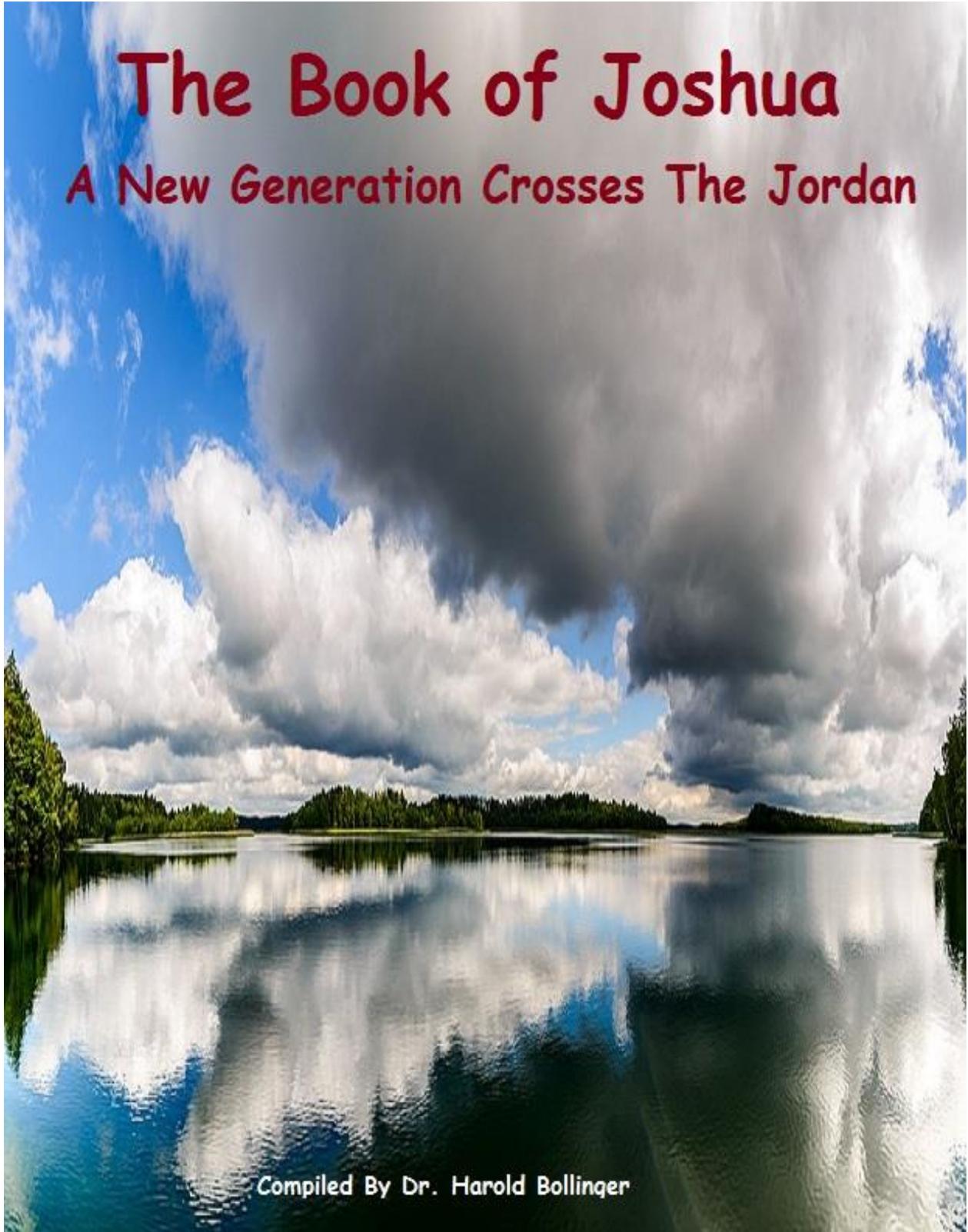


The Book of Joshua

A New Generation Crosses The Jordan

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger



Joshua

OVERVIEW: REMEMBER the childhood game “follow the leader”? The idea was to mimic the antics of the person in front of you in the line of boys and girls winding through the neighborhood. Being a follower was all right, but being leader was the most fun, creating imaginative routes and tasks for everyone else to copy.

In real life, great leaders are rare. Often, men and women are elected or appointed to leadership positions, but then falter or fail to act. Others abuse their power to satisfy their egos, crushing their subjects and squandering resources. But without faithful, ethical, and effective leaders, people wander.

For 40 years, Israel had journeyed a circuitous route through the desert, but *not* because they were following their leader. Quite the opposite was true—with failing faith, they had refused to obey God and to conquer Canaan. So they wandered.

Finally, the new generation was ready to cross the Jordan and possess the land. Having distinguished himself as a man of faith and courage (he and Caleb gave the minority spy report recorded in Numbers 13:30-14:9), Joshua was chosen to be Moses’ successor.

This book records Joshua’s leadership of the people of God as they finish their march and conquer the Promised Land. Joshua was a brilliant military leader and a strong spiritual influence. But the key to his success was his submission to God. When God spoke, Joshua listened and obeyed. Joshua’s obedience served as a model. As a result, Israel remained faithful to God throughout Joshua’s lifetime.

The book of Joshua is divided into two main parts. The first narrates the events surrounding the conquest of Canaan. After crossing the Jordan River on dry ground, the Israelites camped near the mighty city of Jericho. God commanded the people to conquer Jericho by marching around the city 13 times, blowing trumpets, and shouting.

Because they followed God’s unique battle strategy, they won (Joshua 6). After the destruction of Jericho, they set out against the small town of Ai. Their first attack was driven back because one of the Israelites (Achan) had sinned (Joshua 7).

After the men of Israel stoned Achan and his family—purging the community of its sin—the Israelites succeeded in capturing Ai (Joshua 8). In their next battle against the Amorites, God even made the sun stand still to aid them in their victory (Joshua 10). Finally, after defeating other assorted Canaanites led by Jabin and his allies (Joshua 11), they possessed most of the land.

Part two of the book of Joshua records the assignment and settlement of the captured territory (Joshua 13-22). The book concludes with Joshua's farewell address and his death (Joshua 23-24).

Joshua was committed to obeying God, and this book is about obedience. Whether conquering enemies or settling the land, God's people were required to do it God's way. In his final message to the people, Joshua underscored the importance of obeying God. "So be very careful to love the LORD your God" (Joshua 23:11), and "choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. . . . But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

Read Joshua and make a fresh commitment to obey God today. Decide to follow your Lord wherever he leads and whatever it costs.

THE BLUEPRINT

A. ENTERING THE PROMISED LAND (Joshua 1:1-5:12)

Joshua demonstrated his faith in God as he took up the challenge to lead the nation. The Israelites reaffirmed their commitment to God by obediently setting out across the Jordan River to possess the land. As we live the Christian life, we need to cross over from the old life to the new, put off our selfish desires, and press on to possess all God has planned for us. Like Joshua and Israel, we need courageous faith to live the new life.

1. Joshua leads the nation
2. Crossing the Jordan

Joshua 1:1-5:12

After the death of Moses the Lord's servant, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, [2] "Now that my servant Moses is dead, you must lead my people across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. [3] I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Everywhere you go, you will be on land I have given you— [4] from the Negev Desert in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River on the east to the Mediterranean Sea on the west, and all the land of the Hittites.' [5] No one will be able to stand their ground against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

[6] "Be strong and courageous, for you will lead my people to possess all the land I swore to give their ancestors. [7] Be strong and very courageous. Obey all the laws Moses gave you. Do not turn away from them, and you will be successful in everything you do. [8] Study this Book of the Law continually. Meditate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that is written in it. Only then will you succeed. [9] I command you—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

[10] Joshua then commanded the leaders of Israel, [11] "Go through the camp and tell the people to get their provisions ready. In three days you will cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land the Lord your God has given you."

[12] Then Joshua called together the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. He told them, [13] "Remember what Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you: 'The Lord your God is giving you rest and has given you this land.' [14] Your wives, children, and cattle may remain here on the east side of the Jordan River, but your warriors, fully armed, must lead the other tribes across the Jordan to help them conquer their territory. Stay with them

[15] until the Lord gives rest to them as he has given rest to you, and until they, too, possess the land the Lord your God is giving them. Only then may you settle here on the east side of the Jordan River in the land that Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you."

[16] They answered Joshua, "We will do whatever you command us, and we will go wherever you send us. [17] We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses. And may the Lord your God be with you as he was with Moses. [18] Anyone who rebels against your word and does not obey your every command will be put to death. So be strong and courageous!"

[2:1] Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia. He instructed them, "Spy out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho." So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night.

[2] But someone told the king of Jericho, "Some Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." [3] So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: "Bring out the men who have come into your house. They are spies sent here to discover the best way to attack us."

[4] Rahab, who had hidden the two men, replied, "The men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from. [5] They left the city at dusk, as the city gates were about to close, and I don't know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them." [6] (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath piles of flax.) [7] So the king's men went looking for the spies along the road leading to the shallow crossing places of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king's men had left, the city gate was shut.

[8] Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went up on the roof to talk with them. [9] "I know the Lord has given you this land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you. Everyone is living in terror. [10] For we have heard how the Lord made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed.

[11] No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below. [12] Now swear to me by the Lord that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that [13] when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families."

[14] "We offer our own lives as a guarantee for your safety," the men agreed. "If you don't betray us, we will keep our promise when the Lord gives us the land."

[15] Then, since Rahab's house was built into the city wall, she let them down by a rope through the window. [16] "Escape to the hill country," she told them. "Hide there for three days until the men who are searching for you have returned; then go on your way."

[17] Before they left, the men told her, "We can guarantee your safety [18] only if you leave this scarlet rope hanging from the window. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house. [19] If they go out into the street, they will be killed, and we cannot be held to our oath. But we swear that no one inside this house will be killed—not a hand will be laid on any of them. [20] If you betray us, however, we are not bound by this oath in any way."

[21] "I accept your terms," she replied. And she sent them on their way, leaving the scarlet rope hanging from the window.

[22] The spies went up into the hill country and stayed there three days. The men who were chasing them had searched everywhere along the road, but they finally returned to the city without success. [23] Then the two spies came down from the hill country, crossed the Jordan River, and reported to Joshua all that had happened to them. [24] "The Lord will certainly give us the whole land," they said, "for all the people in the land are terrified of us."

[3:1] Early the next morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Acacia and arrived at the banks of the Jordan River, where they camped before crossing. [2] Three days later, the Israelite leaders went through the camp [3] giving these instructions to the people: "When you see the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, follow them. [4] Since you have never traveled this way before, they will guide you. Stay about a half mile behind them, keeping a clear distance between you and the Ark. Make sure you don't come any closer."

[5] Then Joshua told the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do great wonders among you."

[6] In the morning Joshua said to the priests, "Lift up the Ark of the Covenant and lead the people across the river." And so they started out.

[7] The Lord told Joshua, "Today I will begin to make you great in the eyes of all the Israelites. Now they will know that I am with you, just as I was with Moses. [8] Give these instructions to the priests who are carrying the Ark of the Covenant: 'When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop.' "

[9] So Joshua told the Israelites, "Come and listen to what the Lord your God says. [10] Today you will know that the living God is among you. He will surely drive out the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. [11] Think of it! The Ark of the Covenant, which belongs to the Lord of the whole earth, will lead you across the Jordan River! [12] Now choose twelve men, one from each tribe. [13] The priests will be carrying the Ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth. When their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will pile up there in one heap."

[14] When the people set out to cross the Jordan, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. [15] Now it was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river's edge, [16] the water began piling up at a town upstream called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the city of Jericho. [17] Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Lord's covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by them. They waited there until everyone had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

[4:1] When all the people were safely across the river, the Lord said to Joshua, [2] "Now choose twelve men, one from each tribe. [3] Tell the men to take twelve stones from where the priests are standing in the middle of the Jordan and pile them up at the place where you camp tonight."

[4] So Joshua called together the twelve men [5] and told them, "Go into the middle of the Jordan, in front of the Ark of the Lord your God. Each of you must pick up one stone and carry it out on your shoulder—twelve stones in all, one for each of the twelve tribes.

[6] We will use these stones to build a memorial. In the future, your children will ask, 'What do these stones mean to you?' [7] Then you can tell them, 'They remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of the Lord's covenant went across.' These stones will stand as a permanent memorial among the people of Israel."

[8] So the men did as Joshua told them. They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan River, one for each tribe, just as the Lord had commanded Joshua. They carried them to the place where they camped for the night and constructed the memorial there.

[9] Joshua also built another memorial of twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing. The memorial remains there to this day.

[10] The priests who were carrying the Ark stood in the middle of the river until all of the Lord's instructions, which Moses had given to Joshua, were carried out. Meanwhile, the people hurried across the riverbed. [11] And when everyone was on the other side, the priests crossed over with the Ark of the Lord. [12] The armed warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh led the Israelites across the Jordan, just as Moses had directed. [13] These warriors—about forty thousand strong—were ready for battle, and they crossed over to the plains of Jericho in the Lord's presence.

[14] That day the Lord made Joshua great in the eyes of all the Israelites, and for the rest of his life they revered him as much as they had revered Moses.

[15] The Lord had said to Joshua, [16] "Command the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant to come up out of the riverbed." [17] So Joshua gave the command. [18] And as soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the Lord's covenant came up out of the riverbed, the Jordan River flooded its banks as before.

[19] The people crossed the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month—the month that marked their exodus from Egypt. They camped at Gilgal, east of Jericho. [20] It was there at Gilgal that Joshua piled up the twelve stones taken from the Jordan River. [21] Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future, your children will ask, 'what do these stones mean?' [22] Then you can tell them, 'This is where the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground.'

[23] For the Lord your God dried up the river right before your eyes, and he kept it dry until you were all across, just as he did at the Red Sea when he dried it up until we had all crossed over. [24] He did this so that all the nations of the earth might know the power of the Lord, and that you might fear the Lord your God forever."

[5:1] When all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings who lived along the Mediterranean coast heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan River so the people of Israel could cross, they lost heart and were paralyzed with fear.

[2] At that time the Lord told Joshua, "Use knives of flint to make the Israelites a circumcised people again." [3] So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the entire male population of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth.

[4] Joshua had to circumcise them because all the men who were old enough to bear arms when they left Egypt had died in the wilderness. [5] Those who left Egypt had all been circumcised, but none of those born after the Exodus, during the years in the wilderness, had been circumcised. [6] The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all the men who were old enough to bear arms when they left Egypt had died. For they had disobeyed the Lord, and the Lord vowed he would not let them enter the land he had sworn to give us—a land flowing with milk and honey. [7] So Joshua circumcised their sons who had not been circumcised on the way to the Promised Land—those who had grown up to take their fathers' places. [8] After all the males had been circumcised, they rested in the camp until they were healed.

[9] Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the shame of your slavery in Egypt." So that place has been called Gilgal to this day.

[10] While the Israelites were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, they celebrated Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month—the month that marked their exodus from Egypt. [11] The very next day they began to eat unleavened bread and roasted grain harvested from the land. [12] No manna appeared that day, and it was never seen again. So from that time on the Israelites ate from the crops of Canaan.

B. CONQUERING THE PROMISED LAND (Joshua 5:13-12:24)

Joshua and his army moved from city to city, cleansing the land of its wickedness by destroying every trace of idol worship. Conflict with evil is inevitable, and we should be as merciless as Israel in destroying sin in our lives.

Joshua attacks the center of the land

Joshua attacks the southern kings

Joshua attacks the northern kings

Summary of conquests

Joshua 5:13-12:24

As Joshua approached the city of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man facing him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you friend or foe?"

[14] "Neither one," he replied. "I am commander of the Lord's army."

At this, Joshua fell with his face to the ground in reverence. "I am at your command," Joshua said. "What do you want your servant to do?"

[15] The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for this is holy ground." And Joshua did as he was told.

[6:1] Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go in or out. [2] But the Lord said to Joshua, "I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its mighty warriors. [3] Your entire army is to march around the city once a day for six days. [4] Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. [5] When you hear the priests give one long blast on the horns, have all the people give a mighty shout. Then the walls of the city will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the city."

[6] So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn." [7] Then he gave orders to the people: "March around the city, and the armed men will lead the way in front of the Ark of the Lord."

[8] After Joshua spoke to the people, the seven priests with the rams' horns started marching in the presence of the Lord, blowing the horns as they marched. And the priests carrying the Ark of the Lord's covenant followed behind them. [9] Armed guards marched both in front of the priests and behind the Ark, with the priests continually blowing the horns. [10] "Do not shout; do not even talk," Joshua commanded. "Not a single word from any of you until I tell you to shout. Then shout!" [11] So the Ark of the Lord was carried around the city once that day, and then everyone returned to spend the night in the camp.

[12] Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the Lord. [13] The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the Lord, blowing their horns. Armed guards marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the Lord. All this time the priests were sounding their horns. [14] On the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days.

[15] On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the city as they had done before. But this time they went around the city seven times. [16] The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city! [17] The city and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies. [18] Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction, or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on all Israel. [19] Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the Lord and must be brought into his treasury."

[20] When the people heard the sound of the horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the city from every side and captured it. [21] They completely destroyed everything in it—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, donkeys—everything.

[22] Then Joshua said to the two spies, "Keep your promise. Go to the prostitute's house and bring her out, along with all her family."

[23] The young men went in and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all the other relatives who were with her. They moved her whole family to a safe place near the camp of Israel.

[24] Then the Israelites burned the city and everything in it. Only the things made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron were kept for the treasury of the Lord's house. [25] So Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute and her relatives who were with her in the house, because she had hidden the spies Joshua sent to Jericho. And she lives among the Israelites to this day.

[26] At that time Joshua invoked this curse:

"May the curse of the Lord fall on anyone
who tries to rebuild the city of Jericho.
At the cost of his firstborn son,
he will lay its foundation.
At the cost of his youngest son,
he will set up its gates."

[27] So the Lord was with Joshua, and his name became famous throughout the land.

[7:1] But Israel was unfaithful concerning the things set apart for the Lord. A man named Achan had stolen some of these things, so the Lord was very angry with the Israelites. Achan was the son of Carmi, of the family of Zimri, of the clan of Zerah, and of the tribe of Judah.

[2] Joshua sent some of his men from Jericho to spy out the city of Ai, east of Bethel, near Beth-aven. [3] When they returned, they told Joshua, "It's a small town, and it won't take more than two or three thousands of us to destroy it. There's no need for all of us to go there."

[4] So approximately three thousand warriors were sent, but they were soundly defeated. The men of Ai [5] chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the quarries, and they killed about thirty-six who were retreating down the slope. The Israelites were paralyzed with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away.

[6] Joshua and the leaders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed down facing the Ark of the Lord until evening. [7] Then Joshua cried out, "Sovereign Lord, why did you bring us across the Jordan River if you are going to let the Amorites kill us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side! [8] Lord, what am I to say, now that Israel has fled from its enemies? [9] For when the Canaanites and all the other people living in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe us off the face of the earth. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?"

[10] But the Lord said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this? [11] Israel has sinned and broken my covenant! They have stolen the things that I commanded to be set apart for me. And they have not only stolen them; they have also lied about it and hidden the things among their belongings. [12] That is why the Israelites are running from their enemies in defeat. For now Israel has been set apart for destruction. I will not remain with you any longer unless you destroy the things among you that were set apart for destruction.

[13] "Get up! Command the people to purify themselves in preparation for tomorrow. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Hidden among you, O Israel, are things set apart for the Lord. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things. [14] In the morning you must present yourselves by tribes, and the Lord will point out the tribe to which the guilty man belongs. That tribe must come forward with its clans, and the Lord will point out the guilty clan. That clan will then come forward, and the Lord will point out the guilty family. Finally, each member of the guilty family must come one by one. [15] The one who has stolen what was set apart for destruction will himself be burned with fire, along with everything he has, for he has broken the covenant of the Lord and has done a horrible thing in Israel."

[16] Early the next morning Joshua brought the tribes of Israel before the Lord, and the tribe of Judah was singled out. [17] Then the clans of Judah came forward, and the clan of Zerah was singled out. Then the families of Zerah came before the Lord, and the family of Zimri was singled out. [18] Every member of Zimri's family was brought forward person by person, and Achan was singled out.

[19] Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, by telling the truth. Make your confession and tell me what you have done. Don't hide it from me."

[20] Achan replied, "I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. [21] For I saw a beautiful robe imported from Babylon, two hundred silver coins, and a bar of gold weighing more than a pound. I wanted them so much that I took them. They are hidden in the ground beneath my tent, with the silver buried deeper than the rest."

[22] So Joshua sent some men to make a search. They ran to the tent and found the stolen goods hidden there, just as Achan had said, with the silver buried beneath the rest. [23] They took the things from the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites. Then they laid them on the ground in the presence of the Lord.

[24] Then Joshua and all the Israelites took Achan, the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys, sheep, tent, and everything he had, and they brought them to the valley of Achor. [25] Then Joshua said to Achan, "Why have you brought trouble on us? The Lord will now bring trouble on you." And all the Israelites stoned Achan and his family and burned their bodies. [26] They piled a great heap of stones over Achan, which remains to this day. That is why the place has been called the Valley of Trouble ever since. So the Lord was no longer angry.

[8:1] Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid or discouraged. Take the entire army and attack Ai, for I have given to you the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. [2] You will destroy them as you destroyed Jericho and its king. But this time you may keep the captured goods and the cattle for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city."

[3] So Joshua and the army of Israel set out to attack Ai. Joshua chose thirty thousand fighting men and sent them out at night [4] with these orders: "Hide in ambush close behind the city and be ready for action. [5] When our main army attacks, the men of Ai will come out to fight as they did before, and we will run away from them. [6] We will let them chase us until they have all left the city. For they will say, 'The Israelites are running away from us as they did before.' [7] Then you will jump up from your ambush and take possession of the city, for the Lord your God will give it to you. [8] Set the city on fire, as the Lord has commanded. You have your orders."

[9] So they left that night and lay in ambush between Bethel and the west side of Ai. But Joshua remained among the people in the camp that night. [10] Early the next morning Joshua roused his men and started toward Ai, accompanied by the leaders of Israel.

[11] They camped on the north side of Ai, with a valley between them and the city. [12] That night Joshua sent five thousand men to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. [13] So they stationed the main army north of the city and the ambush west of the city. Joshua himself spent that night in the valley.

[14] When the king of Ai saw the Israelites across the valley, he and all his army hurriedly went out early the next morning and attacked the Israelites at a place overlooking the Jordan Valley. But he didn't realize there was an ambush behind the city. [15] Joshua and the Israelite army fled toward the wilderness as though they were badly beaten, [16] and all the men in the city were called out to chase after them. In this way, they were lured away from the city. [17] There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not chase after the Israelites, and the city was left wide open.

[18] Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Point your spear toward Ai, for I will give you the city." Joshua did as he was commanded. [19] As soon as Joshua gave the signal, the men in ambush jumped up and poured into the city. They quickly captured it and set it on fire.

[20] When the men of Ai looked behind them, smoke from the city was filling the sky, and they had nowhere to go. For the Israelites who had fled in the direction of the wilderness now turned on their pursuers. [21] When Joshua and the other Israelites saw that the ambush had succeeded and that smoke was rising from the city, they turned and attacked the men of Ai.

[22] Then the Israelites who were inside the city came out and started killing the enemy from the rear. So the men of Ai were caught in a trap, and all of them died. Not a single person survived or escaped. [23] Only the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

[24] When the Israelite army finished killing all the men outside the city, they went back and finished off everyone inside. [25] So the entire population of Ai was wiped out that day—twelve thousand in all. [26] For Joshua kept holding out his spear until everyone who had lived in Ai was completely destroyed. [27] Only the cattle and the treasures of the city were not destroyed, for the Israelites kept these for themselves, as the Lord had commanded Joshua. [28] So Ai became a permanent mound of ruins, desolate to this very day.

[29] Joshua hung the king of Ai on a tree and left him there until evening. At sunset the Israelites took down the body and threw it in front of the city gate. They piled a great heap of stones over him that can still be seen today.

[30] Then Joshua built an altar to the Lord, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal. [31] He followed the instructions that Moses the Lord's servant had written in the Book of the Law: "Make me an altar from stones that are uncut and have not been shaped with iron tools." Then on the altar they presented burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. [32] And as the Israelites watched, Joshua copied the Law of Moses onto the stones of the altar.

[33] Then all the Israelites—foreigners and citizens alike—along with the leaders, officers, and judges, were divided into two groups. One group stood at the foot of Mount Gerizim, the other at the foot of Mount Ebal. Each group faced the other, and between them stood the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Lord's covenant. This was all done according to the instructions Moses, the servant of the Lord, had given for blessing the people of Israel.

[34] Joshua then read to them all the blessings and curses Moses had written in the Book of the Law. [35] Every command Moses had ever given was read to the entire assembly, including the women and children and the foreigners who lived among the Israelites.

[9:1] Now all the kings west of the Jordan heard about what had happened. (These were the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who lived in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far north as the Lebanon Mountains.) [2] These kings quickly combined their armies to fight against Joshua and the Israelites.

[3] But when the people of Gibeon heard what had happened to Jericho and Ai, [4] they resorted to deception to save themselves. They sent ambassadors to Joshua, loading their donkeys with weathered saddlebags and old patched wineskins. [5] They put on ragged clothes and worn-out, patched sandals. And they took along dry, moldy bread for provisions. [6] When they arrived at the camp of Israel at Gilgal, they told Joshua and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land to ask you to make a peace treaty with us."

[7] The Israelites replied to these Hivites, "How do we know you don't live nearby? For if you do, we cannot make a treaty with you."

[8] They replied, "We will be your servants."

"But who are you?" Joshua demanded. "Where do you come from?"

[9] They answered, "We are from a very distant country. We have heard of the might of the Lord your God and of all he did in Egypt. [10] We have also heard what he did to the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River—King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan (who lived in Ashtaroth). [11] So our leaders and our people instructed us, 'Prepare for a long journey. Go meet with the people of Israel and declare our people to be their servants, and ask for peace.'

[12] "This bread was hot from the ovens when we left. But now, as you can see, it is dry and moldy. [13] These wineskins were new when we filled them, but now they are old and cracked. And our clothing and sandals are worn out from our long, hard trip."

[14] So the Israelite leaders examined their bread, but they did not consult the Lord. [15] Then Joshua went ahead and signed a peace treaty with them, and the leaders of Israel ratified their agreement with a binding oath.

[16] Three days later, the facts came out—these people of Gibeon lived nearby! [17] The Israelites set out at once to investigate and reached their towns in three days. The names of these towns were Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. [18] But the Israelites did not attack the towns, for their leaders had made a vow to the Lord, the God of Israel.

The people of Israel grumbled against their leaders because of the treaty. [19] But the leaders replied, "We have sworn an oath in the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel. We cannot touch them. [20] We must let them live, for God would be angry with us if we broke our oath. [21] Let them live. But we will make them chop the wood and carry the water for the entire community."

So the Israelites kept their promise to the Gibeonites. [22] But Joshua called together the Gibeonite leaders and said, "Why did you lie to us? Why did you say that you live in a distant land when you live right here among us? [23] May you be cursed! From now on you will chop wood and carry water for the house of my God."

[24] They replied, "We did it because we were told that the Lord your God instructed his servant Moses to conquer this entire land and destroy all the people living in it. So we feared for our lives because of you. That is why we have done it. [25] Now we are at your mercy—do whatever you think is right."

[26] Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. [27] But that day he made the Gibeonites the woodchoppers and water carriers for the people of Israel and for the altar of the Lord—wherever the Lord would choose to build it. That arrangement continues to this day.

[10:1] Now Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured and completely destroyed Ai and killed its king, just as he had destroyed the city of Jericho and killed its king. He also learned that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel and were now their allies. [2] He and his people became very afraid when they heard all this because Gibeon was a large city—as large as the royal cities and larger than Ai. And the Gibeonite men were mighty warriors.

[3] So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent messengers to several other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. [4] "Come and help me destroy Gibeon," he urged them, "for they have made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel." [5] So these five Amorite kings combined their armies for a united attack. They moved all their troops into place and attacked Gibeon.

[6] The men of Gibeon quickly sent messengers to Joshua at Gilgal, "Don't abandon your servants now!" they pleaded. "Come quickly and save us! For all the Amorite kings who live in the hill country have come out against us with their armies."

[7] So Joshua and the entire Israelite army left Gilgal and set out to rescue Gibeon. [8] "Do not be afraid of them," the Lord said to Joshua, "for I will give you victory over them. Not a single one of them will be able to stand up to you."

[9] Joshua traveled all night from Gilgal and took the Amorite armies by surprise. [10] The Lord threw them into a panic, and the Israelites slaughtered them in great numbers at Gibeon. Then the Israelites chased the enemy along the road to Beth-horon and attacked them at Azekah and Makkedah, killing them along the way.

[11] As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the Lord destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.

[12] On the day the Lord gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the Lord in front of all the people of Israel. He said,

"Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon."

[13] So the sun and moon stood still until the Israelites had defeated their enemies.

Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day. [14] The Lord fought for Israel that day. Never before or since has there been a day like that one, when the Lord answered such a request from a human being.

[15] Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

[16] During the battle, the five kings escaped and hid in a cave at Makkedah. [17] When Joshua heard that they had been found, [18] he issued this command: "Cover the opening of the cave with large rocks and place guards at the entrance to keep the kings inside. [19] The rest of you continue chasing the enemy and cut them down from the rear. Don't let them get back to their cities, for the Lord your God has given you victory over them."

[20] So Joshua and the Israelite army continued the slaughter and wiped out the five armies except for a tiny remnant that managed to reach their fortified cities. [21] Then the Israelites returned safely to their camp at Makkedah. After that, no one dared to speak a word against Israel.

[22] Then Joshua said, "Remove the rocks covering the opening of the cave and bring the five kings to me." [23] So they brought the five kings out of the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. [24] Joshua told the captains of his army, "Come and put your feet on the kings' necks." And they did as they were told.

[25] "Don't ever be afraid or discouraged," Joshua told his men. "Be strong and courageous, for the Lord is going to do this to all of your enemies." [26] Then Joshua killed each of the five kings and hung them on five trees until evening.

[27] As the sun was going down, Joshua gave instructions for the bodies of the kings to be taken down from the trees and thrown into the cave where they had been hiding. Then they covered the opening of the cave with a large pile of stones, which remains to this very day.

[28] That same day Joshua completely destroyed the city of Makkedah, killing everyone in it, including the king. Not one person in the city was left alive. He killed the king of Makkedah as he had killed the king of Jericho. [29] Then Joshua and the Israelites went to Libnah and attacked it.

[30] There, too, the Lord gave them the city and its king. They slaughtered everyone in the city and left no survivors. Then Joshua killed the king of Libnah just as he had killed the king of Jericho.

[31] From Libnah, Joshua and the Israelites went to Lachish and attacked it. [32] And the Lord gave it to them on the second day. Here, too, the entire population was slaughtered, just as at Libnah. [33] During the attack on Lachish, King Horam of Gezer had arrived with his army to help defend the city. But Joshua's men killed him and destroyed his entire army.

[34] Then Joshua and the Israelite army went to Eglon and attacked it. [35] They captured it in one day, and as at Lachish, they completely destroyed everyone in the city. [36] After leaving Eglon, they attacked Hebron, [37] capturing it and all of its surrounding towns. And just as they had done at Eglon, they completely destroyed the entire population. Not one person was left alive. [38] Then they turned back and attacked Debir. [39] They captured the city, its king, and all of its surrounding villages. And they killed everyone in it, leaving no survivors. They completely destroyed Debir just as they had destroyed Libnah and Hebron.

[40] So Joshua conquered the whole region—the kings and people of the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills, and the mountain slopes. He completely destroyed everyone in the land, leaving no survivors, just as the Lord, the God of Israel, had commanded. [41] Joshua slaughtered them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and from Goshen to Gibeon. [42] In a single campaign Joshua conquered all these kings and their land, for the Lord, the God of Israel, was fighting for his people. [43] Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

[11:1] When King Jabin of Hazor heard what had happened, he sent urgent messages to the following kings: King Jobab of Madon; the king of Shimron; the king of Acshaph; [2] all the kings of the northern hill country; the kings in the Jordan Valley south of Galilee; the kings in the western foothills; the kings of Naphtalim on the west; [3] the kings of Canaan, both east and west; the kings of the Amorites; the kings of the Hittites; the kings of the Perizzites; the kings in the Jebusite hill country; and the Hivites in the towns on the slopes of Mount Hermon, in the land of Mizpah.

[4] All these kings responded by mobilizing their warriors and uniting to fight against Israel. Their combined armies, along with a vast array of horses and chariots, covered the landscape like the sand on the seashore. [5] They established their camp around the water near Merom to fight against Israel.

[6] Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. By this time tomorrow they will all be dead. Cripple their horses and burn their chariots."

[7] So Joshua and his warriors traveled to the water near Merom and attacked suddenly. [8] And the Lord gave them victory over their enemies. The Israelites chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim, and eastward into the valley of Mizpah, until not one enemy warrior was left alive.

[9] Then Joshua crippled the horses and burned all the chariots, as the Lord had instructed.

[10] Joshua then turned back and captured Hazor and killed its king. (Hazor had at one time been the capital of the federation of all these kingdoms.) [11] The Israelites completely destroyed every living thing in the city. Not a single person was spared. And then Joshua burned the city.

[12] Joshua slaughtered all the other kings and their people, completely destroying them, just as Moses, the servant of the Lord, had commanded. [13] However, Joshua did not burn any of the cities built on mounds except Hazor. [14] And the Israelites took all the captured goods and cattle of the ravaged cities for themselves, but they killed all the people. [15] As the Lord had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua. And Joshua did as he was told, carefully obeying all of the Lord's instructions to Moses.

[16] So Joshua conquered the entire region—the hill country, the Negev, the land of Goshen, the western foothills, the Jordan Valley, and the mountains and lowlands of Israel. [17] The Israelite territory now extended all the way from Mount Halak, which leads up to Seir, to Baal-gad at the foot of Mount Hermon in the valley of Lebanon. Joshua killed all the kings of those territories, [18] waging war for a long time to accomplish this. [19] No one in this region made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites of Gibeon. All the others were defeated. [20] For the Lord hardened their hearts and caused them to fight the Israelites instead of asking for peace. So they were completely and mercilessly destroyed, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[21] During this period, Joshua destroyed all the descendants of Anak, who lived in the hill country of Hebron, Debir, Anab, and the entire hill country of Judah and Israel. He killed them all and completely destroyed their towns. [22] Not one was left in all the land of Israel, though some still remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

[23] So Joshua took control of the entire land, just as the Lord had instructed Moses. He gave it to the people of Israel as their special possession, dividing the land among the tribes. So the land finally had rest from war.

[12:1] These are the kings east of the Jordan River who had been killed and whose land was taken. Their territory extended from the Arnon Gorge to Mount Hermon and included all the land east of the Jordan Valley.

[2] King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, was defeated. His kingdom included Aroer, on the edge of the Arnon Gorge, and extended from the middle of the Arnon Gorge to the Jabbok River, which serves as a boundary for the Ammonites. This territory included half of the present area of Gilead, which lies north of the Jabbok River. [3] Sihon also controlled the Jordan Valley as far north as the western shores of the Sea of Galilee and as far south as the Dead Sea, from Beth-jeshimoth to the slopes of Pisgah.

[4] King Og of Bashan, the last of the Rephaites, lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei. [5] He ruled a territory stretching from Mount Hermon to Salecah in the north and to all of Bashan in the east, and westward to the boundaries of the kingdoms of Geshur and Maacah. His kingdom included the northern half of Gilead, the other portion of which was in the territory of King Sihon of Heshbon. [6] Moses, the servant of the Lord, and the Israelites had destroyed the people of King Sihon and King Og. And Moses gave their land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

[7] The following is a list of the kings Joshua and the Israelite armies defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which leads up to Seir. (Joshua allotted this land to the tribes of Israel as their inheritance, [8] including the hill country, the western foothills, the Jordan Valley, the mountain slopes, the Judean wilderness, and the Negev. The people who lived in this region were the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.) These are the kings Israel defeated:

[9] The king of Jericho
The king of Ai, near Bethel

[10] The king of Jerusalem
The king of Hebron

[11] The king of Jarmuth
The king of Lachish

[12] The king of Eglon
The king of Gezer

[13] The king of Debir
The king of Geder

- [14] The king of Hormah
The king of Arad
- [15] The king of Libnah
The king of Adullam
- [16] The king of Makkedah
The king of Bethel
- [17] The king of Tappuah
The king of Hopher
- [18] The king of Aphek
The king of Lasharon
- [19] The king of Madon
The king of Hazor
- [20] The king of Shimron-meron
The king of Acshaph
- [21] The king of Taanach
The king of Megiddo
- [22] The king of Kedesh
The king of Jokneam in Carmel
- [23] The king of Dor in the city of Naphoth-dor
The king of Goyim in Gilgal
- [24] The king of Tirzah.

In all, thirty-one kings and their cities were destroyed.

C. DIVIDING THE PROMISED LAND (Joshua 13:1-24:33)

Joshua urged the Israelites to continue to follow the Lord and worship him alone. The people had seen God deliver them from many enemies and miraculously provide for all their needs, but they were prone to wandering from the Lord. Even though we may have experienced God at work in our lives, we too must continually renew our commitment to obey him above all other authority and to worship him alone.

1. The tribes receive their land
2. Special cities are set aside
3. Eastern tribes return home
4. Joshua's farewell to the leaders

Joshua 13:1-24:33

When Joshua was an old man, the Lord said to him, "You are growing old, and much land remains to be conquered. [2] The people still need to occupy the land of the Philistines and the Geshurites— [3] territory that belongs to the Canaanites. This land extends from the stream of Shihor, which is on the boundary of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron,

[4] and includes the five Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. The land of the Avvites in the south also remains to be conquered. In the north, this area has not yet been conquered: all the land of the Canaanites, including Mearah (which belongs to the Sidonians), stretching northward to Aphek on the border of the Amorites; [5] the land of the Gebalites and all of the Lebanon mountain area to the east, from Baal-gad beneath Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath; [6] and all the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, including all the land of the Sidonians.

"I will drive these people out of the land for the Israelites. So be sure to give this land to Israel as a special possession, just as I have commanded you. [7] Include all this territory as Israel's inheritance when you divide the land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

[8] Half the tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad had already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan, for Moses, the servant of the Lord, had previously assigned this land to them.

[9] Their territory extended from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Gorge (including the town in the middle of the gorge) to the plain beyond Medeba, as far as Dibon. [10] It also included all the towns of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, and extended as far as the borders of Ammon. [11] It included Gilead, the territory of the kingdoms of Geshur and Maacah, all of Mount Hermon, all of Bashan as far as Salecah, [12] and all the territory of King Og of Bashan, who had reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei. King Og was the last of the Rephaites, for Moses had attacked them and driven them out. [13] But the Israelites failed to drive out the people of Geshur and Maacah, so they continue to live among the Israelites to this day.

[14] Moses did not assign any land to the tribe of Levi. Instead, as the Lord had promised them, their inheritance came from the offerings burned on the altar to the Lord, the God of Israel.

[15] Moses had assigned the following area to the families of the tribe of Reuben.

[16] Their territory extended from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Gorge (including the town in the middle of the gorge) to the plain beyond Medeba. [17] It included Heshbon and the other towns on the plain—Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon, [18] Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, [19] Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill above the valley, [20] Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth.

[21] The land of Reuben also included all the towns of the plain and the entire kingdom of Sihon. Sihon was the Amorite king who had reigned in Heshbon and was killed by Moses along with the chiefs of Midian—Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—princes living in the region who were allied with Sihon. [22] The Israelites also killed Balaam the magician, the son of Beor. [23] The Jordan River marked the western boundary for the tribe of Reuben. The towns and villages in this area were given as an inheritance to the families of the tribe of Reuben.

[24] Moses had assigned the following area to the families of the tribe of Gad.

[25] Their territory included Jazer, all the towns of Gilead, and half of the land of Ammon, as far as the town of Aroer just west of Rabbah. [26] It extended from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to Lo-debar. [27] In the valley were Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, Zaphon, and the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon. The Jordan River was the western border, extending as far north as the Sea of Galilee. [28] The towns and villages in this area were given as an inheritance to the families of the tribe of Gad.

[29] Moses had assigned the following area to the families of the half-tribe of Manasseh.

[30] Their territory extended from Mahanaim, including all of Bashan, all the former kingdom of King Og, and the sixty towns of Jair in Bashan. [31] It also included half of Gilead and King Og's royal cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei. All this was given to the descendants of Makir, who was Manasseh's son.

[32] These are the allotments Moses had made while he was on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan River, east of Jericho. [33] But Moses gave no land to the tribe of Levi, for the Lord, the God of Israel, had promised to be their inheritance.

[14:1] The remaining tribes of Israel inherited land in Canaan as allotted by Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the tribal leaders. [2] These nine and a half tribes received their inheritance by means of sacred lots, in accordance with the Lord's command through Moses. [3] Moses had already given an inheritance of land to the two and a half tribes on the east side of the Jordan River. [4] The tribe of Joseph had become two separate tribes—Manasseh and Ephraim. And the Levites were given no land at all, only towns to live in and the surrounding pasturelands for their flocks and herds. [5] So the distribution of the land was in strict accordance with the Lord's instructions to Moses.

[6] A delegation from the tribe of Judah, led by Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb said to Joshua, "Remember what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God, about you and me when we were at Kadesh-barnea. [7] I was forty years old when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land of Canaan. I returned and gave from my heart a good report, [8] but my brothers who went with me frightened the people and discouraged them from entering the Promised Land. For my part, I followed the Lord my God completely.

[9] So that day Moses promised me, 'The land of Canaan on which you were just walking will be your special possession and that of your descendants forever, because you wholeheartedly followed the Lord my God.'

[10] "Now, as you can see, the Lord has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise—even while Israel wandered in the wilderness. Today I am eighty-five years old. [11] I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. [12] So I'm asking you to give me the hill country that the Lord promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the Anakites living there in great, walled cities. But if the Lord is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the Lord said."

[13] So Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave Hebron to him as an inheritance. [14] Hebron still belongs to the descendants of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite because he wholeheartedly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. [15] (Previously Hebron had been called Kiriath-arba. It had been named after Arba, a great hero of the Anakites.)

And the land had rest from war.

[15:1] The land assigned to the families of the tribe of Judah reached southward to the border of Edom, with the wilderness of Zin being its southernmost point.

[2] The southern boundary began at the south bay of the Dead Sea, [3] ran south of Scorpion Pass into the wilderness of Zin and went south of Kadesh-barnea to Hebron. Then it went up to Addar, where it turned toward Karka. [4] From there it passed to Azmon, until it finally reached the brook of Egypt, which it followed to the Mediterranean Sea. This was their southern boundary.

[5] The eastern boundary extended along the Dead Sea to the mouth of the Jordan River.

The northern boundary began at the bay where the Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea, [6] crossed to Beth-hoglah, then proceeded north of Beth-arabah to the stone of Bohan. (Bohan was Reuben's son.) [7] From that point it went through the valley of Achor to Debir, turning north toward Gilgal, which is across from the slopes of Adummim on the south side of the valley. From there the border extended to the springs at En-shemesh and on to En-rogel. [8] The boundary then passed through the valley of the son of Hinnom, along the southern slopes of the Jebusites, where the city of Jerusalem is located. Then it went west to the top of the mountain above the valley of Hinnom, and on up to the northern end of the valley of Rephaim.

[9] From there the border extended from the top of the mountain to the spring at the waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the towns on Mount Ephron. Then it turned toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim). [10] The border circled west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the town of Kesalon on the northern slope of Mount Jearim, and went down to Beth-shemesh and on to Timnah. [11] The boundary line then proceeded to the slope of the hill north of Ekron, where it turned toward Shikkeron and Mount Baalah. It passed Jabneel and ended at the Mediterranean Sea.

[12] The western boundary was the shoreline of the Mediterranean Sea.

These are the boundaries for the families of the tribe of Judah.

[13] The Lord instructed Joshua to assign some of Judah's territory to Caleb son of Jephunneh. So Caleb was given the city of Arba (that is, Hebron), which had been named after Anak's ancestor. [14] Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi—descendants of Anak.

[15] Then he fought against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher). [16] Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the one who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher." [17] Othniel, the son of Caleb's brother Kenaz, was the one who conquered it, so Acsah became Othniel's wife.

[18] When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for an additional field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What is it? What can I do for you?"

[19] She said, "Give me a further blessing. You have been kind enough to give me land in the Negev; please give me springs as well." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

[20] This was the inheritance given to the families of the tribe of Judah.

[21] The towns of Judah situated along the borders of Edom in the extreme south are Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, [22] Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, [23] Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, [24] Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, [25] Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor), [26] Amam, Shema, Moladah, [27] Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, [28] Hazar-shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, [29] Baalah, Iim, Ezem, [30] Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, [31] Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, [32] Lebaath, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. In all, there were twenty-nine of these towns with their surrounding villages.

[33] The following towns situated in the western foothills were also given to Judah: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, [34] Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, [35] Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, [36] Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim. In all, there were fourteen towns with their surrounding villages. [37] Also included were Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, [38] Dilean, Mizpeh, Joktheel, [39] Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, [40] Cabbon, Lahmam, Kitlish, [41] Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages. [42] Besides these, there were Libnah, Ether, Ashan, [43] Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, [44] Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

[45] The territory of the tribe of Judah also included all the towns and villages of Ekron. [46] From Ekron the boundary extended west and included the towns near Ashdod with their surrounding villages. [47] It also included Ashdod with its towns and villages and Gaza with its towns and villages, as far as the brook of Egypt and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

[48] Judah also received the following towns in the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, [49] Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), [50] Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, [51] Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—eleven towns with their surrounding villages. [52] Also included were the towns of Arab, Dumah, Eshan, [53] Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, [54] Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior—nine towns with their surrounding villages.

[55] Besides these, there were Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, [56] Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, [57] Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah—ten towns with their surrounding villages.

[58] In addition, there were Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, [59] Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon—six towns with their surrounding villages. [60] There were also Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim) and Rabbah—two towns with their surrounding villages.

[61] In the wilderness there were the towns of Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, [62] Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En-gedi—six towns with their surrounding villages.

[63] But the tribe of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, who lived in the city of Jerusalem, so the Jebusites live there among the people of Judah to this day.

[16:1] The allotment to the descendants of Joseph extended from the Jordan River near Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, through the wilderness and into the hill country of Bethel. [2] From Bethel (that is, Luz) it ran over to Ataroth in the territory of the Arkites. [3] Then it descended westward to the territory of the Japhletites as far as Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer and on over to the Mediterranean Sea.

[4] The families of Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance.

[5] The following territory was given to the families of the tribe of Ephraim as their inheritance.

The eastern boundary of their inheritance began at Ataroth-addar. From there it ran to Upper Beth-horon, [6] then on to the Mediterranean Sea. The northern boundary began at the Mediterranean, ran east past Micmethath, then curved eastward past Taanath-shiloh to the east of Janoah. [7] From Janoah it turned southward to Ataroth and Naarah, touched Jericho, and ended at the Jordan River. [8] From Tappuah the border extended westward, following the Kanah Ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the inheritance given to the families of the tribe of Ephraim.

[9] Ephraim was also given some towns with surrounding villages in the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh. [10] They did not drive the Canaanites out of Gezer, however, so the people of Gezer live as slaves among the people of Ephraim to this day.

[17:1] The next allotment of land was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph's older son. Gilead and Bashan on the east side of the Jordan had already been given to the family of Makir because he was a great warrior. (Makir was Manasseh's oldest son and was the father of Gilead.) [2] Land on the west side of the Jordan was allotted to the remaining families within the tribe of Manasseh: Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher, and Shemida.

[3] However, Zelophehad son of Hephher, who was a descendant of Manasseh, Makir, and Gilead, had no sons. Instead, he had five daughters. Their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. [4] These women came to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the Israelite leaders and said, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with the men of our tribe."

So Joshua gave them an inheritance along with their uncles, as the Lord had commanded. [5] As a result, Manasseh's inheritance came to ten parcels of land, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan across the Jordan River,

[6] because the female descendants of Manasseh received an inheritance along with the male descendants. (The land of Gilead was given to the rest of the male descendants of Manasseh.)

[7] The boundary of the tribe of Manasseh extended from the border of Asher to Micmethath, which is east of Shechem. Then the boundary went south from Micmethath to the people living near the spring of Tappuah. [8] (The land surrounding Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah, on the border of Manasseh's territory, belonged to the tribe of Ephraim.) [9] From the spring of Tappuah, the border of Manasseh followed the northern side of the Kanah Ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. (Several towns in Manasseh's territory belonged to the tribe of Ephraim.)

[10] The land south of the ravine belonged to Ephraim, and the land north of the ravine belonged to Manasseh, with the Mediterranean Sea forming Manasseh's western border. North of Manasseh was the territory of Asher, and to the east was the territory of Issachar.

[11] The following towns within the territory of Issachar and Asher were given to Manasseh: Beth-shan, Ibleam, Dor (that is, Naphoth-dor), Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo, with their respective villages. [12] But the descendants of Manasseh were unable to occupy these towns. They could not drive out the Canaanites who continued to live there. [13] Later on, however, when the Israelites became strong enough, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves. But they did not drive them out of the land.

[14] The descendants of Joseph came to Joshua and asked, "Why have you given us only one portion of land when the Lord has given us so many people?"

[15] Joshua replied, "If the hill country of Ephraim is not large enough for you, clear out land for yourselves in the forest where the Perizzites and Rephaites live."

[16] They said, "The hill country is not enough for us, and the Canaanites in the lowlands around Beth-shan and the valley of Jezreel have iron chariots—they are too strong for us."

[17] Then Joshua said to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph, "Since you are so large and strong, you will be given more than one portion. [18] The forests of the hill country will be yours as well. Clear as much of the land as you wish and live there. And I am sure you can drive out the Canaanites from the valleys, too, even though they are strong and have iron chariots."

[18:1] Now that the land was under Israelite control, the entire Israelite assembly gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tabernacle. [2] But there remained seven tribes who had not yet been allotted their inheritance.

[3] Then Joshua asked them, "How long are you going to wait before taking possession of the remaining land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has given to you? [4] Select three men from each tribe, and I will send them out to survey the unconquered territory. They will return to me with a written report of their proposed divisions of the inheritance. [5] The scouts will map the land into seven sections, excluding Judah's territory in the south and Joseph's territory in the north. [6] Then I will cast sacred lots in the presence of the Lord our God to decide which section will be assigned to each tribe.

[7] However, the Levites will not receive any land. Their role as priests of the Lord is their inheritance. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh won't receive any more land, for they have already received their inheritance, which Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave them on the east side of the Jordan River."

[8] As the men who were mapping out the land started on their way, Joshua commanded them, "Go and survey the land. Then return to me with your written report, and I will assign the land to the tribes by casting sacred lots in the presence of the Lord here at Shiloh." [9] The men did as they were told and mapped the entire territory into seven sections, listing the towns in each section. Then they returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh. [10] There at Shiloh, Joshua cast sacred lots in the presence of the Lord to determine which tribe should have each section.

[11] The first allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Benjamin. It lay between the territory previously assigned to the tribes of Judah and Joseph.

[12] The northern boundary began at the Jordan River, went north of the slope of Jericho, then west through the hill country and the wilderness of Beth-aven. [13] From there the boundary went south to Luz (that is, Bethel) and proceeded down to Ataroth-addar to the top of the hill south of Lower Beth-horon.

[14] The boundary then ran south along the western edge of the hill facing Beth-horon, ending at the village of Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), one of the towns belonging to the tribe of Judah. This was the western boundary.

[15] The southern boundary began at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim. From there it ran westward to the spring at the waters of Nephtoah,

[16] And down to the base of the mountain beside the valley of the son of Hinnom, at the northern end of the valley of Rephaim. From there it went down the valley of Hinnom, crossing south of the slope where the Jebusites lived, and continued down to En-rogel. [17] From En-rogel the boundary proceeded northeast to En-shemesh and on to Geliloth (which is across from the slopes of Adummim). Then it went down to the stone of Bohan. (Bohan was Reuben's son.)

[18] From there it passed along the north side of the slope overlooking the Jordan Valley. The border then went down into the valley, [19] ran past the north slope of Beth-hoglah, and ended at the north bay of the Dead Sea, which is the southern end of the Jordan River.

[20] The eastern boundary was the Jordan River.

This was the inheritance for the families of the tribe of Benjamin.

[21] These were the towns given to the families of the tribe of Benjamin.

Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, [22] Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, [23] Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, [24] Kephrah-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba—twelve towns with their villages. [25] Also Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, [26] Mizpeh, Kephirah, Mozah, [27] Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, [28] Zela, Haeleph, Jebus (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath-jearim—fourteen towns with their villages.

This was the inheritance given to the families of the tribe of Benjamin.

[19:1] The second allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Simeon. Their inheritance was surrounded by Judah's territory.

[2] Simeon's inheritance included Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, [3] Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, [4] Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, [5] Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, [6] Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem—thirteen towns with their villages. [7] It also included Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four towns with their villages, [8] including all the villages as far south as Baalath-beer (also known as Ramah of the Negev).

This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Simeon. [9] Their inheritance came from part of what had been given to Judah because Judah's territory was too large for them. So the tribe of Simeon received an inheritance within the territory of Judah.

[10] The third allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Zebulun.

The boundary of Zebulun's inheritance started at Sarid. [11] From there it went west, going past Maralah, touching Dabbesheth, and proceeding to the brook east of Jokneam. [12] In the other direction, the boundary line went east from Sarid to the border of Kisloth-tabor, and from there to Daberath and up to Japhia.

[13] Then it continued east to Gath-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Rimmon and turned toward Neah. [14] The northern boundary of Zebulun passed Hannathon and ended at the valley of Iphtah-el. [15] The towns in these areas included Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their surrounding villages.

[16] This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Zebulun.

[17] The fourth allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Issachar.

[18] Its boundaries included the following towns: Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem, [19] Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, [20] Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, [21] Remeth, Engannim, En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez. [22] The boundary also touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, ending at the Jordan River—sixteen towns with their surrounding villages.

[23] This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Issachar.

[24] The fifth allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Asher.

[25] Its boundaries included these towns: Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph, [26] Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. The boundary on the west went from Carmel to Shihor-libnath, [27] turned east toward Beth-dagon, and ran as far as Zebulun in the valley of Iphtah-el, running north to Beth-emek and Neiel. It then continued north to Cabul, [28] Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, and as far as Greater Sidon. [29] Then the boundary turned toward Ramah and the fortified city of Tyre and came to the Mediterranean Sea at Hosah. The territory also included Mehebel, Aczib, [30] Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob—twenty-two towns with their surrounding villages.

[31] This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Asher.

[32] The sixth allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Naphtali.

[33] Its boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak at Zaananim, and extended across to Adami-nekeb, Jabneel, and as far as Lakkum, ending at the Jordan River. [34] The western boundary ran past Aznoth-tabor, then to Hukkok, and touched the boundary of Zebulun in the south, the boundary of Asher on the west, and the Jordan River on the east.

[35] The fortified cities included in this territory were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, [36] Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, [37] Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, [38] Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen cities with their surrounding villages.

[39] This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Naphtali.

[40] The seventh and last allotment of land went to the families of the tribe of Dan.

[41] The towns within Dan's inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, [42] Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, [43] Elon, Timnah, Ekron, [44] Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, [45] Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, [46] and Me-jarkon, also Rakkon along with the territory across from Joppa.

[47] But the tribe of Dan had trouble taking possession of their land, so they fought against the town of Laish. They captured it, slaughtered its people, and settled there. They renamed the city Dan after their ancestor.

[48] This was the inheritance of the families of the tribe of Dan—these towns with their villages.

[49] After all the land was divided among the tribes, the Israelites gave a special piece of land to Joshua as his inheritance. [50] For the Lord had said he could have any town he wanted. He chose Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim. He rebuilt the town and lived there.

[51] These are the territories that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the tribal leaders gave as an inheritance to the tribes of Israel by casting sacred lots in the presence of the Lord at the entrance of the Tabernacle at Shiloh. So the division of the land was completed.

[20:1] The Lord said to Joshua, [2] "Now tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed Moses. [3] Anyone who kills another person unintentionally can run to one of these cities and be protected from the relatives of the one who was killed, for the relatives may seek to avenge the killing.

[4] "Upon reaching one of these cities, the one who caused the accidental death will appear before the leaders at the city gate and explain what happened. They must allow the accused to enter the city and live there among them. [5] If the relatives of the victim come to avenge the killing, the leaders must not release the accused to them, for the death was accidental.

[6] But the person who caused the death must stay in that city and be tried by the community and found innocent. Then the one declared innocent because the death was accidental must continue to live in that city until the death of the high priest who was in office at the time of the accident. After that, the one found innocent is free to return home."

[7] The following cities were designated as cities of refuge: Kedesh of Galilee, in the hill country of Naphtali; Shechem, in the hill country of Ephraim; and Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah. [8] On the east side of the Jordan River, across from Jericho, the following cities were designated as cities of refuge: Bezer, in the wilderness plain of the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth in Gilead, in the territory of the tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan, in the land of the tribe of Manasseh.

[9] These cities were set apart for Israelites as well as the foreigners living among them. Anyone who accidentally killed another person could take refuge in one of these cities. In this way, they could escape being killed in revenge prior to standing trial before the community.

[21:1] Then the leaders of the tribe of Levi came to consult with Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the other tribes of Israel. [2] They spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, "The Lord instructed Moses to give us towns to live in and pasturelands for our cattle." [3] So by the command of the Lord the Levites were given as their inheritance the following towns with their pasturelands.

[4] The descendants of Aaron, who were members of the Kohathite clan within the tribe of Levi, were given thirteen towns that were originally assigned to the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

[5] The other families of the Kohathite clan were allotted ten towns from the territories of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

[6] The clan of Gershon received thirteen towns from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

[7] The clan of Merari received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

[8] So the Israelites obeyed the Lord's command to Moses and assigned these towns and pasturelands to the Levites by casting sacred lots.

[9] The Israelites gave the following towns from the tribes of Judah and Simeon [10] to the descendants of Aaron, who were members of the Kohathite clan within the tribe of Levi, since the sacred lot fell to them first:

[11] Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah, along with its surrounding pasturelands. (Arba was an ancestor of Anak.) [12] But the fields beyond the city and the surrounding villages were given to Caleb son of Jephunneh.

[13] The following towns with their pasturelands were given to the descendants of Aaron the priest: Hebron (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone), Libnah, [14] Jattir, Eshtemoa, [15] Holon, Debir, [16] Ain, Juttah, and Beth-shemesh—nine towns from these two tribes.

[17] From the tribe of Benjamin the priests were given the following towns with their surrounding pasturelands: Gibeon, Geba, [18] Anathoth, and Almon—four towns. [19] So thirteen towns were given to the priests, the descendants of Aaron.

[20] The rest of the Kohathite clan from the tribe of Levi was allotted these towns and pasturelands from the tribe of Ephraim: [21] Shechem (a city of refuge for those who accidentally killed someone), Gezer, [22] Kibzaim, and Beth-horon—four towns.

[23] The following towns and pasturelands were allotted to the priests from the tribe of Dan: Eltekeh, Gibbethon, [24] Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon—four towns.

[25] The half-tribe of Manasseh allotted the following towns with their pasturelands to the priests: Taanach and Gath-rimmon—two towns. [26] So ten towns with their pasturelands were given to the rest of the Kohathite clan.

[27] The descendants of Gershon, another clan within the tribe of Levi, received two towns with their pasturelands from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan (a city of refuge) and Be-eshterah.

[28] From the tribe of Issachar they received Kishion, Daberath, [29] Jarmuth, and En-gannim—four towns with their pasturelands.

[30] From the tribe of Asher they received Mishal, Abdon, [31] Helkath, and Rehob—four towns and their pasturelands.

[32] From the tribe of Naphtali they received Kedesh in Galilee (a city of refuge), Hammoth-dor, and Kartan—three towns with their pasturelands.

[33] So thirteen towns and their pasturelands were allotted to the clan of Gershon.

[34] The rest of the Levites—the Merari clan—were given the following towns from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam, Kartah, [35] Dimnah, and Nahalal—four towns with their pasturelands.

[36] From the tribe of Reuben they received Bezer, Jahaz, [37] Kedemoth, and Mephaath—four towns with their pasturelands.

[38] From the tribe of Gad they received Ramoth in Gilead (a city of refuge), Mahanaim, [39] Heshbon, and Jazer—four towns with their pasturelands. [40] So twelve towns were allotted to the clan of Merari.

[41] The total number of towns and pasturelands within Israelite territory given to the Levites came to forty-eight. [42] Every one of these towns had pasturelands surrounding it.

[43] So the Lord gave to Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they conquered it and settled there. [44] And the Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had solemnly promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could stand against them, for the Lord helped them conquer all their enemies. [45] All of the good promises that the Lord had given Israel came true.

[22:1] Then Joshua called together the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. [2] He told them, "You have done as Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you, and you have obeyed every order I have given you. [3] You have not deserted the other tribes, even though the campaign has lasted for such a long time. You have been careful to obey the commands of the Lord your God up to the present day.

[4] And now the Lord your God has given the other tribes rest, as he promised them. So go home now to the land Moses, the servant of the Lord, gave you on the east side of the Jordan River.

[5] But be very careful to obey all the commands and the law that Moses gave to you. Love the Lord your God, walk in all his ways, obey his commands, be faithful to him, and serve him with all your heart and all your soul."

[6] So Joshua blessed them and sent them home. [7] Now Moses had given the land of Bashan to the half-tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan. The other half of the tribe was given land west of the Jordan. As Joshua sent them away, he blessed them [8] and said, "Share with your relatives back home the great wealth you have taken from your enemies. Share with them your large herds of cattle, your silver and gold, your bronze and iron, and your clothing."

[9] So the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh left the rest of Israel at Shiloh in the land of Canaan. They started the journey back to their own land of Gilead, the territory that belonged to them according to the Lord's command through Moses.

[10] But while they were still in Canaan, before they crossed the Jordan River, Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built a very large altar near the Jordan River at a place called Geliloth.

[11] When the rest of Israel heard they had built the altar at Geliloth west of the Jordan River, in the land of Canaan, [12] the whole assembly gathered at Shiloh and prepared to go to war against their brother tribes. [13] First, however, they sent a delegation led by Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest. They crossed the river to talk with the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. [14] In this delegation were ten high officials of Israel, one from each of the ten tribes, and each a leader within the family divisions of Israel.

[15] When they arrived in the land of Gilead, they said to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, [16] "The whole community of the Lord demands to know why you are betraying the God of Israel. How could you turn away from the Lord and build an altar in rebellion against him? [17] Was our sin at Peor not enough? We are not yet fully cleansed of it, even after the plague that struck the entire assembly of the Lord.

[18] And yet today you are turning away from following the Lord. If you rebel against the Lord today, he will be angry with all of us tomorrow.

[19] If you need the altar because your land is defiled, then join us on our side of the river, where the Lord lives among us in his Tabernacle, and we will share our land with you. But do not rebel against the Lord or draw us into your rebellion by building another altar for yourselves. There is only one true altar of the Lord our God. [20] Didn't God punish all the people of Israel when Achan, a member of the clan of Zerah, sinned by stealing the things set apart for the Lord? He was not the only one who died because of that sin."

[21] Then the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered these high officials: [22] "The Lord alone is God! The Lord alone is God! We have not built the altar in rebellion against the Lord. If we have done so, do not spare our lives this day. But the Lord knows, and let all Israel know, too, [23] that we have not built an altar for ourselves to turn away from the Lord. Nor will we use it for our burnt offerings or grain offerings or peace offerings. If we have built it for this purpose, may the Lord himself punish us.

[24] "We have built this altar because we fear that in the future your descendants will say to ours, 'What right do you have to worship the Lord, the God of Israel? [25] The Lord has placed the Jordan River as a barrier between our people and your people. You have no claim to the Lord.' And your descendants may make our descendants stop worshiping the Lord. [26] So we decided to build the altar, not for burnt sacrifices,

[27] But as a memorial. It will remind our descendants and your descendants that we, too, have the right to worship the Lord at his sanctuary with our burnt offerings, sacrifices, and peace offerings. Then your descendants will not be able to say to ours, 'You have no claim to the Lord.' [28] If they say this, our descendants can reply, 'Look at this copy of the Lord's altar that our ancestors made. It is not for burnt offerings or sacrifices; it is a reminder of the relationship both of us have with the Lord.' [29] Far be it from us to rebel against the Lord or turn away from him by building our own altar for burnt offerings, grain offerings, or sacrifices. Only the altar of the Lord our God that stands in front of the Tabernacle may be used for that purpose."

[30] When Phinehas the priest and the high officials heard this from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, they were satisfied. [31] Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, replied to them, "Today we know the Lord is among us because you have not sinned against the Lord as we thought. Instead, you have rescued Israel from being destroyed by the Lord."

[32] Then Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, and the ten high officials left the tribes of Reuben and Gad in Gilead and returned to the land of Canaan to tell the Israelites what had happened. [33] And all the Israelites were satisfied and praised God and spoke no more of war against Reuben and Gad. [34] The people of Reuben and Gad named the altar "Witness," for they said, "It is a witness between us and them that the Lord is our God, too."

[23:1] The years passed, and the Lord had given the people of Israel rest from all their enemies. Joshua, who was now very old, [2] called together all the elders, leaders, judges, and officers of Israel. He said to them, "I am an old man now. [3] You have seen everything the Lord your God has done for you during my lifetime. The Lord your God has fought for you against your enemies.

[4] I have allotted to you as an inheritance all the land of the nation yet unconquered, as well as the land of those we have already conquered—from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. [5] This land will be yours, for the Lord your God will drive out all the people living there now. You will live there instead of them, just as the Lord your God promised you.

[6] "So be strong! Be very careful to follow all the instructions written in the Book of the Law of Moses. Do not deviate from them in any way. [7] Make sure you do not associate with the other people still remaining in the land. Do not even mention the names of their gods, much less swear by them or worship them. [8] But be faithful to the Lord your God as you have done until now.

[9] "For the Lord has driven out great and powerful nations for you, and no one has yet been able to defeat you. [10] Each one of you will put to flight a thousand of the enemy, for the Lord your God fights for you, just as he has promised. [11] So be very careful to love the Lord your God.

[12] "But if you turn away from him and intermarry with the survivors of these nations remaining among you, [13] then know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive them out from your land. Instead, they will be a snare and a trap to you, a pain in your side and a thorn in your eyes, and you will be wiped out from this good land the Lord your God has given you.

[14] "Soon I will die, going the way of all the earth. Deep in your hearts you know that every promise of the Lord your God has come true. Not a single one has failed!

[15] But as surely as the Lord your God has given you the good things he promised, he will also bring disaster on you if you disobey him. He will completely wipe you out from this good land he has given you. [16] If you break the covenant of the Lord your God by worshiping and serving other gods, his anger will burn against you, and you will quickly be wiped out from the good land he has given you."

[24:1] Then Joshua summoned all the people of Israel to Shechem, along with their elders, leaders, judges, and officers. So they came and presented themselves to God.

[2] Joshua said to the people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: Your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River, and they worshiped other gods. [3] But I took your ancestor Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan. I gave him many descendants through his son Isaac. [4] To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the hill country of Seir, while Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

[5] "Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I brought terrible plagues on Egypt; and afterward I brought you out as a free people. [6] But when your ancestors arrived at the Red Sea, the Egyptians chased after you with chariots and horses. [7] When you cried out to the Lord, I put darkness between you and the Egyptians. I brought the sea crashing down on the Egyptians, drowning them. With your very own eyes you saw what I did. Then you lived in the wilderness for many years.

[8] "Finally, I brought you into the land of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan. They fought against you, but I gave you victory over them, and you took possession of their land. [9] Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, started a war against Israel. He asked Balaam son of Beor to curse you, [10] but I would not listen to him. Instead, I made Balaam bless you, and so I rescued you from Balak.

[11] "When you crossed the Jordan River and came to Jericho, the men of Jericho fought against you. There were also many others who fought you, including the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I gave you victory over them. [12] And I sent hornets ahead of you to drive out the two kings of the Amorites. It was not your swords or bows that brought you victory. [13] I gave you land you had not worked for, and I gave you cities you did not build—the cities in which you are now living. I gave you vineyards and olive groves for food, though you did not plant them.

[14] "So honor the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. [15] But if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."

[16] The people replied, "We would never forsake the Lord and worship other gods. [17] For the Lord our God is the one who rescued us and our ancestors from slavery in the land of Egypt. He performed mighty miracles before our very eyes. As we traveled through the wilderness among our enemies, he preserved us. [18] It was the Lord who drove out the Amorites and the other nations living here in the land. So we, too, will serve the Lord, for he alone is our God."

[19] Then Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy and jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and sins. [20] If you forsake the Lord and serve other gods, he will turn against you and destroy you, even though he has been so good to you."

[21] But the people answered Joshua, saying, "No, we are determined to serve the Lord!"

[22] "You are accountable for this decision," Joshua said. "You have chosen to serve the Lord."

"Yes," they replied, "we are accountable."

[23] "All right then," Joshua said, "destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel."

[24] The people said to Joshua, "We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey him alone."

[25] So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day at Shechem, committing them to a permanent and binding contract between themselves and the Lord. [26] Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. As a reminder of their agreement, he took a huge stone and rolled it beneath the oak tree beside the Tabernacle of the Lord.

[27] Joshua said to all the people, "This stone has heard everything the Lord said to us. It will be a witness to testify against you if you go back on your word to God."

[28] Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.

[29] Soon after this, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110. [30] They buried him in the land he had inherited, at Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

[31] Israel served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the leaders who outlived him—those who had personally experienced all that the Lord had done for Israel.

[32] The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought along with them when they left Egypt, were buried at Shechem, in the parcel of ground Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor for one hundred pieces of silver. This land was located in the territory allotted to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph.

[33] Eleazar son of Aaron also died. He was buried in the hill country of Ephraim, in the town of Gibeah, which had been given to his son Phinehas.

MEGATHEMES

THEME: Success

EXPLANATION:

God gave success to the Israelites when they obeyed his master plan, not when they followed their own desires. Victory came when they trusted in him rather than in their military power, money, muscle, or mental capacity.

IMPORTANCE:

God's work done in God's way will bring his success. The standard for success, however, is not to be set by the society around us but by God's Word. We must adjust our minds to God's way of thinking in order to see his standard for success.

THEME: Faith

EXPLANATION:

The Israelites demonstrated their faith by trusting God daily to save and guide them. By noticing how God fulfilled his promises in the past, they developed strong confidence that he would be faithful in the future.

IMPORTANCE:

Our strength to do God's work comes from trusting him. His promises reassure us of his love and that he will be there to guide us in the decisions and struggles we face. Faith begins with believing he can be trusted.

THEME: Guidance

EXPLANATION:

God gave instructions to Israel for every aspect of their lives. His law guided their daily living and his specific marching orders gave them victory in battle.

IMPORTANCE:

Guidance from God for daily living can be found in his Word. By staying in touch with God, we will have the needed wisdom to meet the great challenges of life.

THEME: Leadership

EXPLANATION:

Joshua was an example of an excellent leader. He was confident in God's strength, courageous in the face of opposition, and willing to seek God's advice.

IMPORTANCE:

To be a strong leader like Joshua we must be ready to listen and to move quickly when God instructs us. Once we have his instructions, we must be diligent in carrying them out. Strong leaders are led by God.

THEME: Conquest

EXPLANATION:

God commanded his people to conquer the Canaanites and take all their land. Completing this mission would have fulfilled God's promise to Abraham and brought judgment on the evil people living there. Unfortunately, Israel never finished the job.

IMPORTANCE:

Israel was faithful in accomplishing their mission at first, but their commitment faltered. To love God means more than being enthusiastic about him. We must complete all the work he gives us and apply his instructions to every corner of our lives.

TIMELINE

Exodus from Egypt 1446 B.C. (1280 B.C.)

CONQUEST OF CANAAN

Israelites enter Canaan 1406 (1240)

Judges begin to rule 1375 (1220)

THE DAYS OF THE JUDGES

United Kingdom under Saul 1050 (1045)

David becomes king 1010

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print