

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.

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Vv. 10-16 *The inheritance of Zebulun.* The tribe of Zebulun received land in Galilee, with boundaries along the Kishon River on the south, the tribe of Asher on the west, and the tribe of Naphtali on the north and east. The village of Nazareth, not listed at this time but made famous in New Testament times because the home of Joseph and Mary which was there, was in the territory of Zebulun. The land was varied, reaching on the east almost to the Sea of Galilee and on the west to the foot of Mount Carmel. Fertile plains were broken by mountain ranges, and little streams watered it well.

Vv. 17-23 *The inheritance of Issachar.* A general outline of the territory of Issachar would be achieved by drawing a line from Mount Carmel east to the Jordan River over Mount Gilboa to form the southern boundary and another line from Mount Carmel east to the Jordan River over Mount Tabor to form the northern boundary. The land lay south and east of the land belonging to Zebulun and north of the eastern half of the territory of Manasseh. Within Issachar's borders were such important cities as Jezreel, Shunem, En-gannim, and Tabor. The territory was very rich in mineral resources and was mostly fertile soil, the plain of Jezreel being famous for its fertility.

Vv. 24-31 *The Inheritance of Asher.* Asher received land along the Mediterranean seacoast. The land lay north of Mount Carmel and stretched all the way to the borders of Tyre. Asher's territory extended inland about half the distance to the

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Sea of Galilee and the upper waters of the Jordan River. The land was rich, and the people of Asher were so far north that they engaged in commerce with the great Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon and were not as active in the affairs of Israel as were some of the other tribes. It is interesting to notice that Anna, the prophetess who was in the Temple at the time of Jesus' presentation, was of this tribe (Luke 2:36).

Vv. 32-39 *The inheritance of Naphtali.* Naphtali also received land in Galilee. On the west was Asher; on the south, Zebulun and Issachar; on the east, the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River; and on the north, the region of Hamath. Naphtali and Asher thus received the northernmost land which was allocated to Israel.

Vv. 40-48 *The inheritance of Dan.* Dan's territory was perhaps the smallest of all; but it was known as the garden spot of southern Palestine. Dan was situated on the Mediterranean seacoast, and the territory extended inland to the western boundary of the land of Benjamin. Thus the borders were Ephraim on the north; Benjamin on the east; Judah on the south; and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. Joppa was an important town on Dan's border, and the tribe became famous in Bible history as the homeland of Samson.

Vv. 49-51 *The inheritance of Joshua.* The Israelites gave Joshua an inheritance in the midst of them. It is said that it was given him "according to the word of the Lord." This does not refer to a

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divine oracle, but to a promise which Joshua had probably received from God at the same time as Caleb. It was only fitting and proper for these people to give a place for their leader to live. God's promises are always fulfilled. God had told Abraham that He would make of him a great nation. He told him at one time that He would make his children as numerous as the sands on the seashore. Over 300,000 men of war, twenty years of age and older, were counted among these tribes whose inheritances are listed in this chapter. God had, furthermore, promised Jacob that the land whereon he lay around Beth-el would be given to his descendants. Under Joshua's administration, this promise was also fulfilled.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *To each according to his several ability* (Matthew 25:15b). In the parable of the talents, Jesus taught us that God gives to each of us according to his ability. The land given to the tribes of Israel was suited to their needs. Not only did Joshua, their military leader, and Eleazar, their priest, use their best judgment in making these assignments; but they asked for God's guidance in the matter. They cast the sacred lots in determining the portions to be given to each of the tribes, and in this chapter we read of the completion of this work.
2. *Last but not least.* When they had made an end of distributing the land for an inheritance by the borders of it to all the children of Israel, the people made proper provision for Joshua, the son of Nun; and they gave him an inheritance in the midst of them. The grand warrior of God had led them from victory unto victory.

He had also guided and inspired them until they had completed the work of settling the land. Their giving him a place to dwell in their midst was a fitting reward for his years of faithful service. In addition, as the text points out, it was "according to the commandment of the Lord." Since Joshua was a member of the tribe of Ephraim, his inheritance was appropriately in the hill country of Ephraim, where he built a city and lived in it.

3. "*Let all things be done decently and in order*" (I Corinthians 14:40). This injunction was given to the Christians in Corinth, but it is a principle which has always been applicable to God's work. The orderliness of the processes by which God called the universe into being according to the Biblical record (Genesis 1) has amazed and intrigued the keenest scientific minds. The arrangements made for Israel's encampment and marching during the wilderness wanderings explains a part of the process by which God forged a nation out of a band of emancipated slaves (Numbers 2-4). The way in which God directed the orderly allotment of land to the tribes of Israel is another incident which elicits reverence from all God-fearing people.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Inheritance of Simeon 19:1-9

And the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

2 And they had in their inheritance Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and Moladah,

3 And Hazar-shual, and Balah, and Azem,

4 And Eltolad, and Bethul, and Hormah,

5 And Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah,

6 And Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem; thirteen cities and their villages:

7 Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages:

8 And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

9 Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

1. *Who was Simeon?* 19:1

Simeon was the son of Jacob by Leah. He was the second son born to them; and when he was born, his mother gave him a name that indicated that her petitions had been heard of the Lord. His name comes from the Hebrew verb, *shamah*, "to hear." His birth is recorded in Genesis 29:33. When Jacob blessed his sons, he prophesied that Simeon would be with Levi and scattered among the others of Jacob's descendants. Simeon was not to have a separate inheritance of his own. As a result of this prediction's being fulfilled, Simeon inherited cities which centered around Beer-sheba and were completely within the borders of the land given to the children of Judah (Genesis 49:5-7). At the first numbering, made before Israel left Sinai (Numbers 1), there were 59,300 men in Simeon. His tribe decreased in number until there were only 22,200 when the children of Israel were numbered again in the plains of Moab (Numbers 26).

2. *Where was Beer-sheba?* 19:2

Beer-sheba was immediately west of the south end of the Dead Sea and central in the territory given to Simeon. Isaac had lived there when Jacob left to seek a wife among his mother's people (Genesis 28). Abraham had dwelt there (Genesis 22:19), and Isaac had digged a well there (Genesis 26:25). Beer-sheba is famous in modern times as a center of business activity in Israel. A world-famous camel market is located at this southernmost city of Israel.

3. *Where was Ziklag?* 19:5

Ziklag was about twenty miles north and east of Beer-sheba. In the days of David the town was given to him by Achish, king of Gath; and the sacred writer says that Ziklag thereafter pertained unto the kings of Judah until the time of the writing of his narrative (I Samuel 27:6). Such a circumstance indicates that the town had fallen into the hands of the Philistines although it originally was given as a possession to the men of Simeon.

The Inheritance of Zebulun 19:10-16

10 And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid:

11 And their border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river that is before Jokneam;

12 And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sun-rising unto the border of Chisloth-tabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia,

13 And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-methoar to Neah;

14 And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el:

15 And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: twelve cities with their villages.

16 This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.

4. *Who was Zebulun?* 19:10a

The third lot came out for Zebulun, who was the son of Jacob and Leah, being the sixth son born of this union (Genesis 30:19). Since Leah at that time had borne six sons to Jacob, she felt her husband would certainly want to live continually with her. She gave this son a name from a Hebrew word, *zabal*, which means "dwelling." Jacob foresaw that Zebulun would not be a great leader among his people, but he did make a prophecy that he would "dwell" at the haven of the sea. By divine foresight, Jacob predicted Zebulun's inheritance would be in the northern part of the land given to Israel. There were 57,400 men in this tribe when they were numbered at Sinai (Numbers 1), and they had increased to a total of 60,500 when the second census was taken in Moab (Numbers 26).

5. *Where was the land given to Zebulun?* 19:10b-15

Although Jacob had predicted that they would dwell at the haven of the sea, there is some doubt about the exact location of this land. Keil and Delitzsch say in their *Commentary on the Old Testament, Joshua, Judges and Ruth* that the territory of Zebulun did not touch either the Mediterranean Sea nor the Jordan River (page 191). Nonetheless, this territory was in the fertile valley which stretched from the Mediterranean Sea, along the Kishon River, and extended to the east almost to the Sea of Galilee. By residing in such a position, the men of the tribe of Zebulun were in a position to derive the benefits which came from being close to both the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee.

6. *Which Beth-lehem was in Zebulun's territory ? 19:15*

The Beth-lehem within the borders of the tribe of Zebulun was not the place of Jesus' birth. It is for this reason that quite often reference is made to Bethlehem-Judah (Judges 17:7, 19:1; see also Micah 5:2). Bethlehem of Zebulun was probably the home of Ibzan, one of the judges of Israel (Judges 12:8, 10). After him ruled Elon, the Zebulonite (Judges 12:11). Although it is not specified that Elon was his son, it is assumed that Ibzan, the Bethlehemite, and Elon, the Zebulonite, were from the same area, thus identifying Beth-lehem in Zebulun.

The Inheritance of Issachar 19:17-23

17 And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families.

18 And their border was toward Jezreel, and Chesul-loth, and Shunem,

19 And Haphraim, and Shihon, and Anaharath,

20 And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez,

21 And Remeth, and En-gannim, and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez;

22 And the coast reacheth to Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Beth-shemesh; and the outgoings of their border were at Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages.

23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.

7. *Who was Issachar? 19:17*

Issachar was the fifth son born to Jacob and Leah. His name was from a Hebrew word, *zachar*, which meant "to hire." Leah felt she had "hired" her husband by allowing Rachel to have the mandrakes found by her son, Reuben. Issachar's birth is recorded in Genesis 30:17, 18,

and Jacob's prophecy about his future is given in Genesis 49:14, 15. When the children of Israel were numbered at Sinai, there were 54,400 men, twenty years of age and older, among these people. Later at the second census, there were 64,300 (Numbers 1 and 26).

8. *What were the borders of Issachar?* 19:18

Issachar lay in the valley between Mount Tabor and Mount Carmel. His land ran east to the Jordan River. Asher and Naphtali inherited land to the north, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (west) was on the south. It is doubtful that the land of Issachar reached either to the Mediterranean Sea or to the Sea of Galilee, but the fertile land in the valleys within his borders provided some of the best soil in all of Canaan.

9. *What cities of importance were in Issachar?* 19:18-22

Sixteen cities are listed as a part of the inheritance of Issachar. Jezreel was an important city. It became the summer home of the kings of Israel (I Kings 21:1). Shunem (verse 18) was the home of the Shunammite who befriended Elisha (II Kings 4:8 ff.). En-gannim (verse 21) was the scene of Ahaziah's escape from Jehu (II Kings 9:27), where it is translated, "the garden house," in the King James Version, and is identified with the modern city of Jenin, a large town of four thousand people. These cities were strategic defense outposts in the days of Israel's monarchy.

The Inheritance of Asher 19:24-31.

24 And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families.

25 And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Becten, and Achshaph,

26 And Alammelech, and Amad, and Misheal; and reacheth to Carmel westward, and to Shihor-labnath;

27 And turneth toward the sunrising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north side of Beth-emek, and Neiel, and goeth out to Cabul on the left hand,

28 And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, even unto great Zidon;

29 And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre; and the coast turneth to Hosah; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea from the coast to Achzib:

30 Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages.

31 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.

10. *Who was Asher?* 19:24

Asher was the son of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, and Jacob. When he was born (Genesis 30:13), he was given a name which signified that his mother was happy. *Ashrab* means "happy" in the Hebrew. Jacob mentioned him in his blessings of his sons (Genesis 49:20). At the census taken near Mount Sinai, there were 41,500 men of war in Asher. Later at the census taken in Moab, he had 53,400 men, twenty years of age and older (Numbers 1 and 26).

11. *Where was the territory of Asher?* 19:24-31

The land assigned to the tribe of Asher reached from Mount Carmel to the northern border of Canaan itself. Carmel is a wooded mountain which stretches in the north-westerly direction, along the southern side of the River Kishon. Some of the land was very rich soil, and it made an excellent home for the descendants of Asher. Most of the land was along the Mediterranean seacoast, and would have been naturally bounded on the north by the Leontes

River. Deborah made reference to the nature of the land as she said, "Asher sat still at the haven of the sea and abode by his creeks" (Judges 5:17b).

12. *How many cities were in Asher?* 19:30

Twenty-two cities are listed as being within the borders of the tribe of Asher. Most of them are rather unimportant, being mentioned very infrequently in the rest of Bible history. Anna, daughter of Phanuel, was from the midst of this tribe (Luke 2:36). The phrase, "Great Sidon," denotes the preeminence which that city enjoyed over Tyre, the sister city, mentioned in verse 29, as being a "strong city." These non-Israelite cities maintained their preeminence. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants; and the history of the people of Asher was inextricably intertwined with the history of the Phoenicians, who lived in Tyre and Sidon.

The Inheritance of Naphtali 19:32-39

32 The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families.

33 And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaananim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan:

34 And then the coast turneth westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sun-rising.

35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Ham-math, Rakkath, and Chinnereth,

36 And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor,

37 And Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor,

38 And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.

13. *Who was Naphtali?* 19:32

Naphtali was the son of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, and Jacob. His birth is recorded in Genesis 30:8; and his name is from a Hebrew word, *naftal*, meaning "to wrestle." Rachel and Leah were wrestling with each other in an attempt to gain the favor of their husband, Jacob. Jacob gave a blessing to Naphtali (Genesis 49:21); and at the first census, he had 53,400 warriors (Numbers 1). He decreased in numbers until there were only 45,400 when the second census was taken (Numbers 26).

14. *Where was the territory of Naphtali?* 19:32-39

The territory given to the children of Naphtali lay immediately east of the territory given to Asher. On the south the land touched the territory of Issachar and Zebulun. On the east border were the streams which ran together to form the Jordan River, flowing through the waters of Merom, and finally into the Sea of Galilee. This tribe also reached to the northern extremities of the Promised Land, and its north border was the Syrian territory which lay beyond the Leontes River.

15. *How many cities were given to Naphtali?* 19:38

Nineteen cities and their villages were within the borders of the territory given to Naphtali. "Judah upon Jordan" is a very unusual reference and caused a great deal of controversy until it was noticed that the sixty towns of Jair, which were upon the eastern side of the Jordan, were called Judah. These cities were reckoned as pertaining to Judah; because Jair, the possessor of these

towns, was a descendant of Judah on the father's side through Hezron (I Chronicles 2:5, 21, 22). Manasseh East had received this territory on the other side of the Jordan opposite the land given to Naphtali. Barak was from this tribe (Judges 4:6).

The Inheritance of Dan 19:40-48

40 And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families.

41 And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh,

42 And Shaalabbin, and Ajalon, and Jethlah,

43 And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron,

44 And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath,

45 And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon,

46 And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border before Japho.

47 And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.

16. *Who was Dan? 19:40*

Dan was also the son of Bilhah and Jacob (Genesis 30:6). His name means "to judge." Jacob gave him a rich blessing (Genesis 49:16-18); and when the tribes of Israel were counted at Sinai, there were 62,700 men, twenty years of age and older, in this tribe (Numbers 1). At the later census he had grown until there were 64,400 men of this age (Numbers 26).

17. Where was the territory of Dan? 19:40-46

The major part of Dan's territory lay along the Mediterranean seacoast, immediately west of the land given to the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin was thus on his eastern border. On the northern border was the territory of Ephraim, and on the southern border was the territory of Judah.

18. What additional territory was given to Dan? 19:47, 48

Joshua mentions a conquest which was recorded more fully as an appendix to the book of Judges (Judges 17 and 18). These Israelites went up to the north part of the land given to Israel and conquered an area around Leshem, which was near the headwaters of the Jordan River. This point was the northernmost spot of the land of Israel; and after the name of the place was changed from Leshem to Dan, it was common to speak of the territory of Israel as extending from Dan to Beer-sheba, the northernmost and southernmost important towns, respectively.

The Inheritance of Joshua 19:49-51

49 When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them:

50 According to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

51 These are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of dividing the country.

19. *Where was Timnath-serah? 19:50*

Timnath-serah was in the midst of the land assigned to the tribe of Ephraim. Captain Warren Conder said that there was no place in all Palestine so striking as that of Joshua's home. It was surrounded with deep valleys and rugged hills. Josephus, Jerome, and Eusebius all identify it with *Thamma*; and it is mentioned again in Joshua 24:30 as reference is made to Joshua's final resting place.

20. *Who made the assignments of the territories? 19:51*

Joshua took the lead in assigning the inheritances for the various tribes; but Eleazar, son of Aaron, the priest, was also instrumental in performing this task. These men were ably assisted by all the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. Every tribe was interested in it, and each tribe had one or more men who were officially part of the group making these assignments. The assignments were made in Shiloh at the door of the Tabernacle. This was an appropriate place, signifying that the hand of God was felt upon the work of these men.

TEN QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER 19

1. In the midst of which tribe did Simeon receive an inheritance?
2. What city was central in Simeon's portion?
3. What was Asher's western border?
4. What two famous Phoenician cities were in Asher's territory?
5. What was Dan's west border?
6. What was the name of the town Joshua built?
7. In which tribe was Joshua's inheritance?
8. Who was priest in Joshua's day?
9. In what town were the leaders when they made the assignments?
10. How many tribes were mentioned as receiving a portion in this chapter?