

## Joshua 15-20 – “Moving In”

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We continue on in Joshua to look at the division of the land among the tribes of Israel. Again, there’s a lot of tedious reading and listing of geography that can make one wonder why it’s even here. Yet, there’s something wonderful to remind ourselves of – God is in the details. He’s at work and it’s a reminder that God is involved and cares about the affairs of life. There is meticulous recording as to what families receive what portion of land. God is involved and He cares.

We dealt with the division of land to those 2½ tribes east of the Jordan river. Now we look at the tribes and their land allocation west of the Jordan river. Judah is given its boundaries first. Judah of course would be the most significant and largest of the tribes. When the unified tribes of the northern kingdom were overtaken, Judah stood strong. When they were taken to Babylonian captivity, it was to Judah that the exiles would eventually return. We know our Messiah would come from this tribe and would be known as the lion of the tribe of Judah. There’s great eschatological significance with this portion of land.

### 1. The Land of Judah – 15:1-19

**15:1-12 - *So this was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families: The border of Edom at the Wilderness of Zin southward was the extreme southern boundary. <sup>2</sup> And their southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces southward. <sup>3</sup> Then it went out to the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hezron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa. <sup>4</sup> From there it passed toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border. <sup>5</sup> The east border was the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. And the border on the northern quarter began at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. <sup>6</sup> The border went up to Beth Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. <sup>7</sup> Then the border went up toward Debir from the Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at En Rogel. <sup>8</sup> And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite city (which is Jerusalem). The***

***border went up to the top of the mountain that lies before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the Valley of Rephaim northward. <sup>9</sup> Then the border went around from the top of the hill to the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron. And the border went around to Baalah (which is Kirjath Jearim). <sup>10</sup> Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which is Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to Timnah. <sup>11</sup> And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward. Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel; and the border ended at the sea.***

So this land is large and had some great fertile areas to it. But it was also a land that had great enemies surrounding it. Just as was prophesied by Jacob: **Genesis 49:8–9**, “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s children shall bow down before you. <sup>9</sup> Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?” They had the Moabites on the east, Edomites to the south, Amalekites on the southwest and Philistines to the west. Judah needed strong rulers and kings like David and Solomon to hold their ground.

Then we get another look at Caleb...

**15:12-19** - ***The west border was the coastline of the Great Sea. This is the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families. <sup>13</sup> Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). <sup>14</sup> Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. <sup>15</sup> Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher). <sup>16</sup> And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife.” <sup>17</sup> So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. <sup>18</sup> Now it was so, when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you wish?” <sup>19</sup> She answered, “Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water.” So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.***

I love what we see with Caleb here. We saw last time that he was a man of great faith. At 85 years of age he was ready to take on the giants in the mountain area of Hebron (Joshua 14:10-14). Someone once said, “You are as young as your faith, and as old as your doubt.” That could sum up Caleb here.

Now what’s cool is that not only was Caleb a man of great faith and courage, but he also encouraged others to live that kind of life too. He gave the incentive of his daughter for anyone who would take action and go up against Kirjath Sepher and conquer it (15:16). And Othniel answered that challenge and he gained a wife. Othniel would later become a judge in Israel (Judges 3:7-11).

- A few lessons we can glean from here: (1) Let our faith inspire others to put faith into action. Be an example. (2) When we are faithful to step out in faith and trust in the Lord, we’ll be rewarded. (3) When we’re faithful in a few things, we’ll be given greater responsibility in other things (Matthew 25:21).

Then we see this faith also rub off on Caleb’s daughter who asks for a blessing. This may sound kind of presumptuous or demanding, and yet Caleb gives her springs of water. What a blessing!

I wonder how often we miss out on things because we just don’t ask?

**James 4:2c**, *"Yet you do not have because you do not ask."*

God is a gracious God who I believe desires to bless you. Let us come to Him with expectation.

- **John 7:37–38**, *"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.""*

Next we see that not only were the borders given for the tribe as a whole, but individual cities are specified that would be occupied. Over 100 cities are listed.

## 2. The Cities of Judah – 15:20-63

**15:20-63 - This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:** <sup>21</sup> *The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the border of Edom in the South, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,* <sup>22</sup> *Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah,* <sup>23</sup> *Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,* <sup>24</sup> *Ziph, Telem, Bealoth,* <sup>25</sup> *Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hezron (which is Hazor),* <sup>26</sup> *Amam, Shema, Moladah,* <sup>27</sup> *Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet,* <sup>28</sup> *Hazar*

***Shual, Beersheba, Bizjothjah, <sup>29</sup> Baalah, Ijim, Ezem, <sup>30</sup> Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, <sup>31</sup> Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, <sup>32</sup> Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities are twenty-nine, with their villages. <sup>33</sup> In the lowland: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, <sup>34</sup> Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, <sup>35</sup> Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, <sup>36</sup> Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their villages; <sup>37</sup> Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, <sup>38</sup> Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, <sup>39</sup> Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, <sup>40</sup> Cabbon, Lahmas, Kithlish, <sup>41</sup> Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen cities with their villages; <sup>42</sup> Libnah, Ether, Ashan, <sup>43</sup> Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, <sup>44</sup> Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine cities with their villages; <sup>45</sup> Ekron, with its towns and villages; <sup>46</sup> from Ekron to the sea, all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages; <sup>47</sup> Ashdod with its towns and villages, Gaza with its towns and villages—as far as the Brook of Egypt and the Great Sea with its coastline. <sup>48</sup> And in the mountain country: Shamir, Jattir, Sochoh, <sup>49</sup> Dannah, Kirjath Sannah (which is Debir), <sup>50</sup> Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, <sup>51</sup> Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages; <sup>52</sup> Arab, Dumah, Eshean, <sup>53</sup> Janum, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, <sup>54</sup> Humtah, Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages; <sup>55</sup> Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, <sup>56</sup> Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, <sup>57</sup> Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages; <sup>58</sup> Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, <sup>59</sup> Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages; <sup>60</sup> Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearim) and Rabbah: two cities with their villages. <sup>61</sup> In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, <sup>62</sup> Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi: six cities with their villages. <sup>63</sup> As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.***

Jerusalem was a well-situated city. Propped up with hills all around it was easy to defend. It wasn't taken by Israel until David did it (2 Samuel 5:6-7).

Now was that the way it was supposed to be? Was it that strong that they just need to give up and wait for another day?

I mean God has said He's given them this land. Every place their foot stepped was theirs! Did God mean, all of it except Jerusalem?

There was really no excuse for them not to take this city at this time. They've seen Jericho fall from no effort of their own.

And so for the next many years, the Jebusites would be a problem and reminder of incomplete obedience. Israel allowed a thorn in their side because they didn't want to carry out all that God said.

- Have you faced unnecessary problems because we've failed to carry out what God has for us? The road to full obedience may be hard, but it's the most blessed.

### 3. Manasseh and Ephraim's Inheritance – 16:1-4

**16:1-4, *The lot fell to the children of Joseph from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the waters of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the mountains to Bethel, <sup>2</sup> then went out from Bethel to Luz, passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth, <sup>3</sup> and went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites, as far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to Gezer; and it ended at the sea. <sup>4</sup> So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.***

Remember, the Levites were not to be given a portion of the land as their own inheritance. The reason we have 12 tribes still is because Joseph's portion was split in two between his two sons – Manasseh and Ephraim.

- Though Manasseh was the oldest son and due the greater blessing, Jacob gave him the greater blessing in another Scriptural switch-a-rooney. Ephraim would indeed become an important and mighty tribe – often times said synonymously with Israel (the northern kingdom).
- Other Scriptural examples of this switch-a-rooney: Ishmael and Isaac; Cain and Abel; Esau and Jacob.
- In the same way, God rejects our first birth and gives us a greater blessing in our second birth.

So we see Ephraim given first mention here in the allotment of land...

### 4. The Land of Ephraim – 16:5-10

**16:5-10 - *The border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was thus: The border of their inheritance on the east side was Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon. <sup>6</sup> And the border went out toward the sea on the north side of Michmethath; then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh, and passed by it on the east of Janohah. <sup>7</sup> Then it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and Naarah, reached to Jericho, and came out at the Jordan. <sup>8</sup> The border went out from Tappuah westward to the Brook Kanah, and it ended at the sea. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their***

**families. <sup>9</sup> The separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages. <sup>10</sup> And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.**

Ephraim unfortunately did what was so common among the Israelites. They did not fully drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in some of their cities. Rather, they thought they could take control over them and use them to their advantage. Sadly it was a compromise that will cost them because later in Judges we'll see that these people rose up and began to enslave the Israelites and cause problems for them.

- The lesson is clear: Sin must be dealt with decisively and completely. If we hold on to an area of sin, perhaps it's a little pet sin that we think we can keep in control, it can have the potential to one day take the feet out from under us and bring defeat. Don't tolerate sin in your life but drive it out.

## 5. The Land of Manasseh – 17:1-13

**17:1-6 - There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph: namely for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war; therefore he was given Gilead and Bashan. <sup>2</sup> And there was a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families: for the children of Abiezer, the children of Helek, the children of Asriel, the children of Shechem, the children of Hopher, and the children of Shemida; these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families. <sup>3</sup> But Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters. And these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. <sup>4</sup> And they came near before Eleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers." Therefore, according to the commandment of the Lord, he gave them an inheritance among their father's brothers. <sup>5</sup> Ten shares fell to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side of the Jordan, <sup>6</sup> because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.**

Vv. 3-6 shows the implementation of a decision that was made in Numbers 27. Women weren't to receive an inheritance, but since their father died with no sons, they asked in faith to be partakers of the inheritance. And God honored their faith and it's recorded that it was completed.

**16:7-13 - *And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, that lies east of Shechem; and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah. <sup>8</sup> Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim. <sup>9</sup> And the border descended to the Brook Kanah, southward to the brook. These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook; and it ended at the sea. <sup>10</sup> Southward it was Ephraim's, northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea was its border. Manasseh's territory was adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. <sup>11</sup> And in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beth Shean and its towns, Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns—three hilly regions. <sup>12</sup> Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities, but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. <sup>13</sup> And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.***

Just like their brotherly tribe, they too tried to reign over sin rather than reign it in. It too will cost them.

So Ephraim and Manasseh are given their land and they were a large group. But they began to think a little too highly of themselves and thought they deserved more...

## 6. Further Land for Ephraim and Manasseh – 17:14-18

**17:14-18 - *Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, “Why have you given us only one lot and one share to inherit, since we are a great people, inasmuch as the Lord has blessed us until now?” <sup>15</sup> So Joshua answered them, “If you are a great people, then go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants, since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you.” <sup>16</sup> But the children of Joseph said, “The mountain country is not enough for us; and all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron,***

***both those who are of Beth Shean and its towns and those who are of the Valley of Jezreel.”<sup>17</sup> And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—saying, “You are a great people and have great power; you shall not have only one lot,<sup>18</sup> but the mountain country shall be yours. Although it is wooded, you shall cut it down, and its farthest extent shall be yours; for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots and are strong.”***

These two tribes weren't making a request like Caleb in faith to take on the land, they wanted a handout. And Joshua says, if you need more, and you think you're so great, then prove it! Go take the land that's before you. They didn't like that answer to much. There were strong enemies in those places with some good weaponry.

Sadly, they had plenty of land, but they acted lame. They needed the faith of a Caleb.

- “It's not your boasting but your believing that gives you the victory and gains you new territory. Sometimes those who talk the most accomplish the least.”

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## 7. Instructions to the Remaining Tribes – 18:1-10

***18:1-10 - Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them.<sup>2</sup> But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance.<sup>3</sup> Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: “How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers has given you?<sup>4</sup> Pick out from among you three men for each tribe, and I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come back to me.<sup>5</sup> And they shall divide it into seven parts. Judah shall remain in their territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall remain in their territory on the north.<sup>6</sup> You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts and bring the survey here to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord our God.<sup>7</sup> But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance. And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave them.”<sup>8</sup> Then the men***

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *Be Strong* (p. 127). Victor Books.



***arose to go away; and Joshua charged those who went to survey the land, saying, “Go, walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord in Shiloh.”<sup>9</sup> So the men went, passed through the land, and wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities; and they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh.<sup>10</sup> Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord, and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions.***

Before the rest of the land is divided up, there's attention given to the tabernacle being setup in Shiloh. The people have all moved together from Gilgal and now have setup a centralized worship center in Shiloh, which was to be a reminder that their priority as a people, and their path to blessing, was the worship and devotion of Yahweh.

This is especially fitting as the grumbling and complaints have already started among Ephraim and Manasseh which would only breed disunity and the potential disintegration of a nation. So Shiloh was right in the center of Israel where it could promote a national unity.

The Tabernacle would stay here for the next 369 years. We know the eventual home for it was to be Jerusalem.

## 8. The Land of Benjamin – 18:11-28

***18:11-28 - Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families, and the territory of their lot came out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.<sup>12</sup> Their border on the north side began at the Jordan, and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went up through the mountains westward; it ended at the Wilderness of Beth Aven.<sup>13</sup> The border went over from there toward Luz, to the side of Luz (which is Bethel) southward; and the border descended to Ataroth Addar, near the hill that lies on the south side of Lower Beth Horon.<sup>14</sup> Then the border extended around the west side to the south, from the hill that lies before Beth Horon southward; and it ended at Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearim), a city of the children of Judah. This was the west side.<sup>15</sup> The south side began at the end of Kirjath Jearim, and the border extended on the west and went out to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.<sup>16</sup> Then the border came down to the end of the mountain that lies before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is in the Valley of the Rephaim on the north, descended to the Valley of Hinnom, to the side of the Jebusite city on the south, and descended to En Rogel.<sup>17</sup> And it went***

*around from the north, went out to En Shemesh, and extended toward Geliloth, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. <sup>18</sup> Then it passed along toward the north side of Arabah, and went down to Arabah. <sup>19</sup> And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah; then the border ended at the north bay at the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This was the southern boundary. <sup>20</sup> The Jordan was its border on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, according to its boundaries all around, according to their families. <sup>21</sup> Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, <sup>22</sup> Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, <sup>23</sup> Avim, Parah, Ophrah, <sup>24</sup> Chephar Haammoni, Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages; <sup>25</sup> Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, <sup>26</sup> Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, <sup>27</sup> Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, <sup>28</sup> Zelah, Eleph, Jebus (which is Jerusalem), Gibeath, and Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.*

## 9. The Land of Simeon – 19:1-9

**19:1-9** - *The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. <sup>2</sup> They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah, <sup>3</sup> Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, <sup>4</sup> Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, <sup>5</sup> Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, <sup>6</sup> Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhem: thirteen cities and their villages; <sup>7</sup> Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four cities and their villages; <sup>8</sup> and all the villages that were all around these cities as far as Baalath Beer, Ramah of the South. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. <sup>9</sup> The inheritance of the children of Simeon was included in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the children of Judah was too much for them. Therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of that people.*

Simeon's land was surrounded by Judah. The Simeonites pretty much disappeared bringing to fulfillment Jacobs words in his prophetic farewell in **Genesis 49:6–7**, "Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. <sup>7</sup> Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel."

## 10. The Land of Zebulun – 19:10-16

**19:10-16** - *The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families, and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. <sup>11</sup> Their border went toward the west and to Maralah, went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is east of Jokneam. <sup>12</sup> Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise along the border of Chisloth Tabor, and went out toward Daberath, bypassing Japhia. <sup>13</sup> And from there it passed along on the east of Gath Hopher, toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on Neah. <sup>14</sup> Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon, and it ended in the Valley of Jiphthah El. <sup>15</sup> Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. <sup>16</sup> This was the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.*

## 11. The Land of Issachar – 19:17-23

**19:17-23** - *The fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families. <sup>18</sup> And their territory went to Jezreel, and included Chesulloth, Shunem, <sup>19</sup> Haphraim, Shion, Anaharath, <sup>20</sup> Rabbith, Kishion, Abez, <sup>21</sup> Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez. <sup>22</sup> And the border reached to Tabor, Shahazimah, and Beth Shemesh; their border ended at the Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. <sup>23</sup> This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.*

## 12. The Land of Asher – 19:24-31

**19:24-31** - *The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. <sup>25</sup> And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, <sup>26</sup> Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it reached to Mount Carmel westward, along the Brook Shihor Libnath. <sup>27</sup> It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon; and it reached to Zebulun and to the Valley of Jiphthah El, then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel, bypassing Cabul which was on the left, <sup>28</sup> including Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon. <sup>29</sup> And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre; then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the*

*region of Achzib. <sup>30</sup> Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob were included: twenty-two cities with their villages. <sup>31</sup> This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.*

### 13. The Land of Naphtali – 19:32-39

**19:32-39** - *The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their families. <sup>33</sup> And their border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaanannim, Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan. <sup>34</sup> From Heleph the border extended westward to Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok; it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side, and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise. <sup>35</sup> And the fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, <sup>36</sup> Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, <sup>37</sup> Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, <sup>38</sup> Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh: nineteen cities with their villages. <sup>39</sup> This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.*

### 14. The Land of Dan – 19:40-48

**19:40-48** - *The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. <sup>41</sup> And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, <sup>42</sup> Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, <sup>43</sup> Elon, Timnah, Ekron, <sup>44</sup> Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, <sup>45</sup> Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, <sup>46</sup> Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa. <sup>47</sup> And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. <sup>48</sup> This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.*

### 15. An Inheritance for Joshua – 19:49-51

**19:49-51** - *When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. <sup>50</sup> According to the*

*word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it. <sup>51</sup> These were the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the country.*

Joshua received his inheritance last. He walked humbly and with a concern for others first. That's a great picture of Jesus right there!

## 16. The Cities of Refuge – 20:1-9

**20:1-3** - *The Lord also spoke to Joshua, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, <sup>3</sup> that the slayer who kills a person accidentally or unintentionally may flee there; and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.*

God desired that criminals were punished. Justice needed to be carried out. The principle for capital punishment is found in **Genesis 9:6**, “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.”

God also stated that unpunished murderers corrupt the land (Numbers 35:31-34). But the Lord does make a distinction between murder and manslaughter. That’s why He appointed these cities of refuge to be a place of safety for the one who accidentally killed another (ie. a mishap in lawn darts).

- The **avenger of blood** was the one that would carry out justice on behalf of their murdered family member.

**20:4-9** - *And when he flees to one of those cities, and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. <sup>5</sup> Then if the avenger of blood pursues him, they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand, because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand. <sup>6</sup> And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the one who is high priest in those days. Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.’ ” <sup>7</sup> So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the*

**mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron) in the mountains of Judah. <sup>8</sup> And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. <sup>9</sup> These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them, that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.**

The gates of the city were the place the elders would often congregate and hear matters of judicial concern. Here they would give out rulings and wisdom. Upon entering a city of refuge, the refugee would state his case to the elders of that city. If innocent, they would welcome him in where he would enjoy safety.

The slayer would need to remain in the city to be safe and would remain there until the death of the high priest (20:6).

The cities of refuge were meant to give people a fair hearing in case the avenger of blood took action without hearing the whole story.

And there's a great correlation between the cities of refuge and Jesus:

- i) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are **within easy reach** of the needy person; they were of no use unless someone could get to the place of refuge. The cities and Jesus were accessible. **Romans 10:8-11**, *"But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."*
- ii) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are **available for all**, not just the Israelite; no one needs to fear that they would be turned away from their place of refuge in their time of need. John 3:16; **Romans 10:12-13**, *"For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. <sup>13</sup> For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."*
- iii) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are **the only solution** for the one in need; without this specific protection, they will be destroyed. Many don't like this

idea that Jesus is the only alternative and answer for life. They feel that if they're sincere in what they believe, it's okay. If a person had run to just any city and their avenger catches up and grabs a hold of him and says, now you're mine, the person fleeing couldn't say, 'But wait I'm in a city!' The avenger would just say, but you're not in the right city. 'But wait, I'm sincere'. The avenger would say, you're sincerely wrong. There's only one way to life today, and that's God's way! Live it, or die. **John 14:6**, "*I am the way, truth & life.*"

- iv) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge **provide protection only within their boundaries**. So, if a person has been hanging out a few years in the city of refuge and decides he's going to venture out, if his avenger sees him, he could be killed, and the avenger would not be guilty. It is the responsibility of the one to remain inside the city. We too are to be abiding in Jesus. I'm not saying that people can lose their salvation, but it appears people have left the only means of salvation. They became entangled in the things of the world. **2 Timothy 4:10**, "*for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica...*" Jesus said in **John 15:4-6**, "*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup> "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*" Now is this speaking of fire of judgment or the fires of hell. Well, I certainly don't intend to find out. And neither should you. Abide in Him, He is that place of safety and refuge, where there is life! Why would anyone who has experienced the goodness of God desire to walk away from that?
- v) With both Jesus and the cities of refuge, **full freedom comes with the death of the High Priest**. We did not deserve to be cleared from sin. And we may wonder sometimes how that is so. It is answered simply in the fact that Jesus, our High Priest, died for us. His death brought freedom from sin, freedom from the penalty of sin, which was death. There are those that will say they believe in God, but they have not been freed because they have not believed in Jesus and the fact that He died for them. People don't want to accept that. That takes humility to accept that someone had to die for me. But unless you believe that Jesus died in your place to forgive you of your sin, and rose again to prove He was the giver of life, you will not be free. But whoever turns to Jesus, as our High Priest, the only way to a right relationship with God, you'll

be set free. **John 8:36**, *“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”*

An important distinction between Jesus and the cities of refuge: The cities of refuge only helped the innocent; but the guilty can come to Jesus and find refuge.

PRAISE GOD FOR THAT!