

Joshua Chapter 13

Verses 1-2

“Much land”: Some land had not yet actually been occupied by the Israelites through the previous general victories.

Pockets or areas in (13:2-6), still lay untouched by specific invasion and occupation (see note on 11:23).

When Joshua allotted areas to individuals and tribes, they bore the challenge to drive out lingering resisters.

If not, they would disobey God’s mandate to be resolute in conquest (Deut. 11:22-23).

Failure to do this thoroughly is a sad theme (in Judges chapter 1).

Verses 1-7

Even though Israel still had “much land to be possessed”, God promised Joshua that He would give it to them, so he should include the yet-unconquered territory in his division of the land.

When God promises something, His children should respond as if He has already done it, because He has.

Joshua 13:1 "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 old”:

By this time, he was about 95, in comparison to Caleb’s 85 years (see 14:10; in 23:1 he was old and stricken in age at 110; and in 24:29 he was near death and he died).

Chapters 13 to 19 deal with the careful allotment of land to the tribes of Israel.

The division was to be carried out on spiritual grounds (compare verse 6; 14:2; 18:6), as well as on the basis of the needs of the tribes.

The whole process was presided over by Joshua, Eleazar the priest, and by the heads of the tribes (14:1).

It was carried out carefully by a committee of men specially selected to study the land and determine its boundaries (18:4-1).

We know that Joshua had been without a spot on his life all during the wilderness wanderings.

He was thrust into the shoes of one of the greatest men in history (Moses).

He did not pale to him however.

He knew the task before him and did it just as Moses had commanded him to do.

The crossing of the Jordan River was just as dramatic as the crossing of the Red sea, but has had much less fame.

This is so interesting to me, that God would say there is still much to do.

This is very much like Christianity.

The battle never stops.

It seems too, that we all must work until Jesus comes, or until our life on earth is over.

There is no retirement.

Verses 2-6

This is a detailed list of allotted land yet to be conquered by the Israelites.

The names proceed from south to north, covering the area between the shores of the Mediterranean sea and the coastal mountains.

The mention of the “Philistines” and the five lords” of their principal cities has been considered anachronistic by some due to the omission of the Philistines from the inheritance list of (12:8), and the statement in (11:21-22), that the Anakim were still the chief force in southwestern Canaan.

However, the presence of small numbers of Philistines in the area was noted as early as the patriarchal period (Gen. 21:32; compare Exodus 13:17), so that some Philistine presence was already known by Joshua’s day.

The precision regarding the discussion concerning the Philistines here may be an editorial updating, detailing the conditions of the territory that would be dominated by the Philistines after Joshua’s time.

Indeed, the Philistines would become a source of increasing irritation to Israel during the era of the Judges (compare Judges 3:3-4, 31).

By the time of Samson (a century-and-a-half later), they became a distinct threat (Judges chapters 13 to 16).

Joshua 13:2 "This [is] the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri,"

Unconquered and not enjoyed, namely, what is after described.

And this account is given for Joshua's information, that he might know what to divide, and for the people of Israel's sake, that they might know what they had a right to a claim upon.

What they should endeavor to possess themselves of, and what the LORD would deliver into their hands, provided they were obedient to his will.

For, because they were not, hence many of these places never came into their possession, though divided to them by lot.

All the borders of the Philistines":

whose country bordered and lay upon the shores of the Mediterranean sea, in the southwest of the land of Canaan.

"And all Geshuri":

The principal city belonging to it is said to be in Syria (2 Sam. 15:8).

And had a king over it in the times of David (2 Sam. 3:3).

And seems never to have come into the hands of the Israelites.

These Philistines were powerful opponents.

Some of the area of Lebanon was taken, and some were not.

The Geshurites were the earlier inhabitants of that land, and were also known as the Avites.

Joshua 13:3 "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:"

"Ekron":

Was one of the five cities ruled by a Philistine “tyrant” (verse 3; 1 Sam. 6:17).

The city was near the Mediterranean sea about 22 miles west of Jerusalem.

Its territorial boundary marked the northern extension of the coastal area not taken in the Israelites’ initial invasion of the land (verse 3; Judges 1:18-19).

In the tribal allotments Ekron was assigned to the Danites (19:43), leaving their coastal territory to be absorbed by Judah (15:45-46).

Thus, the border of Judah passed along the ridge to the north of Ekron (15:11).

After David killed Goliath, the Israelites pursued the Philistines to the very gates of the fortified stronghold of Ekron (1 Sam. 17:52).

Still later, according to the Assyrian Annals, Hezekiah held as prisoner Padi, the king of Ekron, against who he and the city’s nobility had rebelled.

Elijah was called to challenge the authority of Ekron’s god, Baal-zebub, to indicate Israelite King Amaziah’s fate (2 Kings 1:2-16).

Amos (Amos 1:8), Jeremiah (Jer. 25:20), Zephaniah (Zeph. 2:4), and Zechariah (Zech. 9:5-7), denounced Ekron as a symbol of evil power to be destroyed.

“Sihor”:

Probably related to the Nile (Isa. 23:3; Jer. 2:18), and possibly a name for that river or an eastern tributary of it.

The name could also refer to a seasonal rain through which runs to the Mediterranean, the Wadi-el-Arish in the desert south of Palestine, northeast of Egypt.

"Sihor" is a name given the Nile in Scripture.

In this case, I believe it means something else.

The word "Sihor" means black, dark, or turbid.

It was probably a lake or a pool.

Some believe this is speaking of the brook of Egypt.

Ekron is a city about 11 miles north of Gath.

The fly god was worshipped here.

The others listed are the tribal nations classified as Philistines.

Joshua 13:4 "From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that [is] beside the Sidonians unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites:"

That is, of those Canaanites who were particularly so called, in distinction from those of the other nations or tribes, and who dwelt in several parts of the land.

Some in the east and others in the west (see Joshua 11:3).

And, as it seems here, some in the south: now on the side of the south, as Kimchi interprets it, all the land of the Canaanites was left, that is, remained unconquered and not possessed.

"And Mearah that is beside the Sidonians":

"The inhabitants of Sidon, and parts adjacent: what this place was, which belonged to the Sidonians":

For so it may better be rendered, is not certain; some take it to be a cave belonging to them.

Sandys speaks of a number of caves cut out of the rock in those parts, called the caves of the Sidonians, and afterwards the caves of Tyre.

But rather something of more importance than a cave or a river is meant; most likely a tract of land near Sidon, and which belonged to it, and reached:

"Unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites":

Of this place (see note on Joshua 12:18).

This is south of the Philistine tribes, not the southernmost part of the Promised Land.

All of Canaan up to Philistine territory, is meant here.

Mearah was probably a prominent cave, perhaps, the cave of Tyre.

Aphek was supposed to be a place of rare beauty on the northwest slopes of Lebanon.

Aphek is 23 miles north of Beirut.

Joshua 13:5 "And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath."

This was another country that remained unconquered.

The Greeks call it Byblus, and near to which Pliny speaks of a place called Gabale, and is now called Gibyle.

It is said to be "pleasantly situated by the seaside, and at present it contains but a little extent of ground, but yet more than enough for the small number of its inhabitants: "it was in greater splendor, and its inhabitants of more fame, in the times of Ezekiel" (Ezek. 27:9).

"And all Lebanon toward the sunrising":

Or east of the land; all that inhabited that mountain remained unconquered, though the conquest was carried as far as the borders thereof.

"From Baal-gad, under Mount Hermon":

Of which (see Joshua 11:17).

"Unto the entering into Hamath":

Which was the north border of the land (see Num. 34:8).

The Giblites were inhabitants of Gebal, which was known also by Byblus.

It was Phoenician.

The Israelites never really inhabited this area, even though it was a part that was to have been conquered.

Hamath was included in that.

Joshua 13:6 "All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephoth-maim, [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."

Presently after thy death, if the Israelites do not hinder it by their unbelief or wickedness.

Though they be now unconquered, yet divide them, partly, as a pledge to assure them of my help in conquering them after thy death.

Partly, to lay an obligation upon the Israelites to proceed in conquering work, and to bear witness against them in case they did not.

And partly, as a wall of partition between them and the Canaanites, to prevent all agreements, contracts, and confederacies with them, to which God saw they began to incline.

Sidon remained independent.

This is speaking of the part of the land of the Sidonians that was included in the Promised Land.

Israel did defeat them, and incorporated them into Israel.

The hill country of Lebanon was the border on this side.

Joshua 13:7 "Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh,"

“Divide this land”:

God commanded Joshua to devise allotments within boundaries for inheritances as He had prepared for earlier (Num. chapters 32-34).

Joshua announced divisions made clear by lot to tribes east of the Jordan (13:8-33), tribes west of the Jordan (Joshua chapters 14-19), Caleb (14:6-15; compare 15:13-19), his own area (19:49-51), cities of refuge (20:1-9), and Levite towns (chapter 21).

All of the land mentioned on the west side of the Jordan is to belong to the nine and a half tribes of Israel.

The other two and a half tribes inherited their land on the eastern side of Jordan.

Manasseh had a half tribe on either side of Jordan.

Joshua 13:8 "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;"

Hebrew with him, i.e. with the half tribe of Manasseh.

Not that half which is expressed (Joshua 13:7), as is evident from the thing.

But the other half, which is sufficiently and necessarily understood, the relative being here put for the antecedent, understood, as it is (Num. 7:89; Psalm 114:2; Isa. 8:21; Jonah 1:3).

"As Moses the servant of the LORD gave them":

Which Moses gave them by my command, and therefore do not thou disturb them in their possessions, but proceed to divide the other possessions to the rest.

Reuben and Gad were herdsmen and they liked the pastureland on the east of the Jordan River.

They were not mistreated by giving them this land.

They had specifically requested it.

Moses got permission from God for them to have it.

Joshua 13:9 "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;"

A city belonging to Moab, from whence the description begins.

The river Arnon, on which it was situated, being the border between Moab and the Amorites (Num. 21:13).

"And the city that is in the midst of the river":

Or "even the city"; meaning the same city of Aroer, it lying both on the bank of it, and in the middle of it.

Or it was a double city, as may seem from (Isa. 17:2).

And so differently situated at that river.

"And all the plains of Medeba unto Dibon":

Of these two places (see Num. 21:30).

Between them lay a plain, which some take to be the plain of Moab.

But it rather seems to be a plain that was between these two places.

And, according to (Joshua 13:17), Dibon itself was in a plain.

This is land on the eastern side of Jordan.

Aroer was on the river.

Arnon was in the extreme south of the territory of Reuben.

Dibon became a city of Gad.

Joshua 13:10 "And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon;"

A city he took from the Moabites, and made it his royal seat (Num. 21:26).

"Unto the border of the children of Ammon":

Which was the river Jabbok (Deut. 3:16).

Sihon and Og were defeated by Moses, and all of their land was taken.

Joshua 13:11 "And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah;"

The land of Gilead, which was part of the kingdom of Og.

Half of which was given to Reuben, and the other half to Gad.

"And the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites":

Of which see (Deut. 3:14).

"And all Mount Hermon":

Called also Sirion, Shenir, and Sion (Deut. 3:9).

"And all Bashan unto Salcah":

Another part of the dominions of Og (Deut. 3:10).

This is a repetition of chapter 12 verse 5.

The Geshurites, we remember were on the northeast corner of Bashan.

The Maachathites were the inhabitants of a small kingdom near Palestine.

Joshua 13:12 "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."

See note on (Joshua 12:4).

"Who remained of the remnant of the giants":

Was descended from those that remained in Ashtaroth, after the rest were cut off by Chedorlaomer (Gen. 14:5).

Called there the Rephaim, as here.

"For these did Moses smite, and cast them out":

That is, not only the giants, but the inhabitants of the above kingdom, the greatest part of them.

For the Geshurites and the Maachathites are excepted in (Joshua 13:13).

Og had been a very powerful king who led an army of giants.

Moses and the children of Israel fought them, and killed nearly all of them.

Joshua 13:13 "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."

Neither in the times of Moses, nor in the times of Joshua.

"But the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day":

In full possession of their cities unmolested.

Yea, in later times they became separate and distinct kingdoms.

For we read both of the king of Geshur, and of the king of Maachah (2 Sam. 3:3).

Even up until the time of David there were still some of them around.

2 Samuel 13:37 "But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And [David] mourned for his son every day."

Joshua 13:14 "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."

Because they were priests who were to be supported by the people through the tithe, the "tribe of Levi" was given "none inheritance" (no land; 13:33).

They were supposed to spend their time and energy serving God and His people in the tabernacle (18:7), rather than tending land or livestock.

The Levitical tribe was not to inherit land.

They lived of the altar of God in the tabernacle.

They did inherit cities to live in.

They did not go to war, and they did not inherit land.

Joshua 13:15 "And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben [inheritance] according to their families."

According to the number of them, and sufficient for them.

Now they will explicitly show what land each tribe received.

Moses gave Reuben's tribe their inheritance before Moses died.

They received land according to how many were in their families.

This land would be theirs for all generations to come.

Joshua 13:16 "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;"

As the country of Sihon is described (Joshua 13:9).

From whence it appears that it was his country which was given to Reuben, though not all of it.

"And the city that is in the midst of the river":

See note on Joshua 13:9.

"And all the plain by Medeba":

Which reached unto Dibon (Joshua 13:9).

Joshua 13:17 "Heshbon, and all her cities that [are] in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,"

Which was by Medeba, and reached to Dibon.

"Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon":

Dibon was rebuilt by Gad, though it belonged to Reuben, and perhaps was inhabited by both, being on the borders of each.

And Bamoth-baal signifies the high places of Baal (see Num. 22:41).

Perhaps this is the same with Bamoth in the valley (Num. 21:20).

And Beth-baal-meon is the same with Baal-meon in (Num. 32:38).

Where it is highly probable was a temple of Baal, since both "beth" signifies a house, and "meon" a habitation.

Joshua 13:18 "And Jahazah, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,"

Called Jahaz (Num. 21:23), where the battle was fought between Sihon and Israel.

"And Kedemoth":

Near to which was a wilderness, which took its name from it, from whence Moses sent messengers with words of peace to Sihon (Deut. 2:26).

"And Mephaath":

Thought to be the Maipha of Ptolemy.

Here Jerom says, in his time was a garrison of Roman soldiers, because of the desert that was near.

It was a city, with its suburbs, given to the Levites, as were the two preceding (Joshua 21:36).

Andrichomius takes it to be the same with Malle, which, Josephus says was called the city of the strangers.

Joshua 13:19 "And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley,"

Of which See note on (Num. 32:37).

"And Sibmah":

Of which (see note on Num. 32:3; and 32:38).

"And Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley":

Which was built on one of the mountains that looked over the valley of Moab, as did Nebo, Pisgah and Abarim.

Perhaps it is the same place Josephus calls Zara.

To which he joins the valley of the Cilicians, and mentions it along with Heshbon, Medeba, and other cities of Moab.

According to Andrichomius, it was in the mount of the valley of Beth-peor, which next follows.

Joshua 13:20 "And Beth-peor, and Ashdoth-pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth,"

So called from Peor, the idol of the Moabites.

And where very likely there had been a temple built to the honor of it.

Over against this place was a valley, where Israel abode some time (Deut. 3:29).

"And Ashdod-pisgah":

Of which see Deut. 3:17.

"And Beth-jeshimoth":

Of which see Num. 33:49.

Joshua 13:21 "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."

In the open level country, as well as those in the mountainous part.

"And all the kingdom of Sihon":

Or, as Masius renders the words, "which all had been the kingdom of Sihon".

For the whole kingdom of Sihon was not given to Reuben, only a part of it, and the rest to Gad (as in Joshua 13:27).

"King of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon":

As in Joshua 13:10.

"Whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba":

Not at the same time that Sihon was smitten by him, but afterwards in a war with Midian (Num. 31:8).

Where their names are given as here.

And there they are called kings of Midian, petty kings, and, as it seems by what follows, were subject to Sihon, and therefore are here mentioned.

"Which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country":

For Midian, as Kimchi supposes, and not without reason, was under the government of Sihon.

And these were his nobles, though they dwelt in the land of Midian.

We find that all of the above were given to Reuben's descendants for a possession.

There were many cities not even mentioned.

Some of them were burned with fire and some were kept as cities for the Reubenites.

Each of the dukes were destroyed along with Sihon.

They had ruled their people, and had made a treaty with Sihon.

They were subordinate kings to Sihon.

Joshua 13:22 "Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them."

The story of "Balaam" is found in (Num. chapter 22-24).

His divided heart, so bent on personal gain, eventually led to his demise as his nation was overtaken by the Israelites.

"Balaam ... Israel slay with the sword":

This Israelite slaying of the infamous false prophet occurred at an unidentified point during the conquest (compare Num. chapters 21-25; 31:16; Joshua 24:9-10; 2 Peter 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14).

A "soothsayer" is the same as a diviner, or someone who tells the future.

We remember the incident with Balaam and the ass.

Balaam pretended to be on the side of the Israelites, but got the Moabite women to entice them into idolatry and adultery.

He was killed because of his evil heart.

Joshua 13:23 "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."

As their border eastward was Aroer on the river Arnon, so their border westward was the river Jordan.

"This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof":

Which Moses gave them on the other side Jordan.

And next follow an account of the inheritance of the tribe of Gad in those parts.

The western side of their inheritance was the Jordan River.

All of the list above was divided among Reuben's descendants.

Joshua 13:24 "And Moses gave [inheritance] unto the tribe of Gad, [even] unto the children of Gad according to their families."

On the other side Jordan, as he did to Reuben.

"Even unto the children of Gad according to their families":

According to the number and largeness of them, dividing to each their part and portion.

Joshua 13:25 "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;"

Their southern coast; of Jazer (see Num. 21:32); where it is called Jaazer.

And is mentioned in (Isa. 16:8; Jer. 48:32), where it is spoken of as a city of Moab.

As it was in the days of those prophets.

"And all the cities of Gilead":

Which lay in those parts.

For the whole was not given to this tribe, half of Gilead was given to the half tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 13:31).

"And half the land of the children of Ammon":

Not what then belonged to them, but what had been taken from them by the Amorites.

And which Israel taking from them, had a right to retain.

Though they were forbid meddling with any of their land in present possession (see Deut. 2:19; Judges 11:13).

"Unto Aroer that is before Rabbah":

Aroer was a city of Moab, situated on the river Arnon (Joshua 13:9).

And stood over against Rabbath, a city of the Amorites, since called Philadelphia.

The same that Joab took (2 Sam. 12:26).

Though Reland thinks, that according to the situation of these cities, another Aroer must be here meant, and which belonged to the Amorites.

Joshua 13:26 "And from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir;"

This was their coast from the south to the north, and so describes their eastern border.

Which reached from Heshbon, given to the tribe of Reuben (Joshua 13:7).

To these places mentioned; Ramath-mizpeh, the same with Ramoth-gilead, which Jerom says was a village in his time, and lay two miles from Philadelphia.

Or Rabbath before mentioned, to the east.

It should be to the west; of Betonim we nowhere else read, it seems to have been near to Ramath.

"And from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir":

The former of these was the place where the angels met Jacob, and who gave it the name from thence.

And in later times a city of this name was built there, and was near the river Jabbok (Gen. 32:2).

Debir is different from that in the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:15).

In the Septuagint version here it is called Daibon, perhaps the same with Dibon, the tribe of Gad rebuilt, and is called Dibon-gad (Num. 32:34).

Joshua 13:27 " And in the valley, Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah, 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."

The same with Beth Haran (see Num. 32:36).

"And Beth-nimrah":

Sometimes called Nimrah (Num. 32:3).

Near to which were some waters, called the waters of Nimrim (Isa. 15:6).

It was in Jerom's time a large village and it seems to have its name from leopards, which perhaps had their haunts hereabout.

"And Succoth":

The place where Jacob pitched his tent after he had passed over Jabbok.

It is called in the Jerusalem Talmud Thaarabah.

"And Zaphon":

Which in the same Talmud is Amatho or Amathus, which Jerom says is a village beyond Jordan, twenty-one miles from Pella to the south, though he places it in the tribe of Reuben.

"The rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon":

Which was not given to the tribe of Reuben (Joshua 13:21).

"Jordan and his border":

That is, the cities which were near it, as Kimchi.

Or that were upon the bank of it, as Jarchi.

"Even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth":

The same with the lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1).

"On the other side Jordan eastward":

The other from that in which the inheritance of Gad lay.

Which was beyond Jordan, from the land of Canaan.

Joshua 13:28 "This [is] the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages."

As described in (Joshua 13:27).

"The cities, and their villages":

The cities given them, some of which are mentioned by name, and the villages adjacent and belonging to them were included in them.

Each tribe had their land divided up among their families.

Gad's inheritance joined Reuben's on one side.

It extended to the sea of Galilee (Chinnereth) and to Jordan on one side.

On the other side, it joined the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh, near the sea of Galilee.

They inherited many cities and villages along with the land.

Joshua 13:29 "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."

Some of Manasseh's people settled on the far side of the Jordan River, while half crossed over and were given an inheritance with the rest of the tribes.

This geographical separation is why they are referred to as the “half tribe of Manasseh”.

Joshua 13:30 "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:"

A place in the tribe of Gad (Joshua 13:26).

Which was the boundary of the half tribe that way.

"All Bashan":

So famous for its oxen, and for pasturage for them, and for its oaks, called by Josephus Batanea.

"All the kingdom of Og king of Bashan":

Which, besides Bashan, took in the kingdom of Argob or Trachonitis.

Half the land of Gilead, all which was possessed by the half tribe of Manasseh (see Deut. 3:13).

"And all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities":

Of Jair, and his relation to Manasseh, and of his taking these cities, and the number of them (see Numbers 33:41).

Threescore, is sixty cities they inherited.

The inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh lay north of the inheritance of Gad.

Joshua 13:31 "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."

The other half not given to the Gadites, who had that half of it which Sihon possessed.

And the tribe of Manasseh that half of it which Og possessed (see Deut. 3:12).

"And Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan":

Which are particularly mentioned, because royal cities (Joshua 13:10; see Deut. 1:4).

"Were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh":

And who was his only son.

However, to his posterity only was this inheritance given, though not to them all.

"Even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families":

Which seems to confirm it that Manasseh had no other son.

Since his whole posterity, both the half tribe on the other side, as well as that in the land of Canaan, were denominated from him.

Though he seems to have had another son, who perhaps died without issue (1 Chron. 7:14).

Joshua 13:32 "These [are the countries] which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward."

Which is particularly described, that each might know their proper portion.

"On the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward":

Of the land of Canaan.

Of Jordan by Jericho (see note on Num. 22:1).

The main thing we must see in all of this, is that God gave each one by inheritance the land they needed to take care of their families properly.

All of this was on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

The land taken from Og and Sihon, became the land of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh.

Joshua 13:33 "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not [any] inheritance: the LORD God of Israel [was] their inheritance, as he said unto them."

"Tribe ... Levi ... gave not any inheritance":

God did not give this tribe a normal allotment of land.

This suited His choice of Levites for the special ministry of the tabernacle service.

Their inheritance consisted in this unique role to share His holy ministrations (18:7).

God did assign them cities and adjacent lands (14:4; Num. 35:2; 4-5), scattered at 48 places (21:41) throughout all the tribes.

This made these religious servants accessible to all the people (compare chapter 21).

The tribe of Levi did not inherit land, because they had been chosen to minister to the LORD.

Their inheritance was the cities they dwelt in, and they shared the offerings with the altar of God.

They were not to go to war, nor were they to raise a cash crop.

Their work was in the tabernacle or in the temple.

Joshua Chapter 13 Questions

1. What did the LORD tell Joshua in the first verse?
2. What was just as dramatic a miracle, as the crossing of the Red sea?
3. How does the statement, God made in the first verse, remind the author of Christianity?
4. These _____ were powerful opponents.
5. The Geshurites were the _____ inhabitants, known as the Avites.
6. The word "Sihor", in verse 3, means what?
7. What was it, probably?
8. What strange false god was worshipped at Ekron?
9. Mearah was, probably, a prominent _____.
10. What rare quality was at Aphek?
11. How far out of Beirut is Aphek?
12. Who were the Giblites?
13. What was another name it was known by?
14. Where is the land of the nine and one half tribes located?
15. Who got land on the other side of Jordan?
16. Why did they inherit their land on the east side of Jordan?
17. Dibon became a city of _____.
18. Who were the two great kings defeated, whose land had been on the east of Jordan?
19. Who were the remnant of the giants?
20. Which tribes were not destroyed, but lived among the Israelites?

21. What was the Levitical tribe to live of?
22. They did not go to _____, and they did not inherit _____.
23. How much land did each tribe receive?
24. Who were destroyed along with Sihon?
25. What is a soothsayer?
26. What terrible thing did Balaam do to the Israelites?
27. Which tribe's inheritance was between the other two?
28. How many cities did the half tribe of Manasseh receive?
29. What is the main message in this for us?