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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Joshua 19.

(2015)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Joshua 19.

Topics.

- The second inheritance allotted to the tribe of Simeon.
- The third inheritance allotted to the tribe of Zebulun.
- The fourth inheritance allotted to the tribe of Issachar.
- The fifth inheritance allotted to the tribe of Asher.
- The sixth inheritance allotted to the tribe of Naphtali.
- The seventh inheritance allotted to the tribe of Dan.
- Joshua is given Timnath-serah for his Inheritance.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the first five books of Moses anticipated the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham concerning the Promised Land. Moses is now dead. Joshua crosses the River Jordan (about 1400 B.C.) and after a string of military victories apportioned the land according to the twelve tribes. These battles shine a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that God fights for His people when they are faithful and courageous and put their full trust in Him. (Josh. 1:6-9).

At the close of the book Joshua says that he and all his house will serve the LORD and invites the people to choose whether they will serve the gods of their fathers or the gods in whose land they dwell or the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. The people choose to serve their God. (Josh. 24:15). Although anonymous the book appears to contain eyewitness testimony, some of which may have been written by Joshua himself.

NOTE: in this study I have not attempted to give detail of land areas, borders and boundaries or the locations of towns and villages etc., since I am not a master of geography or the regions of the Middle East. Added to this it is difficult and enormously time consuming to trace the exact boundaries of some sites and cities, because a number of ancient names mentioned are unknown today

The Second inheritance Allotted to the Tribe of Simeon.

Joshua 19:1-9 ----- ¹The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the people of Simeon, according to their clans, and their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the people of Judah. ²And they had for their inheritance Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, ³Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, ⁶Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhén—thirteen cities with their villages; ⁷Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four cities with their villages, ⁸together with all the villages around these cities as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Simeon according to their clans. ⁹The inheritance of the people of Simeon formed part of the territory of the people of Judah. Because the portion of the people of Judah was too large for them, the people of Simeon obtained an inheritance in the midst of their inheritance.

This chapter is a continuation of (Josh. 18:2-6) where Joshua began to allot the remaining land of Canaan to the seven tribes who had not yet been allocated an inheritance.

These remaining seven tribes where: Benjamin (Josh. 18:11-20), Simeon (Josh. 19:1-9), Zebulun (Josh. 19:10-16), Issachar (Josh. 19:17-23), Asher (Josh. 19:24-31), Naphtali (Josh. 19:32-39) and Dan (Josh. 19:40-48). Following are the cities that Simeon had amongst the inheritance of the tribe of Judah.

The second lot of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Simeon. Simeon's inheritance was seventeen cities with their villages. Simeon was Jacob's son by Leah. The number of cities does not tallying with the catalogue of cities. Eighteen cities are named, yet the Scripture states there are seventeen cities with their villages following are two reasons why this maybe: -

1. The error maybe due to the use of Hebrew letters for numbers in translation.
2. Some believe Sheba (v2) is the same with Shema (v26).

There are many other reasons giving that explain why this error may have occurred for those who would like to do a Google search. The following four cities with their villages and all the villages around them as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb

1. Ain
2. Rimmon
3. Ether
4. Ashan

Was part of the territory of the tribe of Judah, but because the allotted portion for the tribe of Judah was too large (i.e., far greater than they needed) they are also part of the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon. Now upon the more exact survey of the land it appeared to Joshua and even to the tribe of Judah themselves, that the part given to them far exceed the needs of their population and therefore was suited to be shared with another tribe.

The inheritance of Simeon the eldest son of Jacob was within the inheritance of the children of Judah which was partly because Simeon was a small tribe, and partly because the portion that fell to the tribe of Judah was too large for it. The first division Israel made of the land of Canaan was made during the course of battling their enemies and possessing the land so the knowledge they had of the land was very general. Now that the land was mostly subdued it has become obvious that the territory allotted to Judah was far larger than the tribe needed. The law of equality therefore required that a part of it was appropriated to Simeon.

The following verses show that Judah and Simeon worked together in helping each other drive out their enemies and complete the conquest of their inheritance.

- Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you." So Simeon went with him. (Judges 1:3).
- Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction. So the name of the city was called Hormah. (Judges 1:17).

This fact illustrates the good relationship Simeon and Judah had with each other and shows that when Joshua's work was done, something was still left for the individual tribes to do. It is safe to suppose that by establishing Simeon's inheritance within the domain of another tribe (Judah) would result in the people of Simeon being intermixed with the tribe of Judah. Such an arrangement fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob, that the Simeonites should be scattered in Jacob, and divided in Israel.

- Cursed be their (Simeon and Levi) anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel. (Gen. 49:7).

The whole tribe of Levi (the Levitical priests) were to have no allotment or inheritance with Israel, for the tithes (the food offerings) that the Israelites present as an offering to God and God Himself where their inheritance.

The other eleven tribes of Israel did receive land in Canaan as their inheritance, but the Levites received no land, but were given forty-eight cities and pasturelands within the other tribes' territories (for the dwelling of their families and for keeping livestock etc.,) and in this sense they were scattered throughout Israel.

A full explanation is found in (Deut. 18). It should be highlighted that the Levites were not chosen because they were better than the other tribes, just as ministers of the Gospel are no more valued in the eyes of God than any other faithful believer.

In a similar manner even though a group of seventeen cities is named for Simeon (Josh. 19:2-6) there still remains the idea of a compact district, (as it is usually represented on maps) amongst another group of people (i.e., Judah) (Josh. 19:7, 8) and since the boundaries of Simon were not fixed there is valid reason to suppose that the people of Simeon were divided and dispersed amongst those of Judah and in this sense also scattered amongst Israel.

The men of Judah recognised that they had more than was needed and therefore they did not oppose Joshua taking away certain cities within their border. A true believer who is controlled by the Spirit of God and has obtained more than enough in anything will willingly give it up without murmuring to help others, because God is love and love does not insist on its own way (1 Cor. 13:5). It will influence those in whom it richly dwells to part with their own to supply to supply what their brothers and sisters are lacking.

The Third inheritance allotted to the Tribe of Zebulun.

Joshua 19:10-16 ----- ¹⁰The third lot came up for the people of Zebulun, according to their clans. And the territory of their inheritance reached as far as Sarid. ¹¹Then their boundary goes up westward and on to Mareal and touches Dabbesheth, then the brook that is east of Jokne-am. ¹²From Sarid it goes in the other direction eastward toward the sunrise to the boundary of Chisloth-tabor. From there it goes to Daberath, then up to Japhia. ¹³From there it passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah, ¹⁴then on the north the boundary turns about to Hannathon, and it ends at the Valley of Iphtahel; ¹⁵and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve cities with their villages. ¹⁶This is the inheritance of the people of Zebulun, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The third lot of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Zebulun. Zebulun's inheritance was twelve cities with their villages. Zebulun was Jacob's son by Leah. Some of the names may have dropped out of the text since the number of the cities does not tallying with the catalogue of cities. Zebulun was allotted twelve cities with their villages, but only the following five cities have been mentioned

1. Kattath
2. Nahalal
3. Shimron
4. Idalah
5. Bethlehem

The remaining names in the verses are not names of cities, but the names of points in or near the boundary line of Zebulun's allotted land. It is very likely that seven names have disappeared from the text and perhaps also the exact definition of the western frontier since some of these boundaries, sites and cities cannot be exactly traced.

The Fourth inheritance Allotted to the Tribe of Issachar.

Joshua 19:17-23 ----- ¹⁷The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the people of Issachar, according to their clans. ¹⁸Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez. ²²The boundary also touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its boundary ends at the Jordan—sixteen cities with their villages. ²³This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Issachar, according to their clans—the cities with their villages.

The fourth lot of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Issachar. Issachar's inheritance was sixteen cities with their villages. Issachar was Jacob's son by Leah.

It seems only the principal cities are named since the Scripture states there are sixteen cities and only thirteen are mentioned with the borders of the land. All of these cities are all in the eastern part of the Plain of Esdraelon.

The Fifth inheritance Allotted to the Tribe of Asher.

Joshua 19:24-31 ----- ²⁴The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the people of Asher according to their clans. ²⁵Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, ²⁶Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. On the west it touches Carmel and Shihor-libnath, ²⁷then it turns eastward, it goes to Beth-dagon, and touches Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtahel northward to Beth-emek and Neiel. Then it continues in the north to Cabul, ²⁸Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, as far as Sidon the Great. ²⁹Then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it ends at the sea; Mahalab, Achzib, ³⁰Ummah, Aphek and Rehob—twenty-two cities with their villages. ³¹This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Asher according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The fifth lot of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Asher. Asher's inheritance was twenty-two cities with their villages. Asher was Jacob's son by Leah's handmaid Zilpah. The principal cities are named and the boundaries described. The allotment refers to the northern portion of the territory of Asher, on the Phoenician frontier.

Some of the names of the ancient cities may have dropped out of the text since the number twenty-two does not tallying with the catalogue of cities. Ramah still retains its ancient name, and lies about twelve miles southeast of Tyre. Achzib is the modern "Zib," on the coast, eight or nine miles north of Acre.

The commonly used expression, "according to their clans," (v31) means that the land was divided according to the size of each the tribe (i.e., the number of names in the tribe).

- You shall inherit the land by lot according to your clans. To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance. Wherever the lot falls for anyone, that shall be his. According to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit. (Num. 33:54).

The Sixth inheritance Allotted to the Tribe of Naphtali.

Joshua 19:32-39 ----- ³²The sixth lot came out for the people of Naphtali, for the people of Naphtali, according to their clans. ³³And their boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaanannim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, and it ended at the Jordan. ³⁴Then the boundary turns westward to Aznoth-tabor and goes from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun at the south and Asher on the west and Judah on the east at the Jordan. ³⁵The fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor, ³⁸Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen cities with their villages. ³⁹This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Naphtali according to their clans—the cities with their villages.

The sixth lot of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Naphtali. Naphtali inheritance was nineteen cities with their villages. Naphtali was Jacob's son by Rachel's handmaid Bilhah.

Here the boundaries are described and sixteen fortified cities are named. It is possible the focus of the writer was only upon the fortified cities since the number of cities does not tally with the catalogue (two are missing). Sixteen fortified cities is not only remarkable, but also extremely wise policy since they would stand to protect the northern frontier by a belt of fortresses, as the south was protected by the powerful tribes of Judah.

Although the cities mentioned have not been discovered, it is evident, from Zaananim, which is by Kedesh, that is, on the northwest of Lake Merom (Judges 4:11), that the boundary described (Joshua 19:34) ran from the southwest towards the northeast, up to the sources of the Jordan.

The Seventh inheritance Allotted to the Tribe of Dan.

Joshua 19:40-48 ----- ⁴⁰The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the people of Dan, according to their clans. ⁴¹And the territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, ⁴²Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, ⁴⁶and Me-jarkon and Rakkon with the territory over against Joppa. ⁴⁷When the territory of the people of Dan was lost to them, the people of Dan went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and striking it with the sword they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor. ⁴⁸This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Dan, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

The seventh lot (the last lot drawn) of the remaining seven to be drawn by Joshua at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Joshua 18:8-10) was Dan. Though the number of cities and their villages are not numbered for Dan's inheritance is not mentioned there are seventeen that are named. Dan was Jacob's son by Rachel's handmaid Bilhah.

In each census taken during the exodus the tribe of Dan was the most numerous of the tribes next to Judah, Dan also had a position of honour in being commander of the rear-guard during the march. Dan lay on the west of Benjamin and consisted of portions surrendered by Judah and Ephraim. Its boundaries are not stated, as they were easily distinguishable from the relative position of Dan to the three adjoining tribes.

Joshua is Given Timnath-serah for His Inheritance.

Joshua 19:49-51 ----- ⁴⁹When they had finished distributing the several territories of the land as inheritances, the people of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. ⁵⁰By command of the LORD they gave him the city that he asked, Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim. And he rebuilt the city and settled in it. ⁵¹These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel distributed by lot at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing the land.

Joshua divided the remaining seven portions of land by lot at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. (Joshua 18:8-10). In all cases the lot of the inheritance of the tribe not only fell in such a way as to favour harmony and limit discontent amongst the tribes, but also in a way that gave the frontiers of the nation the best possible defence.

Now that the seven lots are completed the tribes of Israel give the city Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim to Joshua for his inheritance according to the word of the LORD which he asked for. The city of Timnath-serah is in the hill country of Ephraim 18 miles NW of Jerusalem. Timnath-serah means an abundant portion and though it was small it was enough for Joshua. He rebuilt the city and settled in it and it was in this city that he was buried.

It should be highlighted: Joshua was the oldest and the greatest man in the nation, the chief governor, yet his inheritance came last of all. Truly the wonderful modesty of this great man is to be admired. He waited to receive his portion last of all. He sought not his own interest, but that of the people and then his inheritance was not by lot, but by gift of those who already possessed the whole land.

Symbolism: they gave Joshua the city which he asked, according to the word of the LORD." Joshua was a type of Christ, in the book of Psalm's it is written: -

- I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. (Psalm 2:7-8).

The true Joshua must reign until God has put all enemies under His feet. Then, and not until then will the true Captain of God's people take His own personal inheritance and be subject to Him that put all things under Him. Joshua waited until all the tribes were settled, before he asked any provision for himself. He was content to go without until he saw all other tribes allotted their inheritance. In this attitude of Joshua lies the following example to all God's people: "Prefer the common welfare before personal advantage."

Those who labour most too do-good to others, seek an inheritance in the Canaan above and will be greatly rewarded if they have done all the service to their brothers and sisters in Christ of which they are capable of and nothing will be able to rob them of their title to it when they endeavour to bring others into the Lord's Kingdom.

The Lord Jesus Christ came and dwelt on earth, not in pomp, but poverty, providing rest for all who came to him. He had no permanent abode to lay his head; for he lived not too please himself, but others and would not enter into his inheritance until by his obedience to death on the bloodstained cross of Calvary he secured the eternal inheritance for all his people. Added to this, he does not consider his own glory complete until every ransomed sinner is put in possession of his heavenly rest.

End.