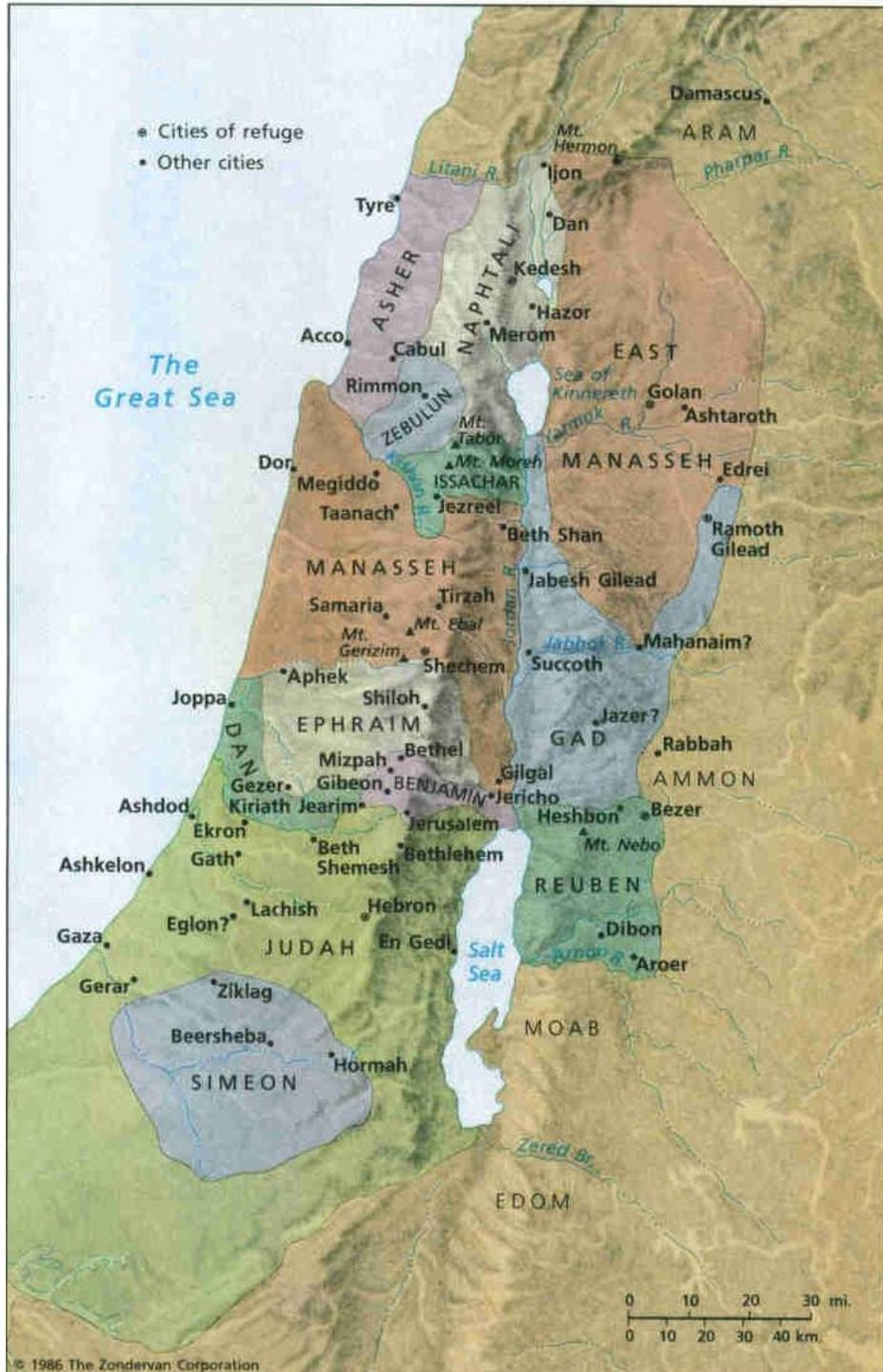


# Joshua

*The LORD is Salvation*

## LAND OF THE TWELVE TRIBES



## Chapter 15 *The Land Allotment for Judah*

**15:1-12 Judah** The land inherited by the tribe of Judah stretched from the Dead (Salt) Sea to the Mediterranean (Great) Sea. The northern boundary extended along an irregular east-west line from the north end of the Dead Sea westward to the Great Sea (just north of Ashdod), and the south boundary was at the southernmost extent of the PL <sup>Numbers 34:1-5</sup>, south of Kadesh Barnea.

**15:13-14** Joshua had fulfilled the command of God <sup>Numbers 14:24</sup> to give Caleb a “portion in Judah” (the city of Kiriath Arba/Hebron <sup>Joshua 14:13, 1 Chronicles 6:55-56</sup>). Caleb was faithful to his promise to “drive out” <sup>Joshua 14:12</sup> (a figure of speech meaning killing) the Anakites (Anakim: descendants of Anak <sup>Numbers 13:22</sup> who came from the Nephilim <sup>Genesis 6:4, Numbers 13:33</sup>) out of the “hill country”. From Hebron, Caleb drove out three descendants of Anak (Sheshai, Ahiman, Talmai) <sup>Judges 1:20</sup>.

*“Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron)” is the place where Abraham’s wife Sarah died. <sup>Genesis 23:1-2</sup>*

**15:15-19** Caleb then marched on Debir (Kiriath Sepher), which must have been reinhabited after it was destroyed during the southern campaign <sup>Joshua 10:38-39</sup>. Caleb offered his daughter, Acsah, in marriage to anyone who would attack and capture Debir. Othniel, who would later become a judge (more literally, a ruler) in Israel <sup>Judges 3:7-11</sup>, took the city and thus won the hand of Acsah. It seems apparent that Othniel not only won the hand of Caleb’s daughter, Acsah, but also a plot of land in the Negev (the hot dry region in southern Judah). Acsah asked her father for and received from him some springs of water <sup>Genesis 36:24</sup> (known as the upper & lower springs).

*Some manuscripts read: “One day when she came to Othniel, he urged her...” <sup>v.18a, Judges 1:14</sup>*

*Water was necessary in order to irrigate the dry land to make it useful for farming/grazing. Perhaps two springs were given by Caleb in case one of them went dry <sup>Hosea 13:15</sup> for a time.*

**15:20-62** The remainder of the chapter details the land given to each clan in the tribe of Judah. Judah’s cities, towns and villages are listed in four area groups: the south <sup>v.20-32</sup>, the western foothills <sup>v.33-47</sup>, the central hill region <sup>v.48-60</sup>, and the Judean desert (west of the Salt Sea) <sup>v.61-62</sup>.

**15:63** Even though Joshua earlier killed the king of Jerusalem, Adoni-Zedek, <sup>Joshua 10:1-5,22-26</sup>, he did not kill all of the residents or destroy the city <sup>Joshua 10:20-21</sup>. As a result, Judah was not able to “dislodge” the Jebusites from Jerusalem. The Jebusites represented a remnant of the Canaan pagan population who would gradually introduce compromise in the life of the Israelites.

## Joshua N: 15-17

Historically, after becoming drunk from wine made from his own vineyard, Noah was seen naked by his son Ham <sup>Genesis 9:22</sup>. The next day, Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan <sup>Genesis 9:24-27</sup>. The Jebusites were descendants of the third son of Canaan <sup>Genesis 10:15-16</sup>. The land of Canaan was so named, because the primary inhabitants were the descendants of Canaan <sup>Genesis 10:15-19</sup>. Furthermore, these descendants of Canaan were, therefore, also under the curse from Noah. And, in spite of this curse that separated them from God, the Canaanites had 400 years to get right with Him. However, at the end of that time, their sin <sup>Leviticus 18:3,24-25, 2 Kings 16:3</sup> had reached its "full measure" <sup>Genesis 15:16</sup>, so God required their total destruction <sup>Deuteronomy 7:1-11</sup>.

Early Biblical history referred to Jerusalem as Salem <sup>Genesis 14:18</sup>. And while the OT mainly refers to the city as Jerusalem <sup>e.g., Joshua 10:1</sup>, another common name was Jebus <sup>Judges 19:11</sup>.

How hard did the men of Judah try to "dislodge" the Jebusites? Didn't God promise that "no one will be able to stand up against" them and He would "give them" the land? <sup>Joshua 1:1-5</sup>.

## Chapter 16 *The Land Allotment for Joseph's Sons: Part 1, Ephraim*

**16:1-4** These verses describe the southern boundary of the lands west of the Jordan River that were allotted as an inheritance to Joseph's two "descendants" (Manasseh and Ephraim <sup>v.4</sup>).

**16:5-10 Ephraim** These verses contain the description of the "territory of Ephraim" <sup>v.5</sup>, including some cities within the land to the north inherited by his brother Manasseh. Instead of killing the pagan inhabitants of Gezer <sup>1 Kings 9:16</sup>, as the LORD commanded them to do <sup>Deuteronomy 20:16-17</sup>, the tribe of Ephraim compromised by making slaves of them <sup>Judges 1:28-29</sup>.

As the only mention of the extra cities in Manasseh for Ephraim, most scholars assume this provided towns for the Ephraim clans that could not fit in their smaller allotment of land.

## Chapter 17 *The Land Allotment for Joseph's Sons: Part 2, Manasseh*

**17:1 Half tribe of Manasseh (east)** This verse refers to the inheritance given to Makir, Manasseh's firstborn <sup>Genesis 50:23</sup>. Makir's warrior clan was given land east of the Jordan <sup>Joshua 13:29-31</sup>.

Manasseh was the first born of Joseph, but Jacob gave Ephraim the "blessing" <sup>Genesis 48:17-20</sup>.

**17:2 Half tribe of Manasseh (west)** The 10-tracts of land west of the Jordan <sup>v.5</sup> went to clans led by five other descendants of Manasseh: Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher and Shemida.

## Joshua N: 15-17

**17:3-6** Zelophehad, son of Hopher (and a great-great-grandson of Manasseh), died having no sons, but only five daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. Zelophehad's daughters received an equal inheritance with the five clans mentioned earlier <sup>v.2</sup> making 10-tracts of land.

The Torah (Pentateuch) states that the blessing of a father (the largest part of the inheritance - a double portion <sup>Deuteronomy 21:17</sup>) must go to the firstborn male <sup>Deuteronomy 21:15-17</sup>. However, a great-great-grandson of Manasseh (Zelophehad) had only daughters, and after Zelophehad died in the desert wanderings, his five daughters <sup>Numbers 26:33</sup> approached Moses to demand a share in the Promised Land inheritance <sup>Numbers 27:1-4</sup>. In spite of the request being unlawful, Moses "brought their case before the LORD" <sup>Numbers 27:5</sup>. The LORD responded to Moses' inquiry by saying that the daughters were "right" and that they should have their father's inheritance <sup>Numbers 27:6-7</sup>. The LORD continued by defining to Moses the legal line of inheritance: sons, daughters, brothers, father's brothers, nearest relatives <sup>Numbers 27:8-11</sup>.

**17:7-10** These verses define the boundaries of the Manasseh inheritance: a large land area south of the Sea of Galilee and north of the Salt Sea; stretching from the Great Sea to the Jordan.

**17:11-13** The tribe of Manasseh shared cities with their neighbors to the north, Issachar and Asher. These cities were not destroyed, but the people were made slaves, much like Gezer <sup>Joshua 16:10</sup>.

**17:14-15** Joseph's descendants complained that they did not have enough of an inheritance for the number of people in their tribe. As a result, Joshua granted them permission to clear some of the forest land, in order to create more space for additional cities and towns for their people.

**17:16-18** The "people of Joseph" continued to complain about their allotment of land not being "enough for [them]", as well as the strength of the Canaanites (with iron chariots <sup>Judges 1:19, 4:3,13</sup>) living in the plains. Joshua rebuked the request for more land and encouraged them that they had the ability to defeat all enemies of God <sup>Deuteronomy 20:1</sup>.

There are a few confusing aspects to these verses <sup>v.14-18</sup>: for example, (1) the reference to "Joseph" <sup>v.14</sup> appears to be a collective way of speaking of both Ephraim and Manasseh, (2) the mention of "one allotment...for an inheritance" <sup>v.14</sup> seems to be one of the ways the clans of the sons of Joseph were showing their greed and (3) the reference to having too many people, etc. <sup>v.14-16</sup> appears to refer not so much to needing more land, but a need for more cities for their people - hence Joshua's permission to "clear" forest land <sup>v.15,18</sup>.