

220921-4 Jos 13, An Aged Joshua's Last Work – To Divide Canaan—CThurman

The 12th chapter closed out the first major division of the Book of Joshua. These chapters gave an account of Israel's invasion into all of the land of Canaan. The 12th chapter was an assessment of Israel's newly established boundaries as a nation, and of the 31 city-kings that were slain in the Canaan conquest.

Chapters 13-19 marks the second division of the book of Joshua, which mainly concerns allotting the land on the western side of the Jordan River to the nine and one-half tribes of Israel that shall live there.

Remember that there is a sense in which respect Canaan is not a land of rest, but a land of conflict. It is a land of rest in that it is a land in which we cease from our own works and enter into the works of God. It is the time for victorious living.

1Jo 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Chapter 13

1 ¶ Now Joshua was old and stricken in years;
being old gone

old, Qal pret. of the Hebrew verb זָקַן, zah-qeyhn, tss. *to be old, to be aged*; the adj. זָקֵן, is tss. *old, eldest, old man, aged, ancient, ancient man*.

stricken, Qal pret. of the Hebrew verb בָּא, bōh, tss. *to come, to go, to be stricken* (twice in Jos.13.1), *to pass*.

and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years,
gone

and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.
is left inherited.

remaineth, Niphal (simple pass.) pret. of the Hebrew verb שָׁאַר, shah-ar, tss. *to remain, to leave*; **v.2.**

to be possessed, Qal infin. of the Hebrew verb יָרַשׁ, yah-rash, tss. *to possess, to succeed, to enjoy, to inherit, to drive out, to consume, to expel*; **v.2.**

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

Philistines, of the Hebrew noun פְּלִשְׁתִּי, P^e-leesh-tee; Philistia, פְּלִשְׁתַּי, P^e-le-sheth, meaning ‘the land of the wanderers’ or, ‘the land of strangers’, cf. *Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, H.W.F. Gesenius, p.677.

ISBE, ‘The word [Philistines, added] means “migrants,” and they came from another country. They are noticed 286 t in the OT, and their country 8 t.

borders, a Hebrew fem. noun גְּלִילֵי, also tss. *coasts, country*;
Jos.22.10, 11.

3 From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward,
(cf. Jer.2.18)

borders, a Hebrew masc. noun גְּבוּלֵי, g^e-vool, also tss. *bounds, coast, landmark, space, limit*; **vss. 3, 4, 10, 11, 16, 23 (twice), 25-27, 30.**

which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines;
reckoned

counted, Niphal (simple pass.) fut. of the Hebrew verb חָשַׁב, chah-shav, tss. *to think, to devise, to imagine, to purpose, to regard, to esteem, to conceive, to count, to be cunning, to impute, to account, to reckon, to consider.*

Noah, to Shem, to Ham, to Mizraim (the Egyptians), to Casluhim, to Philistim. And,

Noah, to Shem, to Ham to Canaan ...

*Ge.10.15 ¶ And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,
16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite,
17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,
18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and
afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.
19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest
to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and
Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.*

the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites:

‘The Philis ... were so powerful at the time of the Heb conquest that none of their great towns were taken.’ *ISBE*, vol. 4, p.2377

The first mention of the Philistine people in the Bible is Ge.21.32. The Philistines possessed the most southwestern coastal parcel of property of Canaan that follows along the Mediterranean Sea, or as Ex.23.31 calls it, the Sea of the Philistines. (Ge.21.32; Ex.13.17; 23.31) The Avites, or Avims were driven out of Ammon and apparently joined themselves to the Philistines. (cf. Deu.2.23)

4 From the south, all the land of the Canaanites,

Perhaps referring to the part of the mid-section of Canaan.

and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians, unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites:

The mention of the Amorites would lead us to understand there were Amorites that continued on the eastern side of the Jordan River. So, there were areas of Canaan that were unconquered in the south, along the middle, and to the eastern border of Canaan marked by the Jordan River.

**5 And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising,
Gebalites**

Gebalites of the city of Gebal, north of the city of Sidon about 50 miles.
(roughly)

from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath.

It appears that Baalgad is south of the entrance to Hamath, Syria.

**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.**

divide thou it by lot, Hiphil (causative act.) imper. of the Hebrew verb
נָפַל, nah-phal, also tss. *to cast, to throw down, to overthrow, to fall,*
etc.

7 ¶ Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance
distribute (western)

divide, Piel (intensive act.) imper. of the Hebrew verb חָלַק, *chah-laq*,
also tss. *to distribute, to deal, to give a portion, to part, etc.*

unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites
(the half tribe of Manasseh)

have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them,

(before his death)

beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them;

The whole land, the land on both sides of the Jordan River belong the
Israel.

The remainder of this chapter gives a description of the boundaries of the eastern land that belongs to Israel.

9 From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river,

The river Arnon marks Israel's southernmost boundary on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. This border separates between Israel and Moab. But it also sounds like the city of Aroer, which is situated at about the midway point of the length of this river Arnon, might serve as a southeastern corner marker. West of it is Israel's. South of it is Moab's. And north of it is Ammon's. (cf. Jos.12.2, *from the middle of the river*; 13.16)

and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon;

Which cities mark all the land directly east of the Dead Sea. This essentially describes the land allotted to the tribe of Reuben in the south.

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

So, this describes the midland territory of the eastern parcel above Reuben. This is half of the area that is called Gilead. These were the cities under the rule of Sihon that are allotted to the tribe of Gad.

De 3:12 And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, and half mount Gilead, (which involves Sihon's territory) and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites.

De 3:16 And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon half the valley, and the border even unto the river Jabbok (perhaps giving a major boundary between Gad and Manasseh's land, but where this river turns south in the east ...), which is the border of the children of Ammon ...

Then north of the tribe of Gad, which would be the northern half of Gilead and above ...

11 And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites,

and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah;

From Gilead up to Geshur, which is directly east of the sea of Chinnereth (Galilee, or Lake Genessaret). Maacah is located just above Geshir and under mount Hermon.

Salcah, or Salecah might mark the kingdom of Og's easternmost border. This describes the land allotted to the one-half tribe of Manasseh located on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

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 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.

At the time of the closing history of the book of Joshua Geshurites and Maachathites remained in the land of Canaan.

14 Only unto the tribe 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.

cf. Jos.13.33; Nu.18.20-24

On the east of the Jordan River Levi receives of the sacrifices which Israel brings to the LORD. Then what follows is a description of the allotment of this land to the two and one-half tribes that shall dwell here, Reuben, Gad and the one-half tribe of Manasseh.

Reubens Parcel

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

There is some question about what is described in Nu.32.34-42. All that I can say is that this describes cities each of the tribes Reuben, Gad and Manasseh quickly rebuilt to leave behind their families, flocks, herds, etc. with a sufficient military presence to defend them until the rest of the brethren returned from helping the other tribes inherit Canaan, as agreed in Nu.32.25-27.

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

18 And Jahazah, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

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

20 And Bethpeor, and Ashdothpisgah, and Bethjeshimoth,

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

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.

Gad's Parcel

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

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;

Again, if Aroer is a corner marker to the east for Reuben it is here being used to mark the east boundary between Gad and Ammon. This also seems

to say that not only did Moab lose land in conflict with king Sihon of the Amorites, but so also Ammon.

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

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.

in the border of, קֶצֶף, a masc. noun tss. the end of, the quarter, the edge, to border, to brink, to the brim, the uttermost part, the outside; cf. Jos.3.2, after; 3.8, the brink of; 3.15, the brim of; 4.19, in the border of; 9.16, at the end of; 13.27, the edge of; 15.1, the uttermost part of; 15.2, from the shore of; 15.5, the end of, the uttermost part of; 15.8, at the end of; 15.21, the uttermost; 18.15, from the end of, 18.16, the end of; 18.19, at the end.

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

½ Tribe of Manasseh's Parcel

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.

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 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.

Closing Remarks

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

cf. Jos.13.14; Nu.18.20-24

Revisit verses 1-8. – In effect the LORD said to Joshua that he was now of an old age and though under his leadership Israel had taken much land, but there was one other work for him to do before he died: divide the land of Canaan and assign it to remaining 9 ½ tribes of Israel.

As children of God the Lord has a work for both the young and the old. Generally, the young have strength and the aged have wisdom.

Pr 20:29 The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.

Lam.3.27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Here the LORD had a final work for Joshua to do before He called Him to glory. The LORD has a work suited even for the aged saints. Old age is another opportunity for serving the Lord. Then, there might be more time to apply that could directly bless others, whether helping younger families learn how to be frugal with their substance, or entertaining guests in the home, more time for personal Bible study, perhaps more time to have Bible studies with others, more personal prayer time, writing notes and letters of encouragement, more time and ways to communicate the faith to others. There are many things the aged saints can do that they hadn't had so much time to do before. Though we lose our ability to handle a chainsaw for hours on end, or hammer nails, drive a truck, run a route or stand behind the service counter all day there are many ways we can put our new-found freedom to work for the Lord. Let us also redeem this time for Christ. This is the final stretch and then we come into the presence of the Lord. Like Joshua some of us are *stricken* in years, or fast approaching that time. Make the most use of the time we have remaining.

Joshua spent about the first 42 years of his life as a slave under cruel taskmasters. During the 40-yr. sojourned he became a great commander of Israel's hosts and one of Moses' personal attendants. And if the record of Joshua covers a period of 21 years, as some say, he waged battle *with his*

brethren against the inhabitants of the land until he was about 103 years of age. And then, it's only my opinion, as the sun began to set on Joshua's life he likely became like Moses just before he died, who unable to go out and to come in as he used to do. (cf. Deu.31.2) And the LORD said, 'Hey, you've one more thing to do.' And when Joshua was finished with his race, when he finished dividing the land of Canaan as the LORD commanded him to do, he rested from his labors. And now, with the whole host of the saints of God awaiting the time of when Christ shall reward His faithful servants.

Even in old age it is good to ask, 'What would the Lord have me to do?' Watch for the good of others. Is there a need someone has that I can supply? Certainly with age comes increasing limitations. Though we cannot necessarily do what we used to do, isn't there something that we can do in the Lord's service until He calls us to come into His presence? I think so.

Chapter 14 begins describing the allotment of the land on the western side of the Jordan River.