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# Joshua 13

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## Joshua 13:1–33

## Distribution of the Land East of the Jordan

### Outline of Chapter 13:

- v. 1–7 **God speaks to Joshua re: the land and peoples that remain to be conquered**
- Vv. 8–12 **The land conquered east of the Jordan**
- v. 13–14 **What remains to be conquered east of the Jordan/the inheritance of Levi**
- v. 15–23 **The inheritance of Reuben**
- v. 24–28 **The inheritance of Gad**
- v. 29–31 **The inheritance of Machir, the half of the tribe of Manasseh**
- v. 32–33 **Conclusion**

### Charts:

- v. 8 **Joshua 13:7–14:3 without 13:10–33**

**Introduction:** With this chapter, we begin the second part of the book of Joshua. This could be called Joshua Book II, inasmuch as its character is entirely different from book I, as is its subject matter. In the previous twelve chapters, we have the invasion and conquering of the Land of Promise by Joshua and the sons of Israel. Joshua 13 begins the chapters in which the land of Canaan is divided up among the tribes of Israel. This particular chapter will deal primarily with the east side of the Jordan River—the portion of land given over to Gad, Reuben and to half the tribe of Manasseh. You will notice a slight difference between this chapter and some of the subsequent chapters. In Joshua 15, for instance, Judah’s territory is given, and all of the cities, and towns and villages and burghs are given by name. We have a few cities mentioned in this chapter, more given as landmarks or as important cities, but nothing like what we find in Joshua 15. The reason for this is that these cities had already been given over to the two and a half tribes were given in Num. 32.

One question which should be dealt with up front is the names of the cities which are given to the various tribes. In some cases, these were the names which these cities always had; in other cases, e.g., Eshtaol and Zorah (Joshua 15, 19), the cities were renamed and this name was reflected in the second part of this book (now, whether this was added later by editing or whether portion of Joshua was written much later, I can’t say). However, my educated guess is that this was all written out, and then there were adjustments made later by those who did not grasp that the book should not have been changed one iota. I believe that Zorah and Eshtaol, for instance, were added to the cities which belonged to Judah—not because Joshua gave those cities to them originally, but because, once Dan deserted them, Judah came in and took them, naming the cities after themselves (or, taking the names of the cities as their own). That is, Bob, of the tribe of Judah, the sub-tribe of Caleb, might have become known as a Zorathite when he moved his family to Zorah.

My subtitle for this chapter is somewhat misleading. Almost a fourth of it is a long quotation from Jehovah God to Joshua requiring him to divide up the land between the peoples of Israel. After this quotation, Joshua parenthetically notes the land which had already been distributed to Gad, Reuben and Machir (half the tribe of Manasseh) as per the orders of Moses. Therefore, the breakdown of what belonged to who was less detailed than we will see in chapter 15.

The next item of interest is why didn’t Israel conquer all of Palestine—i.e., each and every city? Even though Joshua was old and tired, Caleb will give his personal testimony that he feels as young and as strong as he was forty years ago (Joshua 14:11). Caleb and the huge numbers of Israelites could continue the movement to take each and every city and to drive out every enemy. We will cover this when we get to Joshua 13:7.

There are several things about the Bible that concern you. Why the hell does Joshua spend ten chapters dividing up the land? What does that have to do with me and my problems with my spouse or my problems on the job?

Why did God bother with this minutia? What didn't he deal more directly with the minutia of my life? This, my friend, is because the world does not revolve around you, although it may appear that way to you. God, through Moses, has set up some laws which are very specific with regards to the returning of property after 49 years. The book of Joshua helps the Israelites to recall what property belonged to who. There were probably many more records kept than this, just as we have today in our real estate realm. Once a house has been purchased and the buyers close on it, that is not the end of the transaction. The title company records the deed and other legal documents with the county, so that we have on record in a centralized location, the legal owner of any piece of property. What is occurring here is very much the same thing. One of the other things which Israel did was to keep careful and accurate genealogical records. To you, these are the most boring things in the Bible, next to the list of who owns what property, but these records are fascinating. The genealogical records are a microcosm of the history leading to the humanity of our Lord, as well as a confirmation of many of the promises made by God to His people. Not everything you learn from the Bible will pertain directly to you. In fact, sometimes it is much healthier to examine carefully something other than yourself and your own life. God chose for all of this to be here and most congregations are deprived because they have no idea of what is in 95% of the Old Testament or in 50% of the New. This is God's Word and He meant for it to be studied and apprehended. We have a greater chance today to grasp the entire Word of God than even Paul had in his day; and it is the Word of God in our souls, as well as the filling of the Holy Spirit, which is the true source of our spiritual growth. Edersheim suggests: *Although geographical details may seem dry to some, they are most important for the proper understanding of the Bible narrative. They may also be made alike interesting and spiritually useful, if the history of these places is traced in the various passages of Scripture where they are mentioned* (which is something we will do).<sup>1</sup>

From this chapter through Joshua 19, we have a great deal of geographical information. In fact, some of the detail people find even more tedious than the *begat* lists. Without a little work, the next seven chapters will seem to be quite tedious. The reading of or the naming of city after city, people after people, region after region—these are words with little or no meaning to us. However, with a little background on the people and places, we get a fuller grasp of the history and geography found in the Bible. Furthermore, these lists have several purposes, one of which is to affirm the accuracy of the Bible with respect to the geographical matters. We should expect the Bible to be accurate in all areas, whether geographical, historical, scientific. Scofield mentions: *This list is of great help in locating places forgotten with the lapse of years. As archaeological research proceeds, many such places are being rediscovered.*<sup>2</sup>

Now, in entering this portion of Joshua, we also have a problem. Most of you would skim through this list of cities and territories in very short order, giving very little thought to what you might find here. Don't think that is unique to this century. Once the land was distributed and settled, this portion of Scripture was probably rarely read and rarely studied. Therefore, if someone picked up, say, the book of Genesis to study and realized that the manuscript was in bad shape, they would take steps to see that it was recopied. Those recopying the manuscript, generally men who had great respect for God's Word, would give great effort to accurately copying God's Word. However, few people studied the second half of Joshua and therefore it would not be an unlikely scenario for someone at some point in time to pick up the only manuscript of this portion of God's Word and to realize that it is in terrible condition insofar as it is falling apart and difficult to read. Furthermore, when this is copied, the copyist is going to be less interested in what he is copying. Since we lack narrative, it is easier to make mistakes in copying. Therefore, what we will find in the most of the remainder of this book is perhaps the most poorly transmitted portion of God's Word. There will be mistakes; there will be copyist errors; there will be cities whose names are misspelled because they could not longer be read on the previous manuscript. Only the autographs of God's Word are inspired. An autograph is a completely accurate copy of the original. An inaccurate copy is not inspired—at least, not that which is inaccurately copied. Any translation of God's Word is not inspired, unless it accurately conveys what is found in the original text.

In this chapter, we see a change in the life of Joshua. For the better part of forty years, Joshua was the servant of Moses. He stayed in the background attending to this and that. Then one day, God told Moses to pronounce Joshua as his successor. Almost immediately, Joshua became a 5-star general commanding the troops of the

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 273.

Israelites, planning strategy, advancing his men, etc. As abruptly as it began, this life of Joshua's will end. From hereon in, he will no longer be General Joshua. He will be the leader of his country for a rather indefinite period of time, during which he will supervise the division of the Land of Promise. And he will become writer Joshua and record what his life on the battlefield was like. He will also record the distribution of the land (it is possible that one of his aides did that). One of the things which is exciting about this life we are allowed to lead on earth is that we are occasionally given great changes in our life to enjoy. I look back at various period of my life, different places that I have lived, different vocations which I have had, different friends which I have had, and it is like I have been a half-dozen different people. Suddenly, my environment, friends, and vocation would radically change. When it was God's will, it was for the better. For some of us, we become stale in our line of work, in our personal lives, in the place where we live—God often comes to our rescue here and changes everything dramatically. It is normal to resist change, but keep in mind, when God has something planned out for your life, particularly a major change, then you should relish that change.

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## God Speaks to Joshua Re: the Land and Peoples That Remain to Be Conquered

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

**And so Joshua was old; he advanced in the days and so Y<sup>h</sup>owah said to him, "You are old; you advanced in the days and the land remains a great increasing to possess it.** Joshua 13:1

**And Joshua had become old and advanced in years and so Jehovah said to him, "You are old and advanced in years and a great deal of the land remains to be possessed.**

The first verb is the Qal perfect of *zâqên* (זָקַן) [pronounced *zaw-KANE*], which means *to become old*. Strong's #2204 BDB #278. The second verb is the Qal imperfect of the very familiar *bôw'* (בָּוֵא) [pronounced *boh*], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. Here, we could go with tradition, and render this *advance*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. This is followed by the phrase *in the days*. In the quotation from God, we have the exact same sentence structure except that the verbs are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person rather than the 3<sup>rd</sup>. There comes a point in all of our lives when we become old and our body no longer can perform as we would like it to. For some people this might be late forties and for others it may be the eighties or nineties. Joshua is nearly 110 years old. Moses was about 120 years old when he died. Both had just finished vigorous war campaigns near the end of their lives. Moses handed off the baton of leadership to Joshua but Joshua has no one to hand the baton to. There is no one of note who has the spiritual maturity of either of these men. It has been less than ten years since Moses passed away and Joshua has been in power for a very short time. Israel is going to be divided up and then left with essentially a small mop-up activity.

Speaking of age, what is interesting the difference between the ages of Caleb and Joshua. I had always assumed that they were roughly the same age. However, from the evidence that we are given, Joshua was probably somewhere between 5 and 30 years older than Caleb. In fact, he could have been as much as 35 years older than Caleb. The NIV Study Bible estimates their age difference to be fairly close, judging Caleb to be 85 (which is accurate) and Joshua to be 90–100 (which is a reasonable guess).<sup>3</sup> Caleb made a request to Joshua, saying: "I was forty years old when Moses, servant of Jehovah, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought word back to him as in my heart. Nevertheless, my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear, but I followed Jehovah my god fully. So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Certainly the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have followed Jehovah my God fully.' And now, observe, Jehovah has let me live, just as He spoke, these forty-five years, from the time that Jehovah spoke this word to Moses when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now, observe, I am eighty-five years old today." (Joshua 14:7–10). Throughout the remainder of the book of Joshua, we will see the land divided, and then Joshua will give a farewell address. **Now it came to pass after many days,**

<sup>3</sup> Edersheim concurs in Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 328, as do Keil and Delitzsch in Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 98..

when Jehovah had given rest to Israel from all their enemies on every side, and Joshua was old, advanced in years, when Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and their heads and their judge and their officers, and he said to them, “I am old, advanced in years.” (Joshua 23:1–2). Later, Joshua dismissed the people, each to his inheritance. And it came to pass after these things that Joshua ben Nun, servant of Jehovah, died, being 110 years old (Joshua 24:28–29). We are not told how long that they people had peace, nor are we told how much time elapsed between Joshua sending the people out to their land to his death. According to the NIV’s estimation, Joshua will live anywhere from 10–20 years after the conquest of Canaan. The amount of time which elapsed during which there was no war mentioned would be the time that the people entered into their allotted territories and built their homes. After Judges 1, Caleb will disappear from history without a mention of his death. The other man from that generation, Eleazar will die at the last verse of Joshua.

The first verb for *land* is the Niphil perfect of *shâ`ar* (שָׂאָר) [pronounced *shaw-AHR*] which means, in the Niphil, it means, *to remain, to be left over*. Strong’s #7604 BDB #983. What follows is the Hiphil infinitive absolute of the verb *râ`vâh* (רָבַח) [pronounced *raw<sup>b</sup>-VAWH*], which means *to become much, to become many, to multiply, to increase in population and in whatever else*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to become many, to make much, to multiply, to increase, to enlarge, to cause to greatly increase*. Strong’s #7235 BDB #915. This is followed by the adverb *m<sup>e</sup>’ôd* (מְאֹד) [pronounced *m<sup>e</sup>-ODE*] means *exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very*. Strong’s #3966 BDB #547. These two together are rendered *very much* (NASB, Owen, Young) and *the larger part* (Rotherham). This is followed by *to possess it*. Every man with some sort of a public ministry will leave a great many things undone. God’s plan marches on through time and every generation has a crack at it. No one’s ministry is complete. For himself, he is taken at the right time. However, every man leaves behind a great deal of work still to be done, and it is up to those who follow him to continue in that work.

The primary peoples left in the land were the Philistines and the Phœnicians. Still to come: vv. 2–3 will name the areas which remain unconquered in the south and on the west coast, whereas vv. 4–6 will name those areas still to be conquered in the north.

**“This [is] the land the remaining [portion]: all districts of the Philistines and all of the Geshurites,**

Joshua  
13:2

**“This is the land and the peoples who remain: all of the regions of the Philistines and all of the regions of the Geshurites.**

We have in this verse the feminine plural construct of *g<sup>e</sup>lîylâh* (גְּלִילָהּ) [pronounced *g<sup>e</sup>lee-LAW*], which means *region, border, boundary, territory, districts*. It is found only in the plural and only four times in the Bible (Joshua 13:2 22:10 Ezek. 47:8 Joel 3:4 (4:4)). It is rendered *circuits* (Young) and *regions* (NASB, NIV, Owen, Rotherham). Keil and Delitzsch suggest *circles*, as in the circles of the well-defined districts and outlying areas around the city or area referred to. Strong’s #1552 BDB #165. We are no longer speaking of the kings and soldiers but of the areas occupied by the people who are known as the Philistines and the Geshurites.

The Philistines are first mentioned in Gen. 10:14, which reads: And the sons of Ham: **Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan...And Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehavim and Naphtuhim and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim** (Gen. 10:6, 13–14). The Casluhim are only mentioned one more time in Scripture: **And Mizraim became the father of the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, Pathrus, Casluh, from which the Philistines came, and Caphtor** (1Chron. 1:12). However, we have several passages where the Philistines are said to come from Caphtor, which most scholars identify with the island of Crete. Given that the Philistines were famous for their ships and conquering of the sea (the are referred to as the “Sea People”), this would be a reasonable assumption. Deut. 2:23 reads: **“And the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor.”** God speaks in Amos 9:7b: **“Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?”** One explanation for this confusion is that *from whom came the Philistines* is misplaced in Genesis and 1Chronicles and that it should be moved over one word. However, we do not have any manuscript evidence to support this, and the agreement between the two passages makes this even a less likely possibility.<sup>4</sup> However, what we need to focus on is that

<sup>4</sup> However, also bear in mind that the Greek Septuagint does not have this verse in 1Chronicles, meaning that the phrase in question was not necessarily misplaced twice.

both Genesis and in 1Chronicles are dead ends. That is, we do not have an extensive genealogy, but a list of peoples who had come from Mizraim. The relationship between the Casluhim, the Philistines and the Caphtorim is not absolutely clear. My guess is that the Casluhim are the forerunners of the Philistines and that the Philistines overran their cousins, the Caphtorim, many centuries later. Given the information as presented in Scripture, that would be the most likely scenario. At this time in the history of Israel, the Philistines are on the coast of the Mediterranean. I should add that it is from the Philistines that Palestine received its name.

The Gershurites were located in southern Palestine, south of the Philistines near Sinai. David raided these and other peoples while in exile (1Sam. 27). There is a country by the same name, east of the Jordan (Joshua 13:11, 13). Whether these are branches of the same tribe, we don't know, although that is not hard to suppose, given the size of the Land of Promise. Manasseh, for instance, was split between both sides of the Jordan. It would not be unheard of for another people to be split up as well. The Geshurites will play a relatively large part in the life of David and his sons. In fact, David's son Absalom—his mother was a Geshurite (2Sam. 3:3).

**“From the Shihor which [is] east of Egypt and to a boundary of Ekron northward to the Canaanite, it is reckoned five of warlords of Philistines—the Gazite and the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite and the Ekronite;**

Joshua  
13:3a

**“from Shihor, which is east of Egypt, to the northern boundary of Ekron, to the Canaanite (there remain five warlords over the Philistine groups, still to be conquered: the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites and the Ekronites).**

It is difficult in these few verses to pick up where sentences end and begin. *Shihor* means *waters of Horus*, according to ZPEB; according to Barnes, it means *to be black*. There is some disagreement as to the exact location of this river. It is thought to be one of the extremities of the arms of the Nile, such as the Pelusiac or the Bubastite. This would probably square with Isa. 23:3 and Jer. 2:18. In 1Chron. 13:5, it appears to be the southern boundary of David's empire (or perhaps his influence). It is called there *Shihor of Egypt*. ZPEB suggests that the use here and in 1Chronicles refers to the Wadi el Arish, which is an area which was essentially uninhabited or sparsely populated at best. The NIV Study Bible concurs, noting that the Wadi el Arish is located *below Gaza at the eastern entrance to the Sinai*.<sup>5</sup> Keil and Delitzsch also equate this with the modern Wadi el Arish and the *brook of Egypt* found in Joshua 15:4, 47. What is being referred to here is the geographical sphere of influence and control by the Philistines and/or the Gershurites and the other peoples who still occupy the land. This river gives us the southernmost sphere of influence.

Ekron is the most northern of the five Philistine cities; at first it appears to belong to Judah and later it appears to belong to the tribe of Dan. In all actuality, it was a border for Judah (Joshua 15:11) but not a part of Judah. It actually belonged to the tribe of Dan (see Joshua 19:41–43). Ekron is right on the border of Judah and Dan; the city was a border of Judah that belonged to Dan. Ekron had not been fully taken by the Israelites under Joshua; however, Judah conquered it relatively soon thereafter, along with Gaza and Ashkelon (Judges 1:18). Still, Judah did not completely eradicate the Philistines and there appears to be a continual power struggle between the Israelites and the Philistines with regards to Ekron. The Philistines took it back in the days of the judges (1Sam. 5:10). Now, there is a great more to say about Ekron, but we will save that until we get into the book of Samuel. Interestingly enough, even though Ekron is mentioned quite a number of times in Scripture, its original site is still disputed. Keil and Delitzsch identify it with the modern Akîr, a city without any ruins from antiquity, save two wells which probably belonged to the times of the Crusades. See ZPEB for further information.

After the word *Canaanite*, we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect of *châsha*<sup>bv</sup> (חָשָׂה) [pronounced *khaw-SHA<sup>BV</sup>*]. The verb itself means *think, account, count*. It is translated a myriad of ways in the KJV; among them: *thought* (Gen. 50:20), *meant* (Gen. 50:20), *devise* (1Sam. 18:25), *think* (Neh., 6:6), *cunning* (Ex. 35:35), *purposed* (Jer. 49:20), *conceived* (Jer. 49:30), *reckon* (Lev. 25:50), *count* (Lev. 25:52), *impute* (Lev. 17:4), *accounted* (1Kings 10:21). It occurs over 150 times in the Old Testament and is rendered in over ten different ways. In any case, this is a verb of *thinking and planning*. In the Niphal, it means *to be reckoned, to be imputed, to be accounted*. Strong's #2803 BDB #362.

<sup>5</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 305.



Following the verb, we have the feminine number *five* in the construct and the masculine plural of *çeren* (סַרְרֵן) [pronounced *SEH-ren*], which means *warlord, czar, potentate, despot, lord, tyrant*. Keil and Delitzsch say this is the standing title for Philistine princes and is interchangeable with *sârîym* (סַרְיִם) [pronounced *saw-REEM*] (Strong's #8269 BDB #978), an equivalence they arrive at by comparing 1Sam. 29:6 with 29:4, 9. One of my sources (and I forget which, claims that *çeren* is only used of heathen rulers, whereas *sârîym* is used of both Israelites and heathen. However, 1Sam. 8:15 contradicts this. These words are so close that it is possible that the Israelites derived their word from the Philistine title; however, we find the Jewish word as far back as early Genesis. Strong's #5633 BDB #710. This is followed by the plural, proper noun for the Philistines; which must be mentioned separately, since they are not descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:14), just occupants of the land of Canaan. In fact, they took this land from the previous occupants (Deut. 2:23). Then we have the *Gazite* (NASB) or the *Gazathite* (Young). What we don't find here is simply *Gaza*, as is found in Owen's *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. Recall that Gaza was three miles from the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, about fifty miles southwest of Jerusalem, the southernmost city of the Philistines. Gaza was under the control of the Philistines at this point in Joshua, although Israel dominated the land to there. As was mentioned, Judah will take Gaza in Judges 1:18, only to be taken back by the Philistines at a later time. In medieval times, there was a thin fabric exported from Gaza, which is from whence we got the word *gauze*. The particularly tall Philistines occupied this area. Because of their cruelty towards the Jews, particular during their times of trouble, God would pronounce judgment against Gaza. Thus says Jehovah, "For three transgressions of Gaza and for four, I will not revoke [these words]. Because they deported an entire population to deliver them to Edom, so I will send fire upon the wall of Gaza and it will consume her citadels." (Amos 1:6–7). Seek Jehovah, all you humble of the earth who have carried out His ordinances. Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of Jehovah's anger. For Gaza will be abandoned and Ashkelon a desolation; Ashdod will be drive out at noon and Ekron will be uprooted (Zeph. 2:3–4; see also Zech. 9:5). Barnes: *In the time of St. Jerome the ancient city was a ruin of which the foundations could hardly be traced, and the then existing town was built on another site.*<sup>6</sup> Gaza was rebuilt sometime later, and at the time that Barnes wrote, its population exceeded that of Jerusalem.<sup>7</sup>

Ashdod was also near the coast, roughly 20 miles north of Gaza. In the Greek, the ended up Azotus, and it is mentioned in the New Testament in Acts 8:40. This city was also given to Judah (Joshua 15:46–47). Its name means *castle* or *fortress* and it lived up to its name, holding out for 29 years against a siege by Egypt (under Egyptian king Psammetichus), the longest recorded siege in their history. We will cover more Ashdod in the future. Between Gaza and Ashdod was Ashkelon.

Barnes on Ashkelon: *Ashkelon, the birthplace of Herod the Great, figures as an important town and seaport in the history of the crusades, and very massive ruins still attest the ancient strength and grandeur of the place. It is situated about midway between Gaza and Ashdod.*<sup>8</sup>

Due east of Ashkelon was Gath and Ekron was north in further inland from Ashdod. Rotherham has *the Gittites*, NASB and Young have *the Gittite*, Owen has *of Gath*, the NIV has simply *Gath*. The word is the Adjective gentis of Gittîy (גִּתִּי) [pronounced *git-TEE*], and is preceded by a definite article. This means that the word here refers to the people of the city, not to the city. Strong's #1663 BDB #388. I have no clue why it is located here in BDB (it must have to do with *wine-press*; see above).<sup>9</sup> The proper noun Gath is simply Gath (גַּת) [pronounced *gath*]. It means *wine-press*. Strong's #1661 BDB #387. Gath is the one city of the five whose exact whereabouts are still unknown to us today. The inhabitants of Gath are called *Gittites*. This was originally a Canaanite city which was taken by the Phœnicians. Surprisingly enough, we will not hear about Gath throughout the rest of the book of Joshua. This is the city of Goliath and will come into play as a major city again, with respect to Israel, in I and 2Samuel, where we will cover this city in more detail. As a minor point, three early printed editions, the Septuagint and the Syriac codices have *and the Gittite*.

<sup>6</sup> Barnes' Notes, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 383.

<sup>7</sup> I will cover this later when we get into the prophetic books, but you may want to read Josh McDowell, *A Ready Defense*; Here's Life Publishers; ©1990; p. 66–67.

<sup>8</sup> Barnes' Notes, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 383.

<sup>9</sup> BDB has this with the *yodh's* rather than with the *gîmel's*.

These are the five principle cities of the Philistines in that area. 1Sam. 6:16–18a reads: *And when the five warlords of the Philistines saw it, they returned to Ekron that day. And these are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned for a guilt offering to Jehovah; one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron; and the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fortified cities and of country villages.* These are the five strongholds of the Philistines which will remain so for a considerable amount of time. This is also historically very accurate to place all this emphasis upon these five warlords of the Philistines. Note that the other peoples still living in the land are not given this kind of space. It is during this time period, from 1200 to 1000 B.C. that the Philistines are at a peak in their history. We will hear of these five lords in Judges 16 and 1Sam. 6, a time period which corresponds with their time in the sun. There will be scattered references in the Bible after this time period (Isa. 14:29 Jer. 25:20) until God pronounces a final judgment over them in Ezek. 25:15–17.

Since there are five lords of the Philistines designated, but six peoples mentioned, we have a problem. Before consulting anyone, I placed the phrase *and the Avvite* belongs with the next verse. However, let's see what others have done with this transition:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...from the Shihor which faceth Egypt, even as far as the boundary of Ekron, northward, to the Canaanites it is counted,—five princes of Philistines—the Gazites, and the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites, also the Avvim on the south; all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah which belongeth to the Zidonians...
NASB	...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 Ekronites; and the Avvite to the south, all the land of the Canaanite, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians...
NIV	...from the Shihor river on the east of Egypt to the territory of Ekron on the north, all of it counted as Canaanite (the territory of the five Philistine rulers in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron—that of the Avvites); from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, from Mearah of the Sidonians...
NRSV	This is the land that still remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites (from the Shihor, which is east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is reckoned as Canaanite; there are five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the Avvim, in the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians...
REB	The remaining territory is this: all the districts of the Philistines and all the Geshurite country (this is reckoned as Canaanite territory from Shihor to the east of Egypt as far north as Ekron; and it belongs to the five lords of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron); all the districts of the Avvim on the south; all the canaanite country from Mearah which belongs to the Sidonians...
The Septuagint	...from the wilderness before Egypt, as far as the borders of Accaron on the left of the Chananites, it is reckoned to the five principalities of the Phylistines, to the inhabitant of Gaza, and of Azotus, and of Ascalon, and of Geth, and of Accaron, and to the Evite; from Thæman even to all the land of Chanaan before Gaza, and the Sidonians...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	...from Sihor which <i>is</i> on the front of Egypt, and unto the border of Ekron northward, to the Canaanite it is reckoned, five princes of the Philistines, the Gazathitute, and the Ashdothite, the Eshkelonite, the Gittite, and the Ekronite, also the Avim. From the south, all the land of the Canaanite, and Mearah, which <i>is</i> to the Sidonians...

You will notice that only REB and NRSV really dealt with this grammatically. The Massoretic text begins v. 4 with *on the south*, but it is more correct to begin it with *and the Avvite from the south* or *also the Avvite from the south*. The Septuagint, Syriac and the Vulgate codices all make that revision here (recall that the separation of the Bible into verses and chapters is not divinely inspired, but occurred long after the fact). Also, in the English, what is often missed is the grammatical structure. Philistines is in the plural; the five lords of the Philistines are given in the adjective gentis with a definite article. When we get to Avvim, it is also in the adjective gentis with a definite

article, but it is in the plural, indicating that we are through with the five lords of the Philistines (that is done grammatically for those who cannot count).

**“and the Avvim from [the] south, all of [the] land of the Canaanite; and Mearah [lit., cave] which [is] to the Sidonians unto Aphek to a boundary of the Amorite.** Joshua 13:3b–4

**“Also the Avvim from the south, all of the land of the Canaanite; and Mearah, which belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek to the boundary of the Amorite.**

The Avvim are almost unknown to us apart from the Bible. They are mentioned in Deut. 2:23 as a people dispossessed by the Caphtorites to illustrate how various peoples have dispossessed various other peoples. They occupied the same area as the Philistines (“...the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza...”—Deut. 2:23). Keil and Delitzsch suggest that they are neither Phœnicians nor Canaanites, but occupied the land prior to having it wrested from their control by the Philistines. It is likely that they were subdued and completely destroyed by the Philistines. The mention in this verse indicates that they had seen some resurgence in control during the 6–8 years since Moses said that in Deuteronomy. Even more likely is that they were pushed south from their strongholds by the Caphtorim, but still we in possession of some land in Canaan. There is a town named Avvim, which would belong to Benjamin, mentioned in Joshua 18:23). We don’t have enough information to say that there is a connection between the people mentioned here and the town mentioned there. Unrelated to this is the town of Avva, which we will encounter in 2Kings 17:24.

Canaanite and Canaan are terms which take in the Land of Promise and the peoples who lived there. The location Mearah is found only here and totally unknown to us. It might be the Mugar Jezzine (or, *the cave of Jezzine*), which is between Tyre and Sidon or it might refer to a district characterized by deep cave-like ravines near Sidon and Dan-Laish.<sup>10</sup> It apparently belonged to the Sidonians. Sidon was a city farther north, apparently under the control of the Phœnicians from what I have read. As you will recall, the placement of Aphek (which could be several cities) was difficult. Most sources indicate that this is a reference to the southernmost boundary of Joshua’s advancement. Keil and Delitzsch identify it with the present-day Afka, a small village, but a place of rare beauty, upon a terrace of Lebanon, near the chief source of the river Adonis..., with ruins of an ancient temple in the neighbourhood, surrounded by groves of the most splendid walnut trees on the north-east of Beirut.<sup>11</sup>

Then we have *the boundary of the Amorite*. We have three possible explanations here: (1) this is also the boundary of the Amorite, a general name for the people of the land. (2) Edersheim suggests instead that this last phrase refers to as far east as the Og, the king of Bashan, as land which formerly belonged to the Amorites. Given the general context, we are really dealing with the west side of the Jordan. The easiest explanation here is that the Amorites occupied the land east of the Jordan prior to Israel going in and conquering them. Therefore, this just refers to the Jordan River, the boundary of the Amorites less than ten years ago before Israel conquered them. The fly in the ointment here is that they did not extend very far north. (3) Knobel suggests the third possibility that in the north we have Amorites, a Semitic group of peoples, rather than Canaanites, but we do not have any corroborating historical evidence of this.

**“And the land of the Gebalite and all of the Lebanon toward the sunrising, from Baal-gad below a mountain of Hermon unto an opening of Hamath;** Joshua 13:5

**“And the land of the Gebalite and all of Lebanon toward the east, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to the entrance of Hamath.**

Gebal is also a Phœnician city along the coast of the Mediterranean and it would be just 22 miles north of modern-day Beirut. It was known as Byblos to the Greco-Roman world and, in earlier days, Gubla to the Assyrians and Babylonians, and Jehail to the Arabs. Excavations reveal that this city has been occupied as far back as the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. The people who originally occupied Gebal were small, slender, with long heads and delicate features. Their huts were rectangular or circular, made personal ornaments out of silver, and they buried

<sup>10</sup> *Barnes’ Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 383.

<sup>11</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 100.



their dead in earthenware jars. Discoveries which date back to late in the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium indicate that there was a great deal of active trading throughout the Palestinian area, between this city and Egypt, and that there was a trade route which went through Palestine and Syria. Fire engulfed this city around 2800 B.C., but they soon constructed a greater city over the remains. Gebal supplied Egypt with cedars from Lebanon, which were of vital importance to the expanding military force in Egypt. By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium, the Canaanites who occupied Gebal developed a syllabic script based upon the hieroglyphics of Egypt. Some of these copper inscriptions have survived to this day. The names of the kings during this time period indicate that they were Semitic and probably Amorites. By the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, Egypt had expanded her empire to the point where most of Palestine and the southern portion of Phoenicia were under her control. Gebal was essentially an Egyptian colony at this time. Cartouches from this period remain (a cartouche is *an oval or oblong figure, as on ancient Egyptian monuments, enclosing characters which represent the name of a sovereign*).<sup>12</sup> *Objects found in tombs there bear the cartouches of rulers of the twelfth dynasty. The native princes wrote their names in Egyptian characters and vowed their loyalty to the Pharaoh.* There appears to be a weakening and then a strengthening of Egyptian influence over the next several hundred years until the Phœnicians burned Gebal to the ground in 1194 B.C. in their march on Egypt. There is more, of course, but we will cover that later.<sup>13</sup>

Lebanon would be the northernmost portion of Canaan. We mentioned Baal-gad in v. 7 of the previous chapter. It is in the north, probably between the mountains of Lebanon and Mount Hermon.

Hamath was one of the original twin cities, built on both sides of the Orontes River 125 miles north of Damascus. This city of Syria was surrounded by hills and had a warm and humid climate. It was destroyed circa 1750 B.C., apparently rebuilt, and then conquered by Thutmose II of Egypt in 1502–144 B.C.). It seemed to flourish when Egypt had control of Syria and later fell under Hittite control prior to 900 B.C. The *entrance of Hamath* or the *opening of Hamath* was the southern border of the area control by this city and a portion of the Land of Promise, although Israel only extended that far under David, Solomon and Jeroboam II.<sup>14</sup> There's more, of course, and we will cover it during the time of King David.

**“All of the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephoth-maim—all of the Sidonians—I [even] I will cause to dispossess them from before faces of sons of Israel—only you cause her [the land] to fall to Israel in an inheritance as I commanded you.**

Joshua  
13:6

**All of the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim—that is, all of the Sidonians—I, even I, will take the land from them before the sons of Israel and you will cause the land to be allotted to Israel as an inheritance as I have commanded you.**

At the beginning of this verse we have the masculine singular noun *har* (הַר) [pronounced *har*], which means hill, mountain, hill-country. Strong's #2042 (and #2022) BDB #249. It is generally used in conjunction with a specific proper noun and in such a case refers to a particular mountain (e.g., Mount Hermon). However, by itself, it can refer to a mountain range or a mountainous area; or, as most translators render this, as *hill country*.

As discussed in Joshua 11:8, we know that Misrephoth-maim is in northern Palestine in the vicinity of Sidon. Here we are told that it is still under Canaanitish influence. Sidon is along the coast of the Mediterranean and what appears to be the case is that there were a group of people who lived in Sidon called the Sidonians who had influence over all these lands mentioned between vv. 4b–6a. These are the Phœnicians who lived in Lebanon and south of Lebanon (Sidon is, after all, the oldest capital of Phœnicia). God promised Joshua that He would drive them out. That is the Hiphil imperfect of *yârash* (יָרַשׁ) [pronounced *yaw-RAHSH*] means *to possess, to take possession of, to occupy [all] geographical area—by driving out the previous occupants, to inherit, to dispossess*. The Hiphil is the causative stem. Strong's #3423 BDB #439.

<sup>12</sup> Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary; ©1994 by dilithium Press, Ltd.; © by Barnes and Noble Books, p. 228.

<sup>13</sup> This was all quoted or paraphrased from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 2; pp. 667–668.

<sup>14</sup> Again, this information was paraphrased or quoted from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 3; pp. 21–22.

You may find the transition to *all the Sidonians* a bit difficult. Ginsburg suggests *and all the Sidonians* or *even all the Sidonians*, and he adds *which is no doubt the proper reading*.<sup>15</sup> *Them* in this verse does not refer to the Sidonians, but to all the peoples, enemies of God, who still occupied the land. Edersheim, on the other hand, suggests that this is an explanatory clause, not an additional one. That is, the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim were Sidonians. Joshua is not adding additional information or a new groups of peoples, but telling who these inhabitants are.<sup>16</sup>

This is later followed by the adverb *raq* (רַק) [pronounced *rahk*] means *only, provided, altogether, surely*—it carries with it restrictive force. Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956. Then we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular (with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix), Hiphil imperative of *nâphal* (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*], which has a plethora of meanings—in general, it means *to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*. Here, it appears to have the meaning of *allotted to, apportioned*; however, it means *cause her to fall*. What is likely referred to is the choosing of the land for each tribe by the casting of lots, something which will be discussed in more detail later. Strong's #5307 BDB #656. Then we have the *bêyth* preposition (I would have expected *kaph*—however, they both look very much alike) and the feminine singular of *nachâlâh* (נָחַלָה) [pronounced *nah-khuh-LAW*], which means *possession, property, inheritance*. Strong's #5159 BDB #635.

What is abundantly clear is that Israel has not defeated every group of peoples found in the Land of Promise, but God has promised that He would; however, Joshua was immediately divide up the land. The land would be divided up in accordance with the size of the tribe and by casting lots. We are not given the exact method, primarily so we would not rely on that sort of thing today. **“And you will inherit the land by lot according to your families; to the larger, you will give more inheritance, and to the smaller you will give less inheritance. Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his. You will inherit according to the tribes of your fathers.”** (Num. 33:54). **So Moses commanded the sons of Israel, saying, “This is the land that you are to apportion to lot among you as a possession, which Jehovah has commanded to give to the nine and a half tribes.”** (Num. 34:13).

**“And now divide the land the this in an inheritance to nine of the tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”**

Joshua  
13:7

**“So now divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half tribe of Manasseh.”**

We begin this verse with the *wâw* conjunction and then adverb *‘attâh* (עַתָּה) [pronounced *‘aht-TAW*] which is an adverb of time that means *now*. When this adverb is used with the imperative, it implies that the time has come for this exhortation or advice to be followed. Strong's #6258 BDB #773. The first verb is the Piel imperative of *châlaq* (חָלַק) [pronounced *chaw-LAHK*], means *to divide, to apportion, to allot, to share*. Strong's #2505 BDB #323. Manasseh will be split on both sides of the Jordan River. **He also drove out the nations before them and He apportioned them for an inheritance by measurement** (Psalm 78:55a).

An important consideration here is that God intended for the Land of Canaan to only be partially conquered. God intended for the Canaanite to still live in the land. In fact, there are even some authors and expositors who blame Joshua in this regard. He is blamed for not taking Jerusalem from the hands of the Jebusites and from allowing the small, but dangerous groups of Philistines to remain in the land.<sup>17</sup> God did not give Joshua orders to continue attacking those who are in the land and to remove them, but His orders to Joshua are to divide up the land. Now, what should Joshua do? Should he take his armies back into these trouble spots and do some mop up operations or should he distribute the land? Obviously, Joshua is going to follow God's orders. It would be up to those who followed after Joshua to destroy the Philistines and the remaining Amorites and Canaanites. There could have been a myriad of reasons for this: (1) the testing of the faith of the generations of Israelites to follow; and (2) the opportunity for the salvation of some of the peoples still in the land as well as their descendants. (3) God also gives a reason in Judges 3:1–2: **Now these are the nations which Jehovah left, to test Israel by them (to test those who had no experience any of the wars of Canaan, only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly).** (4) Joshua was old and he would not live to see the

<sup>15</sup> Dr. C.D. Ginsburg's Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical of the Hebrew Bible; ©1897; p. 612.

<sup>16</sup> Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 329.

<sup>17</sup> See *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 3, p. 700.

final conquering of the cities which remained occupied by enemy forces in the Land of Promise. There would not be a great leader to follow Joshua for several hundred years. Joshua had two extremely important tasks to complete: first, to distribute the land (as there would be no particular leader that all of Israel would look to); and, secondly, to complete the writing of Scripture that was assigned to him by God in eternity past.

This seems to be somewhat of a abrupt end to what God said to Joshua. Maybe not such an abrupt end as a peculiar beginning in the next verse. They do not seem to segue into one another.

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## The Land Conquered East of the Jordan

*Joshua 12:1–6 Num. 32:33*

**With him the Reubenite and the Gadite received their inheritance which Moses gave to them beyond the Jordan eastward as which Moses, the servant of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, gave to them.**

Joshua  
13:8

**With the other half tribe, the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance which Moses gave to them beyond the Jordan—to the east, according to what Moses, the servant of Jehovah, gave them:**

In the Hebrew, this verse begins with *with him*. Obviously, this does not make a lot of sense. Here is how some of the other translations dealt with this (I am picking this up from v. 7):

*The Emphasized Bible*

Now therefore, apportion this land as an inheritance unto the nine tribes,—and the half tribe of Manasseh. With them the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance,—which Moses gave them beyond the Jordan, eastward, as Moses the servant of Yahweh gave unto them:

KJV

Now, therefore, divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes and the half tribe of Manasseh, With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses, the servant of the LORD, gave them:

NASB

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

The sense of the NASB seems to be the most accurate, that the *him* alluded to is the other half of the tribe of Manasseh (an NIV concurs, as do I).

The only violence which I did to the original, literal Hebrew in my translation is that *Moses* actually follows the two main verbs rather than proceeds them. *Beyond* is the *bêyth* preposition and the masculine singular construct of *‘êber* (עָבַר) [pronounced *ĠAY<sup>e</sup>-ver*], which means *region across, beyond, side*. Strong's #5676 BDB #719.

The Hebrew and the Greek are somewhat different here:

The Literal Hebrew

“And now divide the land the this in an inheritance to nine of the tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.” With him the Reubenite and the Gadite received their inheritance which Moses gave to them beyond the Jordan eastward as which Moses, the servant of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, gave to them.

The Greek Septuagint

“And now divide this land by lot to the nine tribes, and to the half tribe of Manasseh: from Jordan to the great sea westward, you will give it [to them]; the great sea will be the boundary.” [To the two tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh, to Ruben and to Gad, Moses gave them as an inheritance beyond Jordan; Moses, the servant

of the Lord, gave to them eastward...] And with that, v. 9 picks up with the boundaries of what was given on the east side of the Jordan.

You will notice that it is a smoother transition from God speaking to Joshua writing. However, even this is a bit stilted. It is difficult to determine where the quote should end and the narrative should begin. At the end of this verse and at the end of this chapter we have Jehovah God spoken of in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, which indicates, though not unequivocally, that God is no longer being quoted. Since *divide* is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperative, that would indicate that is definitely a portion of God speaking to Joshua. What this appears to be is a parenthetical record being made by Joshua concerning what Moses had already delegated belong to the remaining two and a half tribes. What that would mean is that we would jump immediately from v. 7 to Joshua 14:1, with vv. 8–33 of Joshua 13 being a parenthetical insertion between God's order to Joshua's carrying out of same. This jump would give us: "Now, therefore, apportion this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes, and the half-tribe of Manasseh." Now these are they, sons of Israel, who inherited in the land of Canaan, whom Eleazar the priest, and Joshua ben Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel, caused to inherit by lot, their inheritance, as Jehovah commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine of the tribes, and the half of the tribe, for Moses gave the inheritance of two of the tribes, and of half of the tribe beyond the Jordan, and to the Levites, He did not give an inheritance in their midst... (Joshua 13:7 14:1–3 literally, from the Hebrew). Another clue that v. 7 ends the quote from God is the Hebrew become a tad bit simpler to understand and translate (with the exception of *with him*). What I have done below is given the additional rendering of this verse in the Septuagint, introducing the parentheses to indicate that from v. 8 to the end of this chapter, it is parenthetical, recapping what had been given to the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan.

<p><b>{To the two tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh, to Ruben and to Gad, Moses gave beyond Jordan; Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave to them eastward...}</b></p>	<p>Joshua 13:8 (Septuagint)</p>	<p><b>(To the two tribes, Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, Moses gave their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan; Moses, the servant of Jehovah, gave to them on the east,...)</b></p>
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You will notice that the segue from the voice of God to the writing of Joshua is somewhat smoother in the Greek, and, in the Greek, there is a stronger implication of parenthetical information. Vv. 9–12 are summarized in Num. 32:33: **So Moses gave to them, to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben and to the half-tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, the land with its cities with their territories, the cities of the surrounding land.** A more detailed version of what was conquered has already been given in Joshua 12:1–6. What will follow in this chapter is that Joshua will first outline what areas have been conquered, then name where the pockets of resistance are, and then he will individually name which portion of land goes to which tribe. Moses described what land was conquered and who got what east of the Jordan already in Deut. 3:8–17. I do not recall what method was said to be used, but we will see the Gad repaired some cities that Reuben occupied. This would indicate to me that the job of repairing these cities occurred first, then Moses assigned the cities by lot, without looking at who worked on what cities.

The next problem that we have to deal with is the repetition of the phrase *Moses gave them the land*. Twice in v. 8, Moses is giving them the land. Keil and Delitzsch noticed this and tried to explain it by saying that the second time Moses gave them the land, that was an affirmation that he really did give them the land east of the Jordan. It was good that they addressed the problem and their explanation was fair, but it does not really 'splane why this is written twice. The first is somewhat of a title for the parenthetical information to follow [**To the two tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh, to Ruben and to Gad, Moses gave them as an inheritance, the land beyond the Jordan:**]. The rest of the verse really begins a full sentence which is completed in the following verse. It is more difficult to follow cut up into individual verses, so let me put it all together:

#### Joshua 13:7–14:3 without 13:10–33

<p><b>"Now, therefore, apportion this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes, and the half-tribe</b></p>	<p>Joshua 13:7–9</p>	<p><b>"Now, therefore, apportion this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes, and the half-tribe</b></p>
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of Manasseh.” [To the two tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh, to Reuben and to Gad, Moses gave them as an inheritance, the land beyond the Jordan: as which Moses, the servant of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, gave to them from Aroer which [is] on an edge of a valley of Arnon and the city which [is] in a midst of the valley and all the plain, Medeba as far as Dibon...] Now these are they, sons of Israel, who inherited in the land of Canaan, whom Eleazar the priest, and Joshua ben Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel, caused to inherit by lot, their inheritance, as Jehovah commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine of the tribes, and the half of the tribe, for Moses gave the inheritance of two of the tribes, and of half of the tribe beyond the Jordan, and to the Levites, He did not give an inheritance in their midst...

14:1–3

of Manasseh.” [To the two tribes, Reuben and Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, Moses gave them as an inheritance, the land beyond the Jordan as follows: Moses, the servant of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, gave to them from Aroer which is on the edge of a valley of Arnon and the city which is in a midst of the valley along with all of the tableland, from Medeba as far as Dibon...]. Now these are the ones, the sons of Israel, who inherited in the land of Canaan, whom Eleazar the priest, and Joshua ben Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel, caused to inherit by lot, their inheritance, just as Jehovah commanded by the hand of Moses, for the remaining nine and a half tribes, since Moses had already given an inheritance to the two and a half tribes the land beyond the Jordan; and to the Levites, He did not give an inheritance in their midst....

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It might be a little stilted from the standpoint of the English, but the structure of Joshua’s thinking should make a bit more sense when viewed from the standpoint of a parenthetical thought introduced by a title. Now let’s return to the exegesis. Joshua will first name the territory which was given to the two and a half tribes (vv. 9–12); he will name the peoples not dispossessed (v. 13); and then he will remind us that Levi does not receive a specific land grant. From there, Joshua will specify which lands will be given to which of the two and half tribes.

from Aroer which [is] on an edge of a valley of Arnon and the city which [is] in a midst of the valley and all the plain, Medeba as far as Dibon;

Joshua  
13:9

from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, the city which is in the middle of the valley, and all of the plain, from Medeba to Dibon,

NIV Study Bible: *This town [Aroer] on the Arnon River marked the southern boundary of Israel. From here the land extended through Ammon, Gilead and Bashan to the slopes of Mount Herman in the north, the territory once dominated by the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og.*<sup>18</sup> We will look more carefully at Aroer in v. 16.

The word often rendered *edge* is the feminine singular construct of sâphâh (סַפְּהָה) [pronounced saw-FAWH], which means *lip, speech, edge*. Strong’s #8193 BDB #973. Medeba was last mentioned in Num. 21:30. It is 16 miles east-southeast of the mouth of the Jordan River and was taken from Sihon, king of the Amorites. Dibon is southwest from Medeba, six or seven miles away. Medeba will be given more space in v. 16 and Dibon in v. 17. The Medeba plain is the area east of and adjacent to the Dead Sea. Here, the Septuagint reads: *from Medeba as far as Dibon*. We have almost the same geographical description in Num. 21:30, where Moses surveys the movement of Israel over their land.

and all cities of Sihon, king of the Amorite, who reigned in Heshbon as far as a boundary of sons of Ammon;

Joshua  
13:10

and all of the cities of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, the one who reigned in Heshbon as far as the boundary of all the Ammonites;

<sup>18</sup> The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 306.



The first portion of land taken by Israel on the other side of the Jordan was taken from Sihon. What the boundary thing of the Ammonites means is that most kings ruled over a city and often a rather small one at that. Sihon ruled over a large territory for as far out in any direction as the Ammonites were. Given the fact that this battle was some time ago against one king, Sihon receives a lot of space in the Bible. He is mentioned in Num. 21:21–30 Deut. 1:4 2:24–37 3:6 Joshua 12:2. Whatever you do, you do not want to stand in God’s way. Sihon was given a more than fair warning that the Israelites would be moving through and that they would leave him, his land and his people unharmed. Sihon did not buy into this and sought to destroy the Israelites, even though he, like that entire portion of the land, had heard about the Israelites triumphal exit from Egypt.

A very minor problem occurs here, which I would not have ever noticed without the book *When Critics Ask*. The question is what is the eastern border of Israel? God told Moses that the eastern border of Israel ran to the Euphrates (Gen. 15:18 Deut. 1:7 Joshua 1:4), which is quite a ways further east than these borders suggest. What we are dealing with in this portion of Scripture is the division of the land which has been conquered; not the division of the land which will be conquered. David would later push the boundaries in that direction (2Sam. 8:3), but Israel will never own all of the real estate given her by God until a time future from today.

**and the Gilead and a region of the Geshurite and the Maacathite and all of a mountain of Hermon and all of the Bashan as far as Salecah,**

Joshua  
13:11

**And Gilead and the region of the Geshurite and Maacathite and all of the area around Mount Hermon and all of the land of Bashan as far as Salecah,**

Whereas vv. 9–10 took in the southern portion of the land taken on the east side of the Jordan, this and the next verse take in the central and northern portions. Gilead will be covered briefly in v. 31. The Geshurites appear to have two very different locations, as was mentioned in v. 2. V. 2 refers to a region near Sinai, south of Palestine, and this verse refers to a people up near the Sea of Chinnereth to the east. In the future, when David is exiled from Judah and with Achish, the king of Gath, he will and his men will raid the nearby Geshurites so that Achish would think that he is attacking his own people (1Sam. 27:8). Gath is close to the Mediterranean Sea and this Geshur is near Sinai.

David’s favorite son, Absalom, by Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur (2Sam. 3:3 1Chron. 3:2), killed his half-brother Amnon and fled to Geshur to be under the protection of his grandfather. He remained there for three years until Joab brought him back to Jerusalem (2Sam. 13:37–38 14:23, 32 15:8). This is the northeast Geshur near Lake Chinnereth.

Maacah a small state southeast of Mt. Hermon. It bordered Geshur on the south and may have crossed the Jordan to Abel-beth-maacah on the West. During the reign of David, the king of Maacah contributed 1000 men as mercenaries to aid Ammon in war with Israel (2 Sam. 10:6–8; 1 Chron. 19:6, 7).<sup>19</sup> There were several people, both men (4) and women (6), with the name Maacah in Scripture. Bashan as covered by in Deut. 3:1 and Salecah was mentioned back in Joshua 12:5.

**All a kingdom of Og in the Bashan who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei; he remained from a remnant of the Rephaim—and so Moses defeated them and had driven them out;**

Joshua  
13:12

**the entire kingdom of Og of Bashan who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he was from the remnant of the Rephaim). Moses defeated them and drove them out..**

Again in this verse we have the relative pronoun acting as the subject of the verb *mâlak*<sup>e</sup> (מַלַּךְ) [pronounced *maw-LAHK<sup>e</sup>*], which means *to reign, to become king or queen*. Strong’s #4427 BDB #573. We have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person personal pronoun followed by the verb, the Niphal perfect of *shâ`ar* (שָׂאָר) [pronounced *shaw-AHR*] which means, in the Hiphil, *to let remain, to leave over, to leave behind*; in the Niphal, *to remain, to be left over*. Strong’s #7604 BDB #983. We covered the Rephaim in Deut. 3:11; Og and his kingdom Bashan back in Num. 21 and the Rephaim in Joshua 12:4. We will cover Ashtaroth and Edrei in v. 31. It may seem confusing, as it sounds as

<sup>19</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 4; p 1.

though Og is still around as a remnant—however, what this means is that he was a remnant of the Rephaim and Moses defeated him, killing Og and his sons. Like Sihon, Og also got a lot of press: Num. 21:33–35 Deut. 1:4 3:1–7, 11 Joshua 12:4–5.

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## What Remains to Be Conquered East of the Jordan/the Inheritance of Levi

**And sons of Israel did not drive out the Geshurite and the Maacathite and so Geshur and Maacath dwelled in a midst of Israel as far as the day the this.** Joshua 13:13

**However, the sons of Israel had not yet driven out the Geshurites and the Maacathites and these people still dwell in the midst of Israel to this day.**

Interestingly enough, these remnants were not mentioned back in Num. 21. Both of these peoples were mentioned in Deut. 3:14 Joshua 12:5 and covered back in v. 11.

During David's time, a few hundred years hence, Maacah will be an Aramæan kingdom. The language which we find in v. 13 would not be used in David's time, because they are no longer living in the midst of Israel. The location of the Maacathites has not changed, but Israel's control over that area has. Although we cannot point to the period of time when Maacah allied itself with Aram against Israel, this possibly occurred during the time of Eli when Israel was being pummeled by the Philistines (1Sam. 4–7). As Israel lost more and more control of its central area (like Ephraim and Benjamin), they likely lost control over other areas as well.

The exact way in which Maacah went over to Aram may not have been a pretty picture. They may have first gained independence from Israel; and later, found themselves conquered and then dominated by Aram. By the time of David, whatever the circumstances, they were wholly a part of Aram (see 2Sam. 10:8).

**Only to a tribe of the Levi, [Moses] did not give an inheritance; offerings of fire of Y<sup>h</sup>owah, God of Israel, she [is] their inheritance as which he said to them.** Joshua 13:14

**Now, Moses did not give the tribe of Levi a land inheritance; the offerings of the fire of Jehovah, the God of Israel, were their inheritance, as He had said to them.**

In this verse we have the masculine plural construct of *esh* (אֵשׁ) [pronounced *aysh*], which means *fire* (Lev. 1:7); *lightning* (Gen. 19:24 Ex. 9:23–24); and it is often used to mean a *supernatural fire, the presence of Yahweh or the attendance of a theophany* (Ex. 3:2 13:21). We could easily stretch this to mean *offerings of fire* when in the plural. Strong's #784 BDB #77. The grammar is interesting. *She* matches in gender and number with inheritance and not with *offerings of fire*.

In the Greek, this is somewhat different. The Septuagint reads: **Only no inheritance was given to the tribe of Levi; the Lord God of Israel, He *is* their inheritance, as the Lord said to them; and this *is* the division which Moses made to the children of Israel in Araboth Moab, on the other side of Jordan, by Jericho.** On the one hand, they do not include the *offerings of fire*; and on the other, there is included a preface to the remaining verses. I wonder if that additional line was like the italicized portions of our Bibles where we have a summary of the verses to follow?

This verse begins the distribution of the land to Israel. Levi, the tribe most closely related to spiritual matters, is dealt with first. The tribe of Levi will not be given a specific land inheritance, as has been stated in Num. 18:20, 23–24 26:62 Deut. 10:9 12:12 14:27, 29 18:1–2, 20–24 and will be stated in Joshua 13:33 14:3–4 18:17. Jehovah, the God of Israel, was their inheritance (Num. 18:7 Ezek. 44:28). This tribe will be spread throughout the land, so that there are Levites in every section of the land. This is a foreshadowing of the Israelites in the time to come, when they are scattered throughout every nation of the world and, in the distant (and perhaps, not-so-distant) future, 144,000 evangelists from these Israelites will step forth and make their mark in history. This also parallels the church. We, as members of the church of God, have been spread throughout the world, set amongst

unbelievers as beacons of light to those who are perishing. That the tribe of Levi is spread out like this is interesting inasmuch as sacrifices and spiritual activity will take place primarily in one place—at the Tent of God.

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## The Inheritance of Reuben

**And so Moses gave to a tribe of sons of Reuben for their families:** Joshua 13:15 **So this is what Moses gave to the tribe and families of Reuben:**

At this point in the chapter, we have a more specific distribution of the land. Reuben is the firstborn and is almost mentioned first. Here, Reuben is mentioned after the tribe of Levi. Reuben would receive the land east of the Jordan, as far south as the Arnon River, which was the border of Moab, and Heshbon, the once royal city of Sihon. Because of their close proximity with the Moabites, the tribe of Reuben intermixed as well as mixed it up with them. Throughout Scripture, we will make mention of some of these cities as being under Israelite control and under Moabite control. The Moabites were aggressive in this regard, as some of the cities in the north of Reuben's territory had belonged to Moab, as Moab lost them to Amorites (Num. 21:26). If there were a remnant of Moabites up north, then it would make the country even more likely to encroach upon Reuben's territory. Barnes speculates the Moab probably took back almost all of this land from Reuben, as these tribes became complacent in their ranching and grazing (this appears to be the case by the judgments pronounced against Moab and these cities in Jer. 48). It is ironic, as Reuben was given the smallest chunk of land to begin with (as compared to Gad and Machir). Not only is Reuben given a small chunk of land, but he will lose much of that. This is because the tribe of Reuben is marked by spiritual failure. Barnes correctly observes that no judge, prophet or national hero ever arose from the tribe of Reuben. It causes me to look back on my younger life as an older brother—I did nothing to inspire my younger siblings, nor did I ever offer them anything to aspire to. In my youth, I excelled at manipulating my brothers, but never in guiding them. Reuben's offspring bear these same traits and the firstborn tribe, the tribe of the double portion, the tribe which should lead all of Israel, is a tribe of failures.

On the other hand, most of us know something about Ruth, the Moabitess, who was the mother of Obed, who was the progenitor of Jesse, the father of King David. You would have thought that Ruth would have hooked up with a fellow from the tribe of Reuben, given their relative proximity. However, she became involved with the family of Naomi from Judah and returned with Naomi to Judah and became the great grandmother of David. Like Rahab, here greatness was based upon the choices that she made and the alliances she forged; and her name is preserved in the line of the humanity of our Lord in Matt. 1:5–6.

**And so the territory was to them from Aroer which [is] on an edge of a valley of Arnon and the city which [is] in a midst of the valley and all of the tableland [or, plain] as far as<sup>20</sup> Medeba;** Joshua 13:16 **And so their territory extended from Aroer on the edge of the Valley of Amon, a city in the midst of the valley and the tableland, to Medeba.**

We have in the previous verse and the beginning of this verse what appears to be a grammatical formula which will be repeated. In the previous verse we have Moses giving to a particular tribe for their families. The next verse begins with the *wâw* consecutive (*and then, and so, then*) and the Qal imperfect of the absolute status quo verb *to be* (3rdperson masculine singular, Qal imperfect) and the *lâmed* preposition with the 3rdperson masculine plural suffix. This is followed by the definite article and the masculine singular noun  $g^{eb}v\dot{u}l$  (גבול) [pronounced  $g^{eb}-VOOL$ ], which means *border, boundary, territory*. Strong's #1366 BDB #147. This gives us: *so was their* (Owen), *and the border is to them* (Young), *and their boundary was* (Rotherham), *and their territory was* (NASB).

<sup>20</sup> Generally found as *by*, but *as far as* in three early printed editions of the Massoretic text, the Aramaic, the Syriac codices and the Septuagint.

There are three cities with the name Aroer, another mentioned right here in this chapter (v. 25). This Aroer is, in the Hebrew, ʿārôʿêr (עֲרוֹעַר) [pronounced *gûh-row-GAIR*], the latter pronunciation matching the Greek of the Septuagint (the Septuagint sometimes renders the ayin with a *g* and sometimes without). Strong's #6177 BDB #792. This city was on the north bank of the River Arnon and it marked the southernmost limit of the Amorite kingdom of Sihon. Interestingly enough, the tribe of Gad rebuilt Aroer (Num. 32:34), although it was later assigned to the tribe of Reuben. No explanation or rationale is given for this. Aroer will be mentioned a few more times in Scripture with respect to the kingdom under David, and then the Syria will take it from Israel (2Kings 10:33). It appears as though Moab rebuilt the city around this time and it remained under Moab's control (see the Moabite stone, line 26 and Jer. 48:18–20). The valley of Arnon would be the valley which travels along the River Arnon.

In this verse we have the vague reference to a city in the middle of the valley—it is difficult to tell whether this is some unnamed city or whether this is Aroer. It appears to refer to Aroer, as we have a similar description in Joshua 12:2: *Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, both the middle of the valley and half of Gilead, even as far as the brook Jabbok, the border of the sons of Ammon.* The second reason that I believe this applies to Aroer, is that we are never at a loss in this book for proper nouns. We have a plethora of proper nouns throughout the Bible. In this verse, we have the masculine singular noun *mîyshôr* (מִישׁוֹר) [pronounced *mee-SHORE*], and it means *level country, plain, table-land, level place* (it comes from the word which means *straight, upright*). Strong's #4334 BDB #449.

Medeba is slightly north of Dibon and Aroer in the Trans-Jordanian area. Although assigned to the tribe of Reuben, there apparently were times when control of Medeba changed hands between Reuben, Ammon and Moab, being as it was located on the eastern outskirts of Reuben's territory.

**Heshbon and all of her cities which [are] in the tableland: Dibon and Bamoth-ba'al and Beth-ba'al-me'on;**

Joshua  
13:17

**Heshbon and all of her cities which [are] in the tableland: Dibon and Bamoth-ba'al and Beth-ba'al-me'on;**

Heshbon is 18 miles due east of the mouth of the Jordan, between the Jabbok River and the Arnon river, right at the border of Gad and Reuben. This was originally a Moabite city that Sihon, the king of the Amorites, took from Moab. This city would be given over to the Levites.

There were actually two Dibon's: in southern Judah, we have the Dibon mentioned in Neh. 11:25, which is probably equivalent to Dimonah mentioned in Joshua 15:22. The Dibon referred to here is actually Dhibon in northern Moab. Dibon was rebuilt by the tribe of Gad (and therefore called Dibon-Gad (Num. 32:34 33:45–46); but it fell into the hands of Reuben (Num. 32:3 Joshua 13:15–17). Because it was also somewhat of a border town, like Medeba, control of Dibon did not always remain in the hands of Israel.

Bamoth-baal means *the high places of Baal*, so named because of the religion practices in that area. Also known simply as Bamoth, this was one of the stopping places for the Israelites north of the Arnon River (Num. 21:19–20). This is where King Balak brought Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22:41). The Mesha Stone records that King Mesha built Dibon, Beth-bamoth (possibly a reference to Bamoth), Bezer, Medeba, Beth-diblathen and Beth-baal-meon. This would have been circa 830 B.C. and the stone indicates that Beth-bamoth had been destroyed. Beth-baal-meon is also called Beth-meon (Jer. 48:23), Ba'al-Meon (Num. 32:38 1Chron. 5:8 Ezek. 25:9), and Be'on (Num. 32:3). It is thought to be six miles southwest of Madeba.<sup>21</sup>

**and Jahaz and Kedemoth and Mepha'ath,**

Joshua  
13:18

**and Jahaz and Kedemoth and Mepha'ath,**

Jahaz is mentioned with Beth-baal-meon, Mepha'ath and Kedemoth here and in Joshua 21:36. It was a city assigned to Reuben, but given as one of the Levitically inhabited cities (Joshua 13:18 21:36 1Chron. 6:7–8). It

<sup>21</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 1; p. 529.

is found written also as Jahzah and Jahazah. This is the city where Israel met with Sihon and defeated him (Num. 21:23). *The Moabite Stone quotes Mesha as saying that the king of Israel lived in Jahaz while at war with him, but he was driven out, and Mesha took the city and added it to Moabite territory. Isaiah 15:4 and Jeremiah 48:21 refer to it as a city of Moab. Various identifications have been suggested, but none has met universal acceptance.*<sup>22</sup>

When Moses sought to peacefully travel through the land of Heshbon, he sent messengers through the wilderness of Kedemoth to speak to him (Deut. 2:26). Kedemoth was also assigned to the the tribe of Reuben, although given to the Merarite Levites. It is guessed to be on the upper course of the Arnon River. It is mentioned in Scripture in Deut. 2:26 Joshua 13:18 21:37 1Chron. 6:79. It was another city controlled by Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lost it because he would not allow Moses and the Israelites to pass through his territory without incident. Except for the location, the details about Mepha'ath are identical to those about Kedemoth (Joshua 13:18 21:37 1Chron. 6:79 Jer. 48:21). It also was taken by the Moabites, as was Jahaz and several other cities (Kedemoth is not so mentioned).

**and Kiriathaim and Sibmah and Zereth-shahar in a hill of the valley;** Joshua 13:19 **and Kiriathaim and Sibmah and Zereth-shahar in a hill of the valley;**

Kiriathaim, which means *double city*, is the name of two different cities. This was a city built (or, rebuilt) by Reuben in his territory; one which fell into the hands of the Moabites (Num. 32:37 Joshua 13:19 Jer. 48:1, 23 Ezek. 25:9). It is also spelled Kirjathaim. There is a second city with the same name which belongs to the tribe of Naphtali (1Chron. 6:76). Sibmah (identical to Sebam, Shebam and Shibmah) is mentioned in Num. 32:3, 34–38 Joshua 13:19 Isa. 16:8–9 Jer. 48:32. It was captured by Moses from Sihon, rebuilt by Reuben and taken by Moab much later. Zereth-shahar is mentioned only in this passage. *Identification is uncertain, but there seems reason to locate the town about twenty m. SW of Medeba (Madeba), just a few m. below the point where the Nahaliet River flows into the Dead Sea from the E.*<sup>23</sup> Zereth-shahar means *splendor of the dawn*, perhaps because the early light shown upon it.<sup>24</sup>

**and Beth-peor and mountain slopes of the Pisgah and Beth-jeshimoth;** Joshua 13:20 **and Beth-peor and the mountain slopes of Pisgah and Beth-jeshimoth;**

Pisgah was mentioned and covered in Joshua 12:3, as was Beth-Jeshimoth. Beth Peor is covered in detail in Deut. 34:6.

**and all cities of the tableland and all [the] kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorite, who reigned in Heshbon; whom Moses struck down—him and leaders of Midian: Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, appointed ones of Sihon dwelling in the land;** Joshua 13:21 **and all cities of the tableland and all [the] kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorite, who reigned in Heshbon; whom Moses struck down—him and leaders of Midian: Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, appointed ones of Sihon dwelling in the land.**

These princes are also mentioned together in Num. 31:8. Zur is mentioned in Num. 25:15. The Hebrew word is *nâsîy' ( נָשִׂי' )* [pronounced *naw-SEE*], which means *one lifted up, leaders, chiefs, princes*. Strong's #5387 BDB #672. Barnes suggests that these were *vassals of Sihon*; men probably dedicated or appointed with a libation.<sup>25</sup> You may recall the sin of Peor when an Israelite brought home a Midianite woman and Phinehas, the

<sup>22</sup> Quoted or paraphrased from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 3; p. 389.

<sup>23</sup> *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 5; p. 1056.

<sup>24</sup> Dr. Benjamin Davies' *Student's Hebrew Lexicon*; ©1872 by Asher.

<sup>25</sup> *Barnes' Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 384.



son of Eleazar, put a sword through both of them (Num. 25:1–8). The attempt was to form a union between Israel and Midian, as she was the daughter of Zur, one of the heads of state under Sihon. The Midianites were cousins to the Israelites. Abram was the father of both Isaac and Midian, through different mothers (Gen. 25:1–5).

There is a second word denoting leadership in this verse and that is *nâcîyk*<sup>e</sup> (נָצִיחַ) [pronounced *naw-SEEK*<sup>e</sup>], which could be rendered *prince*, although this is not the normal word that we use for *prince* (it is found only in Deut. 32:38 Joshua 13:21 Psalm 83:11 Ezek. 32:30 Daniel 11:8 Micah 5:4). It is that first passage which is troubling, as it is often rendered *drink-offering*. In the book of Daniel, it is rendered *molten image*. The key is the verb, which, although BDB says that it means *to set, to install*; it really means *to appoint* and the noun means *appointed one*. Strong's #5257 BDB #651.

**and Balaam, son of Beor, the diviner killed [by] sons of Israel with the sword against their slain.**

Joshua  
13:22

**and Balaam, the son of Beor, the diviner-guy, was killed by the sons of Israel with the sword.**

*Qâçam* (קָצַח) [pronounced *kaw-SAHM*] means *to divine, to determine by divination*. Here, it is in the Qal active participle, referring to one who practices divination. Strong's #7080 BDB #890 (verb). This verse ends with the preposition *el* (אֶל) [pronounced *el*], which denotes direction and means *in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding*. Although *unto* is a good rendering, it is also rather archaic. There is also a clear inference of hostility here and BDB allows *against* in that situation. Strong's #413 BDB #39. Then we have the masculine plural of *châlâl* (חָלַל) [pronounced *chaw-LAWL*], which means *slain, fatally wounded, wounded, pierced*; it is from a verb which means *to bore, to pierce*. BDB lists this as a noun, as does Owen; Gesenius and New Englishman's Concordance as an adjective. It describes the result of someone who has been pierced. Strong's #2491 BDB #319. This word is affixed to the masculine plural suffix—*their*. Balaam was one of those killed along with the rest of these Arabs.

The story of Balaam is one of those oddities in the Old Testament. It pops up in the middle of the book of Numbers (Num. 22–24), does not appear to be some thing which Moses wrote, and is barely tied contextually to the chapters surrounding it. In fact, apart from all the later references to Balaam throughout the Bible, one would think that it was inserted inappropriately. His death is mentioned sometime later—Num. 31:8. My take on Balaam was that he was a true prophet. God did speak through him. He was not demon-possessed nor was he some kind of fake. God really did speak through him and really prophesied through him. Balak, the king of Moab, called for Balaam to speak against the Israelites. The news on the street was plain as can be—God took Israel out of Egypt with great signs and wonders and was with Israel. Balaam was enticed by money and by the human celebrity ship of Balak contacting him. He did not go to Balak to witness to him of the God of Israel. On the one hand, he was willing to present to Balaam with God's Word, but on the other, he kept on going back to God just in case God changed His mind and wanted to curse Israel. God cannot be bought and God is not frivolous. Balaam, as a man of God, presented to Balak a completely incorrect view of Who God was. Furthermore, Balaam did not inquire of God whether or not he should go, nor did he take God's message about not going to heart. When traveling to see Balak, the Angel of God, Jesus Christ, stood before Balaam's donkey and would not let him pass by. Balaam's ass was smarter than he was. Several times, Balak persuaded Balaam to prophesy and several times God spoke through Balaam reaffirming His graciousness being extended to the Israelites. The problem was that Balaam was wasting his time and his energy on someone whose mind and heart was completely closed to God. There was no reason for him to prophesy before Balak because Balak's mind was already made up. No purpose of God was accomplished in this effort by Balaam. We engage in hundreds of frivolous activities that God is not in. We engage in frivolous activities that appear to be spiritual, but have nothing to do with God's plan. This was Balaam's mistake.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> We have covered Balaam in much greater detail in Num. 31:16.

**And so was a border of sons of Reuben, the Jordan as a boundary, this inheritance of sons of Reuben to their families the cities and their villages.** Joshua 13:23

**And so the border of the sons of Reuben was as follows: Jordan was a boundary for this inheritance of the sons of Reuben given to their families, both the cities and their villages;**

The western border for Reuben was the Dead Sea; the Jordan River as it fed into the sea was essentially the northern border of the tribe of Reuben. Reuben was Jacob's firstborn by Leah. We see this formula at the beginning or at the end of most of the division of the property of Canaan (see Joshua 13:28 15:20 16:5).

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## The Inheritance of Gad

**And so gave Moses to a tribe of Gad to sons of Gad to their families;** Joshua 13:24

**And Moses gave to the sons of Gad and to their families...**

Gad was the firstborn of Zilpah, Leah's maid. The NIV Study Bible gives us a run down of what God gave to Gad: *The central area, beginning near Heshbon on the south and reaching, along the Jordan, to the southern end of the Sea of Galilee. It included most of Gilead, but the exact boundary between Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh remains somewhat uncertain since not all the places named can now be located.*<sup>27</sup>

**And so was to them their territory: Jazer and all cities of the Gilead and half of [the] land of sons of Ammon as far as Aroer which [is] facing Rabbah.** Joshua 13:25

**...the following territory: Jazer and all of the cities of Gilead and half of the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer which faces Rabbah.**

Jazer, meaning *he helps*, is formerly an Amorite city taken by Moses, but its exact location is unknown, other than it is in southern Gilead and that it is east of Rabbah in Ammon. Most maps place it in central Gad. It was Jazer and the surrounding land which really appealed to Reuben and Gad. **Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had an exceedingly large number of livestock. So when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was indeed a place suitable for livestock, the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the congregation saying..., "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be give to your servants as a possession; do not take us across the Jordan."** (Num. 32:1–2, 5b).

Ammon is 30 or so miles east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, with Gad and Reuben sandwiched between. What is meant by *half of the land of the sons of Ammon as far as Aroer* is that Reuben and Gad both had a sizable chunk of land adjacent to Ammon. They did not possess the land of Ammon but Gad's borders included half of Ammon. I need to go off on a tangent here temporarily concerning Israel and Ammon. This is a fine point, but God told Moses not to take any of the land of Ammon. Moses, in speaking to the people of Israel, said, **"So it came to pass when all of the men of war had finally perished from among the people [this was gen X], that Jehovah spoke to me, saying, 'You will cross over Ar, the border of Moab, today; and when you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.'**" (Deut. 2:16–19). For some reason, I recall the Amorites taking some territory from the Ammonites, and that is the territory which Israel took. However, I cannot seem to find the passages to justify this. However, Barnes agrees with this.<sup>28</sup> However, we would expect this, as the Amorites and the Ammonites were adjacent peoples. Israel was allowed to take that from the Amorites which formerly belonged to Ammon, but Israel was not allowed by God to take the territory

<sup>27</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 308.

<sup>28</sup> See footnote for v. 25 in *Barnes' Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 385.

where the Ammonites presently lived. Once Israel dispossessed land belonging to the Amorites, they were not required to return this land to Ammon. What did not happen is that Israel did not take any land directly from Ammon. In the book of the Judges, a king of Ammon would try to convince one of the judges, Jephthah, that Israel stole part of the land of Ammon from them, but Jephthah knew better (Judges 11:11–24).

As far as *Aroer* does not describe the land of Gad but either the land of Ammon or the extent of the land of Israel in general. The Arnon River separated Reuben from Moab and Aroer was in the southeast corner of Reuben at the bottom of Ammon. After the word Aroer we have the relative pronoun and the preposition 'al (אל) [pronounced *ahl*] and it means, primarily, *upon, against, above*. When 'al is used in connection with something geographical, particularly *water*; it has the connotation of *contiguity* or *proximity*; so here, it means *by*. Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752. This is followed by the masculine plural construct of *pânîym* (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEM*], which means *face*. This word is in the plural, referring to the several features of the face. With 'al, it means *facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking*. Strong's #6440 BDB #815. Again, this describes Ammon facing toward Rabbah, a border city of Ammon and Gad. These cities are thirty miles apart and Rabbah is almost due north of Aroer. We could interpret this in two ways: (1) when Israel was heading north along the King's Highway (mostly), they first went by Aroer and then by Rabbah. That would have been their general direction, putting Aroer before Rabbah. (2) The other way that we could see this is that cities often face in a certain direction; that is, there is actually a front and a back to an ancient city and that the city of Aroer faced the direction of Rabbah (this would have put the Arnon River behind Aroer).

Rabbah is the only city of Ammon ever mentioned in the Bible and it is the present-day Amman, capital of Transjordan. Barnes: *Rabbah was a border fortress, the principal stronghold of the Ammonites (Num. xxi. 24), and the residence of their king. It was attacked and taken by Joab (2 Sam. xi. xii.; 1 Chron. xx. 1), but appears in later times again as an Ammonitish city (Jer. xlix. 3; Ezek. xxv. 5; Amos I. 13–15). In the third century B.C. it received from Ptolemy Philadelphus the name of Philadelphia, and was in later times the sea of a Christian bishop; but has now for many centuries been in ruins, remarkable for their grandeur and extent.*<sup>29</sup>

**And from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim and from Mahanaim to a territory to Debir [or, a territory Lid<sup>e</sup>bir];**

Joshua  
13:26

**And from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim; and from Mahanaim to the territory Lid<sup>e</sup>bir.**

We have encountered Heshbon before back in v. 17; it belonged to Reuben and was on the border of Gad and Reuben. Ramath-mizpeh is mentioned only here in Scripture, as is Betonim. The latter city means *pistachios* and is likely located 16 miles northeast of Jericho.<sup>30</sup>

Mahanaim is spelled several different ways and is transliterated into the Greek in a variety of ways as well. This city is probably located on the Jabbok River at the southern tip of East Manasseh, although we do not know its exact location. Keil and Delitzsch: *Mahanaim is not to be sought for, as Knobel supposes, in the ruins of Meysera, to the south of Jabbok, four hours and a half from Szalt, but was on the north of the Jabbok, since Jacob did not cross the ford of the Jabbok till after the angel had appeared to him at Mahanaim (Gen. 32:3, 23). It was in or by the valley of the Jordan (according to 2 Sam. 18:23, 24), and has probably been preserved in the ruins of Mahneh.*<sup>31</sup> When Jacob left his father-in-law and when the angels of God met him, he named that place *Mahanaim*. It was a Levitical city (1Chron. 6:80) as well as a city of refuge (Joshua 21:38). It is here the Ishbosheth will be proclaimed king (2Sam. 2:8–9) and here where David will flee from Absalom (2Sam. 17:24, 27 1Kings 2:8).

Debir (or, Lid<sup>e</sup>bir) is obviously not the Debir mentioned previously in Scripture, as they would be found on opposite sides of the Jordan. It means *word*, quite an important concept to the Hebrews, and therefore could be the name of several cities. The confusion is the prefix—it appears to have the lâmed prefixed preposition (*to, for*), but that

<sup>29</sup> Barnes' Notes, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 385.

<sup>30</sup> The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 1; p. 553.

<sup>31</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's Commentary on the Old Testament; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 104.

could just be part of the name of this city. So, the other possibility is that the full name of the area is Lid<sup>e</sup>bir, distinguishing it from Debir. Since the word *territory* is preceded by a preposition (not lâmed), the lâmed prior to *Debir* is not grammatically necessary. This is why the NASB footnotes the name as Lidebir and the REB, NAB and NJB all render this as Lodebar (or, Lo-debar). No translation that I am aware of actually translates the lâmed as a preposition, even though most of them render the city as *Debir*. Keil and Delitzsch unequivocally state that this lâmed is not to be taken as a preposition but as a part of the name of the city. Barnes (and the translators in REB, NAB and the NJB) regard this city as identical with Lodebar in 2Sam. 9:4–5 17:27. If this were the case, then this would be where Saul's only remaining relative stayed, hiding from the Philistines who will kill Saul and his sons in battle (1Sam. 31 2Sam. 4:4 9:4). This is also from whence provisions were taken to David while in Mahanaim during his flight from Absalom, placing it east of Mahanaim. Their proximity of Debir and Lodebir in 2Sam. 4 9 17 and Joshua 13:26 make that a likely identification. This further suggests that the lâmed found here is actually a part of the name of Debir. This actually suggests a humorous change of names. With a lâmed preposition, this name would mean *with reference to pasture [land]*; with the negative lo', it means *without pasture [land]*. So this was originally named because there was pastureland nearby, or they expected to find pastures here; but the Israelites, because there was a lack of pastureland in this area, began to call it *without pastureland* instead. Residents made fun of the lack of pastureland, and that name stuck (this is all a reasonable supposition, based upon the similarity of the names, a similarity of their location, and the meanings of the words in the passages cited).

**And in the valley of Beth-haram and Beth-nimrah and Succoth and Zaphon; a remainder of the kingdom of Sihon, king of Hesbon; the Jordan and a boundary as far as [the] end of a Sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan eastward.**

Joshua  
13:27

**and in the Jordan valley: Beth-haran, Beth-nimrah, Succoth and Zaphon—the remainder of the kingdom of Sihon, king of Heshbon. The boundary was the Jordan and running up to the Sea of Chinnereth, all east of the Jordan.**

I am less than thrilled with my rendering and taking it into an easier to follow English sentence, so let me give you what some of the freer translations have done:<sup>32</sup>

*The Amplified Bible*

And in the valley of Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the realm of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a boundary, to the lower end of the Sea of Chinnereth east of the Jordan.

NAB

...and in the Jordan valley: Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, Zaphon, the other part of the kingdom of Sihon, king of Heshbon, with the bank of the Jordan to the southeastern tip of the Sea of Chinnereth.

NJB

...and in the valley: Beth-Haram, Beth-Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon—the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon—running to the top of the Sea of Chinnereth, on the further, eastern side of the Jordan.

REB

...it included, in the valley, Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Beshbon. The boundary was the Jordan and the adjacent land as far as the end of the sea of Kinnereth east of the Jordan.

The four cities named are in the valley of the Jordan just east of the Jordan. The furthest south is Beth-Haram and the furthest north is Zaphon. Beth-haram means *house of height*, was one of the cities captured by Moses and rebuilt by Gad (Num. 32:36). It is east of the Jordan at a high point in the Jordan valley. It is believed that this is the same site as Beth-aramphtha, a name give by the Syrians and mentioned by Josephus in *Antiquities*. It is identified with the modern Tell Iktanu, which is eight miles northeast of the mouth of the Jordan. Beth-nimrah, or *house of leopard*, is probably the city *Nimrah* mentioned in Num. 32:3. Gad rebuilt it and Beth-haram primarily to keep sheep there (Num. 32:36). The site of this city is today called Tell Bleibil, ten miles northeast of Jericho on the north side of the Wadi Shaib.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> The final version of my easier flowing version came from these translations.

<sup>33</sup> Taken from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 1, p. 536.

Succoth is northeast of where the Jordan and the Jabbok rivers meet. ZPEB discusses two present-day sites which vie to be the location of ancient Succoth. You will recall Jacob wrestled Jesus Christ and received a permanent limp as a result (Gen. 32). He then met up with his brother Esau, whom he had defrauded several times. Surprisingly, Esau was not bitter or vindictive and let Jacob off the hook (Gen. 33). Jacob then moved to Succoth and built a house and booths there for his animals, naming the area Succoth, which means *booths*.<sup>34</sup> This is not the Succoth mentioned in Ex. 12:37 13:20 Num. 33:5–6; that Succoth is in Egypt. We will run into Succoth again in the book of Judges and 1Kings and 2Chronicles.

Zaphon will be mentioned again in Judges 12, and we will cover it then.

After the words *and a boundary*, we have the preposition  $\text{ad}$  (אד) [pronounced *ad*] which means *as far as, even to, up to, until*. Strong's #5704 BDB #723. This is followed by the masculine singular construct of  $\text{q\hat{a}tseh}$  (קצח) [pronounced *kaw-TSEH*], which means *end, extremity*. Strong's #7097 BDB #892. The boundary of Gad went up to the Sea of Chinnereth (see Num. 34:11 Deut. 3:17).

**This inheritance of sons of Gad to their families the cities and their villages.** Joshua 13:28

**All these cities and villages belonged to the sons of Gad and to their families by inheritance.**

We have developed somewhat of a formula—the beginning of the area of Gad was v. 24, which read: *And so gave Moses to a tribe of Gad to sons of Gad to their families* and it ended with *This inheritance of sons of Gad to their families the cities and their villages*. Reuben was similarly book-ended by vv. 15 and 23.

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### The Inheritance of Machir, the Half of the Tribe of Manasseh

**And Moses gave to a half a tribe of Manasseh and so it was to a half a tribe of Manasseh to their families:** Joshua 13:29

**Then Moses assigned specific boundaries to the half tribe of Manasseh and their families.**

The same formula continues, as it was Moses who had decided to give this area to the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh (at their request, of course). Although the double portion generally fell upon the firstborn, Reuben, he was such a loser that the double portion fell upon Joseph, the second to the youngest of the twelve brothers. Joseph had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh and they were treated as two tribes. Manasseh had two children—Asriel and Machir and it was the tribe of Machir who occupied the land east of the Jordan. What is being done here is merely a confirmation of what these tribes had already been given. *And the sons of Machir, son of Manasseh, went to Gilead and they took it and they dispossessed the Amorites who were in it. So Moses therefore gave Gilead to Machir, son of Manasseh, and he lived in it* (Num. 32:39–40). The would occupy the land east and north of the Sea of Chinnereth and the upper portion of Gilead.

**And so their region was from Mahanaim, all of the Bashan, all of the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan and all of [the] towns of Jair which [are] [or, and all Havvoth-jair which *is*] in the Bashan—sixty cities.** Joshua 13:30

**Their boundaries extended from Mahanaim, throughout all of Bashan, all of the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan; and all of the towns of Jair which are in Bashan—60 cities altogether;**

The first noun is the masculine singular  $\text{g}^{\text{eb}}\text{v}\hat{\text{u}}\text{l}$  (גבול) [pronounced *g<sup>eb</sup>-VOOL*], which means *border, boundary, territory*. Strong's #1366 BDB #147. Some codices read: *and so all of their region was from Mahanaim and all of the Bashan...* These are two changes which show up variously in different codices and early printed editions.

<sup>34</sup> For the location discussion, see *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 529.



This is obvious that Mahanaim has to be some sort of a boundary between Gad and Manasseh (see v. 26). Og appeared to have control of the land in the more northern section of the land, east of the Jordan, from the Sea of Chinnereth up to Lake Huleh and eastward 30 to 40 miles. Mahanaim is where Jacob met the angels of God. Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw them, "This is God's camp." So he named that place Mahanaim [which means *two camps* or *two companies*] (Gen. 32:1–2). We covered Bashan back in Deut.3:1.

Jair is covered in Num. 32:41 and is worth looking over. Deut. 3:14 reads: **Jair son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called it (i.e., the Bashan) after his own name, Havvoth-jair, [and so it is] to this day.** This verse we are studying could read: **And so their region was from Mahaniam, all of the Bashan, all of the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, and all of Havvoth-jair which [is] in the Bashan—sixty cities.** Apparently when Israel conquered this area, Jair put his name to it. Num. 32:41 confirms this: **And Jair ben Manasseh went and took its towns and called them towns of Jair (or, Havvoth-jair).**

**And a half of Gilead and Ashtaroth and Edrei cites of a kingdom of Og in Bashan, to the people of Machir, son of Manasseh, to half of [the] sons of Machir to their families.**

Joshua  
13:31

**along with half of Gilead, as well as Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan—all given to the people of Machir, the son of Manasseh, to the half [of Manasseh], the sons of Machir.**

Machir is the eldest son of Manasseh (recall that Manasseh and Ephraim were both half-tribes which made up the tribe of Joseph). Machir was the father of Gilead, whose name is the same as this land spoken of here. We don't know the exact chronology of this, as Gilead was the son of Machir, who was the son of Manasseh who was the son of Joseph, while they were all in Egypt. Gilead has been so named in Numbers 26, 27 and 32, the time of its conquering. It seems most logical that the area would be called Gilead, perhaps after the tribe that subdued much of the area and settled in there. One of the reasons that these two and a half tribes chose this land is that it looked to be good grazing land (Num. 32:1).

Ashtaroth received its name from the mother-goddess worshipped by the heathen and this was the home of Og, the king of Bashan (Deut. 1:4 3:10 Joshua 12:4). Edrei, possibly meaning *strong*, was another residence city of Og, king of Bashan (Deut. 1:4 3:10 Joshua 12:4 13:12), was built on a bluff that overlooked a southern fork of the Yarmuk River. This, as was all of Gilead and Bashan, taken in battle by Moses (Num. 21:33–35 Deut. 3:1–6). Edrie's modern-day equivalent is Der'a, a small town of 5,000 in southern Syria, 60 miles south of Damascus and 30 miles east of the Jordan. The ruins excavated in this city go back to the Early Bronze Age. There is also a remarkable *subterranean city of numerous streets, shops, rooms, and cisterns, probably from the Hellenistic or Roman period, in underlying caves in the basaltic rock.*<sup>35</sup> There is another Edrie which we will read about in Joshua 19:17, which is allotted to Naphtali.

The last sentence here is a bit difficult. It sounds as though only half of the men of Machir took this area. Let me give you some examples of how some translators dealt with this:

*The Emphasized Bible* ...and half Gilead and Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan pertained to the sons of Machir son of Manasseh, to half the sons of Machir by their families.

The literal Hebrew ...and half the Gilead and Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of a kingdom of Og in Bashan to sons of Machir, son of Manasseh to half of [the] sons of Machir, for their families.

NAB Half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, once the royal cities of Og in Bashan, fell to the descendants of Machir, son of Manasseh, for half the clans descended from Mahir.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted or paraphrased from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 2; p. 204. The information about the subterranean caves originally came from *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 287 and Smith's *Historic Geography of the Holy Land*, p. 576.

NASB	...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.
NJB	Half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the royal cities of Og in Bashan, were allotted to the sons of Machir son of Manasseh, to half of the sons of Machir, by clans.
REB	Half Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei, the royal cities of Og in Bashan, belong to the sons of Machir son of Manasseh on behalf of half the Marchirites family by family.
The Septuagint	...to the sons of Machir, the sons of Manasse, even to the half-tribe sons of Machir the sons of Manasse, according to their families.

As you can see, many of the translators struggled with the very same thing—it does not seem right that we are only speaking of half of the tribe of Machir, but, rather, half of the tribe of Manasseh. My personal feelings are that the *half* circles back to pick up Manasseh. There might be some manhandling involved to render this as **...to sons of Machir, son of Manasseh—for a half—sons of Machir, for their families**. To sum up (1) it seems as though the half should only apply to Manasseh and not to the sons of Machir (see also Joshua 17:1–5); but (2) the Hebrew seems to apply *half of* to Machir and not Manasseh, which means that half of the tribe of Machir opted to remain with the rest of Manasseh on the west side of the Jordan (however, I am not aware of any Scripture which would back this up). Luckily, when this allotment was originally given, it was understood. Although the differences of translations indicates that the translators thought long and hard about this; there are no comments by any of the commentaries which I have expressing the same questions, including Keil and Delitzsch and Barnes. Our third option is to assume that the Greek Septuagint is the most accurate, which clearly does not deal with half of the tribe of Machir, but deals with the half-tribe of Manasseh which is Machir, and this appears to be the most reasonable alternative.

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## Conclusion

**These which distributed Moses in planes of Moab beyond the Jordan-Jericho east.** Joshua 13:32

**These cities and territories Moses distributed in the planes of Moab beyond the Jordan, east of Jericho.**

The verb is the Piel perfect of *nâchal* (נָחַל) [pronounced *naw-KHAHL*], which means, *to receive anything as a possession, to possess (as wealth or glory)*. In the Piel, it means *to cause something to be inherited, to distribute*. Strong's #5157 BDB #635. This is simply a summary of this chapter.

**And to a tribe of Levi, Moses did not give an inheritance; Y<sup>h</sup>owah God of Israel, He [is] their inheritance as which He said to them.** Joshua 13:33

**Furthermore, to the tribe of Levi, Moses did not give a land inheritance; Jehovah, the God of Israel, is there inheritance, as He has said to them].**

So in this chapter we see what land was distributed to Reuben, Gad and the Machir half of the tribe of Manasseh. In addition, it is mentioned that the Levites did not have a physical possession of land. Appropriate Scripture was covered back in v. 14. When it reads that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was their inheritance; we have what is called metonymy. One word stands in for something else. That is, Jehovah God did not belong exclusively to the Levites but spiritual duties, spiritual services and the sacrificing of the animals belonged to the Levites—all of these things are encompassed by the use of God's name.

This verse would end the parenthetical insertion made by Joshua between the orders given him by God and his compliance with same in the next chapter. The interim verses merely confirm what Moses had already distributed prior to that time. However, what we do have in this chapter is a more tribe-specific distribution of property, where

what was recorded by Moses was more generalized. As you noticed, some of the cities which Gad repaired were given to Reuben, so when Moses first had these tribes go out and work on the cities that they destroyed, he was not giving them a particular plot of land.

*McGee: From all outward appearances Israel seemed to be doing very well. They went into the land and drove a wedge right into the center of it. They conquered the south and went on to conquer the north, but the Lord reminded him that there remained much land to be possessed. After doing a tremendous job, my friend, that will be true of you and me. It was been true of every servant of God; he will never accomplish all that he wished. In Philippians 3:12 Paul says, "Not as though I already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." God told Joshua that the land upon which the children of Israel walked would be theirs. They did not, however, walk on all of it. Neither will we ever be able to possess all of our spiritual possessions. I have met a few saints who think they have. They think there is nothing more for them to learn or do. They are satisfied with the life they are leading and have no desire to press on to "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).<sup>36</sup>*

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<sup>36</sup> J. Vernon McGee, Joshua Judges, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; pp. 73–74.