it is *possible* that the space for Ephraim was *also* considered “too large” and (thus) Benjamin and Dan are “contained” within/around it
  - b. **e.g.** Benjamin is a tribe of 45,600 men (**Num. 26:41**), whereas Ephraim is only 32,500
5. Benjamin will become *inextricably linked* to Judah (to the S) by the days of David, such that Benjamin will virtually become a “part” of Judah as the S Kingdom after Rehoboam (**2 Kings 12:21**)

#### b. the allotment for Simeon (19:1-9)

1. Simeon is the *smallest* of the tribes (22,200; **Num. 26:14**) and is “inserted” into the space of Judah
2. an area within Judah is carved out for Simeon because “*the portion of the people of Judah was too large for them*” (**v. 9**) – **IOW:** the lot fell in such a way that it was obvious that God purposed for Simeon to be contained “within” the larger area to the S previously granted to Judah (**not on map**)
3. this fulfills the blessing of Jacob over Simeon (and Levi) that God would “*scatter*” them in Israel because they were men of violence (**i.e.** they were the brothers who defended Dinah’s honor by killing Hamor the Hivite; **Genesis 34 cf. 49:5-7**)
4. **note:** the tribe of Simeon slowly migrates N *out of Judah* over time – the last *historical* reference to Simeon is **2 Chron. 34:6**, in the days of good king Josiah (c. 620BC), when he cleans up the Baals in what is “left” of the N Kingdom (having gone to captivity in 721BC)

#### c. the allotment for Zebulun (19:10-16)

1. **note:** the next four (4) tribes will cover the area to the far N, reaching up to Lebanon and Syria (**i.e.** Judah covering the S, Joseph in the C, these tribes in the N)
2. Zebulun is a tribe of 60,500 (**Num. 26:27**) – it is allotted land in the area that will eventually become C Galilee (**i.e.** to the W of the Sea of Galilee; **see map**)

#### d. the allotment for Issachar (19:17-23)

1. Issachar is a tribe of 64,300 (**Num. 26:25**), virtually the same size as Dan (**see below**) – it is allotted land below Zebulun in the Valley of Jezreel, W from the Jordan below the Sea of Galilee (**see map**)

#### e. the allotment for Asher (19:24-31)

1. Asher is a tribe of 53,400 (**Num. 26:47**) – it is allotted land along the Mediterranean from W Manasseh N to the top of Canaan (**i.e.** to Sidon the Great; **v. 28**; **see map**)

#### f. the allotment for Naphtali (19:32-39)

1. Naphtali is a tribe of 45,400 (**Num. 26:50**) – it is allotted the inland territory E of Asher to the border of E Manasseh (**i.e.** to the Jordan *above* the Sea of Galilee flowing S from Lake Huleh; **see map**)

#### g. the allotment for Dan (19:40-48)

1. Dan is a tribe of 64,400 (the *second-largest tribe*; **Num. 26:43**) – it is allotted land above Judah (like Benjamin) around Ephraim to W Manasseh N (**see map**)
  - a. (**again**) how Dan became “sandwiched” between Judah and Joseph is unknown, especially given its size relative to the other tribes – *maybe* its “fighting men” count is deceptive as to its *relative size* (**i.e.** its description in **Num. 26:42** includes only a *single clan*; Shuham)

## III. The Allotment for Joshua (Joshua 19:49-51)

### Content

#### a. the allotment for Joshua

1. the third *personal* allotment made in Canaan (**e.g.** Caleb and the daughters of Zelophehad)
2. it would *appear* that this allotment is made *as a gift* to Joshua for his faithfulness in leadership
  - a. **i.e.** the Lord commanded it (**v. 50**), and the people gave it to him (**v. 49**)

3. Joshua was given the city of Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim (his native tribe; **Num. 13:8**)
    - a. he “*rebuilt the city*” – implying 1) it had been destroyed in the initial conquest under his leadership; 2) it needed to be conquered by him (which he did) needing to be rebuilt; or 3) he simply built it as he saw fit in the place called Timnath-serah (or Timnath-heres; **Judg. 2:9**)
    - b. **note:** Joshua (the author) mentions this *only in passing* – the epitaph of the book indicates that he was (ultimately) buried in the city (**Joshua 24:30**)
  4. the allotment is *similar* to the one made for Caleb: although *not expressly promised by God*, Joshua’s posterity is given an allotment **because of his faithfulness to the Lord**
    - a. **i.e.** a *special* allotment made to the man who successfully led them into the Promised Land
    - b. **e.g.** a picture of Jesus (**i.e.** Yeshua) who *also* leads a people into the place of promise ...
- b. the allotment for the elect**
1. these two chapters encompass about 60% of the allotment (**i.e. 7/12 and 355,800 / 601,700**)
  2. so, at the end of these allotments, the people of Jacob have all received a portion of the land promised to Abraham 600 years earlier – on both sides of the Jordan!
  3. it reminds me of Jesus’ words regarding the allotment of the kingdom for the elect (**John 14:1-3**)
 

*“Let not your hearts be troubled. [You] Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms [KJV: mansions; lit. dwelling places]. If it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”*

    - a. **i.e.** everyone in Israel has been given a place – every one of the elect will *also* receive a place
    - b. **Baptist:** as though Jesus is talking about *physical* locations in heaven (**i.e.** mansions)
      1. true ... the element of “physicality” will certainly be true after the resurrection, but ...
    - c. **figuratively:** Jesus is *also* referring to his people being *with him* (and the Father) in the kingdom
      1. **i.e.** we will receive an “allotment” (a place) *with him* in eternity, in the presence of Yahweh, to enjoy his magnificence forevermore (“*I will take you to myself ...*”)
    - d. **the elect are promised a place with him – an allotment of the kingdom of Christ where we will enjoy his inexhaustible loving presence, explore his unlimited nature as God, and exercise our gifts in his infinitely creative universe, all to his glory and our fulfillment**
  4. closing the Thanksgiving season (opening **Advent**):
    - a. it’s *normal* for us to concentrate on giving thanks *for those things we’ve already received*
      1. and (**at GFBC**), to give thanks even for our *troubles, tribulations, griefs, and pains* – knowing they are designed *by a loving Father* to mold us and make us *even more ready for the kingdom*
    - b. but ... it should *also* be normal for us to give thanks **for what we have not yet received**
      1. Advent is an *anticipation*: “looking forward” to celebrating the Christmas season
      2. it *should* be a time giving thanks for our (eventual!) presence with Christ – **a thankfulness borne out of faith in the promises given to us in Christ**