

dren of Joseph were fainthearted in feeling that they would not be able to possess the land since their enemies had these chariots. They were evidently looking for an excuse.

TEN QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 17

1. Who was Machir?
2. Who was Zelophehad?
3. Where was Bashan?
4. What was Manasseh's western border?
5. Which tribe lay south of Manasseh?
6. What tribe lay north of Manasseh?
7. What tribe lay east of Manasseh?
8. What river lay between Manasseh and Ephraim, near their western borders?
9. What did the children of Israel do to the Canaanites who lived among them?
10. What was the name given to the mountain in the land of the children of Joseph?

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 18

- Vv. 1-10 *The remaining land divided into portions.* There were seven portions of land left to be assigned; and after the children of Joseph were settled in the midst of the land, the remaining territory was divided into lots for those tribes which had not yet received their portions. Joshua was determined to complete the work which had been assigned to him by God.
- Vv. 11-20 *Benjamin's inheritance.* The first tribe of the seven remaining without an inheritance was Benjamin. The territory assigned to these people lay just north of the land given to the

STUDIES IN JOSHUA-JUDGES-RUTH

tribe of Judah. The east border was the Jordan River. The territory was rather small, reaching only to the hill country which was in the center of the land. On the west of Benjamin's territory was the land eventually assigned to Dan. On the north of Benjamin's territory was the land assigned to the tribe of Ephraim.

Vv. 21-28 *List of Benjamin's cities.* A total of twenty-six cities were listed as belonging to Benjamin. Twelve of these were in the eastern half of the land, and fourteen were in the western part of the territory. Most of these cities figured prominently in later Israelite history. Most important among these cities was the city later known as Jerusalem.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's house should be in the midst of His people.* The Lord had said that Israel was not to worship on every high hill (Deuteronomy 12). He said that He would appoint a place for His house to be established among His people. Although the Tabernacle was more or less temporary, it was important for it to be set up in the midst of the land. In like fashion, every community should have the church in its midst. God's people should make provisions for His house to be established among them.
2. *A place prepared for all.* The children of Israel came into a land which was intended for them. It was described as a land flowing with milk and honey. There was to be room for all the millions among the people of Israel. Such a beneficent provision points to God's preparation of a city not made with hands. Jesus said

He was going away to prepare a place for those who will be with Him in His glory (John 14:1 ff.). Every child of God will have a place in the heavenly home, just as every Israelite had a home in the days of Joshua.

3. *God's people should be busy with His work.* Joshua was old and impatient with laziness and irregularity. "How long are ye slack to possess the land?" he asked. When Jesus' mother asked why He had stayed behind in Jerusalem, He answered by asking if she did not know He was busy with His Father's business. Such should be the tenor of the life of every Christian.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Remaining Land Divided Into Portions 18:1-10

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

2 And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?

4 Give out from among you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come again to me.

5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

6 Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the description hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord our God.

7 But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave them.

8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh.

9 And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.

10 And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

1. *Where was Shiloh?* 18:1

Shiloh was in the midst of the territory assigned to the tribe of Ephraim. It was admirably situated near the geographic center of the land. It lay east of the road which ran along the center of the ridge which formed the backbone of the Promised Land. In Shiloh, the house of God was established; and here it stayed through the three hundred years of the time of the judges. Shiloh was the center of Israel's worship down into the reign of David. Only when David made preparation for the building of the Temple was the site of Israel's worship moved from this place which became hallowed to them through the worship which centered there around the Tabernacle.

2. *How many surveyors were employed?* 18:4

Twenty-one men went out to survey the land which had not yet been assigned to the tribes. Their work consisted not in the taking of accurate measurements of all the borders, but in preparing a list of the towns in the

different parts of the land. Probably this included an account of the size and character of these towns. They would have made a notice of the quality and condition of the soil, but it hardly would have been necessary for them to penetrate into every corner of the land and every town which was still inhabited by the Canaanites in order to accomplish their end. Since only seven tribes were involved in receiving this territory, three men were selected from each of these tribes; and the total of twenty-one workers would have been sufficient to accomplish the task in a very short time.

3. *Which tribes had already been settled?* 18:5

Three tribes—Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh—had land east of the Jordan. Judah and “the children of Joseph”—Ephraim and Manasseh—were settled west of the Jordan. Since Levi was to have no land as a possession, only seven tribes remained without a portion of land. These were Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan.

4. *Why did Levi receive no inheritance?* 18:7

It was understood that “the priesthood of the Lord” was the inheritance of Levi. They had no time or need for land in which to plant grains, vines, and trees. They were to give themselves completely to the service of God, teaching the law, protecting the rights of the oppressed, and in general, fulfilling their mission as the Lord’s peculiar possession. In return for these services, they were to receive forty-eight cities in which to dwell; and their livelihood was to be provided by the other tribes who gave a tithe of all their income to the Lord for the support of the Levites.

5. *How did the surveyors work?* 18:8, 9

The description was not a measurement made in feet and inches. The art of surveying was well known in Egypt in ancient times. The Israelites would have learned

this skill while in bondage there, but their description which was written in the book was of a general nature. The men chosen for this purpose were able to perform their tasks without being hindered by the Canaanites. These Canaanites had been crushed, although not exterminated, by the victories which the people of Israel had gained. When the formal record was finished, they brought it back to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh. Joshua then assigned the land as he cast the sacred lot.

Benjamin's Inheritance 18:11-20

11 And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

12 And their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven.

13 And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, which is Beth-el, southward; and the border descended to Ataroth-adar, near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon.

14 And the border was drawn thence, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that lieth before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah: this was the west quarter.

15 And the south quarter was from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoah:

16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of the giants on the north,

and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to En-rogel,

17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.

18 And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah:

19 And the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the north bay of the Salt Sea at the south end of Jordan: this was the south coast.

20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

6. *Which lot came up first? 18:11*

The first lot to be assigned was that given to Benjamin. Benjamin was the son of Jacob by Rachel (Genesis 35). The children of Benjamin inherited a territory which lay north of Judah and south of Ephraim. His land did not extend all the way from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, but reached to the boundary of the children of Dan who had territory on the west of the territory of Benjamin.

7. *What were the borders of Benjamin? 18:12*

The border of Benjamin on the east was the Jordan River. From a point on the river just north of Jericho the northern boundary ran almost due west to Beth-el, or Luz, as it was called in the early times. The western border ran directly south from lower Beth-horon to Kirjath-jearim. The southern border ran directly east from Kirjath-jearim to the north shore of the Dead Sea. The tribe of Ephraim was on the north, Dan was on the west, and Judah was on the south. The Jordan River (and across it, the tribe of Gad) was on the east.

8. *Where was Jebusi?* 18:16

Jebusi was the city of the Jebusites. This site later was captured by David and became known as Jerusalem, David's capital and the capital of the succeeding kings of Judah until it was finally captured by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. This passage of Scripture clearly indicates that the site lay within the border of the tribe of Benjamin. It is mentioned again later in the list of the cities which belonged to Benjamin (18:28).

List of Benjamin's Cities 18:21-28

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz,

22 And Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el,

23 And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah,

24 And Chephar-haammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages:

25 Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth,

26 And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah,

27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah,

28 And Zelah, Eleph, and Jebusi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeath, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

9. *Why was Jericho mentioned?* 18:21

Although Jericho was destroyed earlier, its site was important. The city itself was not rebuilt until much later in the days of Ahab. Nevertheless, the site was important to Israel and was worthy of mention among the cities possessed by the men of Benjamin. In addition, certain smaller villages pertained to most of the larger cities; and such was probably the case with Jericho.

10. *Where was Beth-el?* 18:22

Beth-el was in the hill country, and was famous as well as hallowed among the Israelites since it was there that the father of the twelve sons who were heads of the tribes of Israel had worshiped. At Beth-el Jacob received the vision of a ladder set upon the earth and saw angels going up and down on it (Genesis 28). Abraham had pitched his tent near Beth-el, with Beth-el on the west and Ai on the east (Genesis 12); and the people of Benjamin must have counted themselves fortunate to have such an important spot within their borders.

11. *Where was Gibeon?* 18:25

Gibeon was a Canaanite city west and a little south of Beth-el. The Hivites, a group of the Canaanites, had lived here. These people had tricked the children of Israel, pretending to have come from a great distance to make peace with God's people (Joshua 9). It was the defecting of these people which led to the formation of the southern coalition of Canaanite kings who attacked Israel and were defeated on the occasion when Joshua prayed for the sun to stand still, thus giving more time for his warriors to attack their enemies (chapter 10).

12. *Why mention Ramah?* 18:25

Ramah was the home of Samuel. It was a high place, and the name itself means "height." Such a high hill rises above Gibeon, and is pointed out as the burial place of Samuel. The land of Benjamin was filled with sites which became famous as events in later Israelite history transpired. Other sites to the north of Gibeon are also identified as Ramah's or "heights" and are considered to have been the Ramathaim-Zophim, the "heights of Zuph," the home of Samuel's parents (I Samuel 1:1).

TEN QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 18

1. Where was the Tabernacle located?
2. How many tribes remained without land?
3. How many men went out from each tribe to survey the remaining land?
4. Which tribe had no inheritance of land in Israel?
5. Where was the record made of the survey?
6. Which tribe was first to receive a part of the remaining land?
7. What was the east border of this tribe?
8. What two cities were on the western border of this tribe?
9. What famous city, which was later David's capital, was within this tribe's border?
10. How many cities were within this tribe's borders?

A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 19

Vv. 1- 9 *The inheritance of Simeon.* Simeon received land within the boundaries of the territory of Judah. Jacob had said of Simeon and Levi, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7b). Apparently this prediction of God's future dealings with Simeon was partially fulfilled when the men of Simeon received inheritance within the borders of another tribe. Generally speaking, Simeon inherited land within a twenty-mile radius around Beersheba. A number of cities are mentioned as being within the land which fell to this tribe, cities like Ziklag, Ramah, Moladah, and Sharuhén.