


THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

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The commentary on the chapters 1-6 of Joshua were produced under my New Testament everyman's series with the title ALTAR & WELL. The work on Joshua represents some Old Testament work developed outside this framework from 2002 onwards. Earlier work was arranged by biblical chapters (1-1189) although only the N.T. Chapters 930-1189 were produced in simpler format at that time. For your interest I have retained the earlier format in the first 6 chapters (188-193 of the original series) of Joshua-Hebrew words being expressed in equivalent English capital letters.

CHAPTER 1

Preface to the chapter

We are apprised of the Nature of Spiritual Strength and the history of one of the greatest promises of the bible "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee".

A PROFILE OF JOSHUA (Exodus23.20-"my angel")

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD the LORD said to Joshua son of **Nun** his servant (*The patronymic means "fish"-perhaps indicative of an Egyptian pastime if slaves ever had time to go fishing*) was from the first closely linked with Moses as his "minister". It is in the nature of ministry (MSHRTH-Heb) that it is "unceasing." The word "minister" again is from a verb in the continuous-which means "going on and on". Joshua means "Jehovah saves" and it is the Saviour's name. Joshua saved Israel from enemies-Jesus saves his people from five enemies-Satan sin death and hell and the second death. Joshua and those with him gained "possession" of what God promised.

JOSHUA IS IDENTIFIED WITH VICTORY

No man shall be able to stand before you all your life. Again in verse 9 he was bidden by God "Never run away" (Heb HTHTH)-notably this verb is used in 8.1 where Ai is to be attacked a second time -this time Joshua is in command and awaits the Lords advice (cp 7.3&8.18) There is future promise of territory from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean but Joshua's foot never got that far. God promised "I will give you every place you set your foot." Long battles from his 50th year until he was 100 ensued and much land was possessed

DOBBIE AND THE DEFENCE OF MALTA

Joshua like General Dobbie sought Gods guidance daily. Dobbie said "Many a time have I sought God's help and guidance in my official life, sometimes in small matters and sometimes in big ones, both in peace & war, and I can confidently assert that the promise of James 1.5 is no idle or fanciful one. "If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God" Despite 2000 bombings- Malta was never invaded, &the loss of life in what was

The most densely populated place was in 200-that was in 1940 when general Ironsides telegram to Dobbie read "Ye shall not fear them for the Lord your God, he shall fight for you"-a quote from Deuteronomy 3.22-Moses to Joshua.

THE HISTORY OF A GREAT PROMISE 5

I will not leave thee nor forsake thee.

God first gave this promise to Jacob in Gen 28.15 at Bethel.

Next it was brought to mind by Moses in Deuteronomy 4.31 & 31.6 during which time he was completing the book of the Torah and looking back on his failure and Israel's and optimistically looking ahead to Joshua's success-while writing the last book of that self-same Torah. The Law was eventually to be placed within the ark (Deut31.26) as a "witness".

When we consider Joshua 1.8 Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth-meditate in it day and night we have to recognise there would have been a second "witness"-the copy Joshua meditated upon daily! This book was the last great work of Moses -highlighting in its last part-Deuteronomy- the call to "love", the warning scenes from the desert and this charge to faith "be courageous and believe the old promise of God".

The promise next appears in Joshua 1.5 where it is attached to four directions concerning Spiritual Strength with which living in its light invests the soul.

This promise resurfaces in Hebrews 13.5 where the writer encourages Christians within the Jewish nation that was alarmed by the death of James the Just and the increasing belligerence of Romans. He assures them that "we possess a city and altar" which are unassailable-and still in days ahead through prayer whilst living below they may continue to obtain strength and victory and ultimately in the city which has foundations they (and indeed we) shall rule with the returning Christ when his Messianic kingdom comes

THE FOUR SORTS OF STRENGTH NEEDED

Christians who live obedient are consciously at war. Apollyon's darts still fly-giant despair still stalks us, the armoury of the palace beautiful (cp Ephesians 6) is still combat dress.

No.1 STRENGTH TO GRASP AND RECEIVE (our possessions)

In v.6 we find God first wants His people to know of their possessions and enjoy them. You will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers. Joshua must claim these possessions by progress and obedience. Be careful to obey all the law; turn not to the right or left that you may be successful. This command is strategic. God has so much to give those who trust and obey.

No.2 STRENGTH TO OBEY AND SUCCEED (our resources)

In v.7 there is God's condition-"Only" be strong (Heb RAQ). God also demands that Joshua "be very courageous or vigorous and active"- Joshua's was a life like that of our LORD-full of activity-yet graced by daily meditation. The secret is to "meditate" daily and "apply" the scriptures to how life is lived. This makes for the kind of soldier

that is never off guard. Moses knew the victorious soldier must be of this sort. The result is prospering and success- (Literal Hebrew literally "crossing and beholding")

No.3 STRENGTH TO WORK AND WAR (our consecration)

In v.9 with essentially just a little over 24 hours before crossing Jordan God said "Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged." (Hebrew "no trembling" and "no breaking down or running in fear". The LORD your God will be with you wherever you go...get your supplies ready. (11) There must be adequate food for those under arms now committed to battle. "Every warrior in arms shall help your brothers till the LORD gives them rest" This further command to Reuben Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh that every fighting man should leave his family and the inherited land on the east of Jordan to fight alongside his brethren was readily obeyed. (10-15) This principle also applies to Christians in every land-we who are able are to forward the mission of the gospel in other lands. We do not find that the two-and-a-half tribes were diminished or endangered leaving home-they were a mighty encouragement and probably made all the difference between a daunting and a doable task.

No.4 STRONG IN DISCIPLINE (our priorities)

Manasseh received the land promise in Genesis 48. **Only** the LORD be with you... *Manasseh put an absolute condition on full obedience to Joshua namely that God's anointing was evidently upon him and God's presence with him.* It is of interest that the heirs of Joseph never forgot the genuineness of the testimony of Joseph their forefather and Israel's leader 400 years before. In Genesis 41.38 Pharaoh said of Joseph "Can we find anyone like this man-one in whom is the spirit of God?" Manasseh echoed the LORD'S command "Only be strong and courageous" (18) Be undaunted and alert (*HAZAK &EMAK*). *Joshua proved himself alert when the issue of Achan's disobedience came about and he dealt with expeditiously with the offence. These four timeless lessons are valuable for today's soldier-saint.*

CHAPTER 2

In this chapter we are told of "an historic stay of judgment" whilst Rahab and her family is saved. The wonder is divine compassion is absolutely compatible with divine judgment. Where there is true faith mercy rejoices in face of judgment-here as in Lot's Sodom. The scripture is true which reads "A smoking flax will He not quench" (Isaiah 42.3 & Matthew 12.20). The glorious Rahab story enlarges within the covenant people as Salmon takes her to wife and brings her to the "centre" of Israel. Their precious family is at the heart of the bloodline of Christ who Himself is pivotal to the salvation of every family on earth where faith resides.

SPIES SENT TO JERICHO 1

In Numbers 13 **TWELVE** spies were sent along the valley of Eshcol-their majority verdict was "we are as grasshoppers before the giants of Canaan". Joshua had narrowed his selection to men of "definitive faith and courage". Now from the *acacia meadows of Shittim TWO "men of silent feet"* brave the Jordan in spite to arrive at Jericho by twilight 5 days before the historic crossing of Jordan led by Joshua-himself one of only two original spies still living. The men came to "dig", that is, to test if the

land would open up easily to the seed of Abraham. Well then, Salmon (Lk3.32) and his companion arrived at the edge of dark and were received with a welcoming "Shalom" by Rahab the harlot [ZONAH- "a harlot" –the secondary root ZON does not give the primary sense of this word –which main meaning is found in at least 2 dozen texts including Hosea 3.3 & 9. The subsidiary root means "to be hostess" or "feed and entertain"] (cf also Hebrews 11.31).

DIPLOMACY: RAHAB AND THE KING OF JERICHO 2-7

Rahab hid the spies but word of their arrival with her reached the palace. A messenger came and ordered that she hand the spies over. Her reply reads "Right-the men came to me and I had no intimate relations not to speak of knowing nothing about them by previous acquaintance. But because the gate was going to be shut the men just went into the dark. I myself didn't know (both verbs are present and past-so it could mean "I don't know that the men have left") the men were leaving. You should go after them quickly for you should overtake them" Essentially these words were intended to deceive but read as follows there is not a lie in them. "Right-they came to me but I neither had relations with them nor knew them before. You remember the gate was shut. The men went into the dusk of evening (on the rooftop) you should get after them-you must be able to overtake them." The woman had all the guile necessary to be a spy's accomplice. *Within this segment are the words "And it happened at the shutting of the gate" (v.5)*

THE STORY SPELT OUT IN 4 HEBREW WORDS 2-21

The hiding of the spies in Joshua 2.6 is described by the Hebrew word TAMAN "a burying of treasure" or "the burial of a loved one." In Joshua 6.17 the word is used by Joshua for "protection". Rahab laid the flax wood over and around the spies in such order as Abraham laid the wood on Isaac's altar and with as much deep concern-for her house might be searched. Upon intelligence developing about the strangers a considerable stir ensued but Rahab persuaded the king's Jericho soldiers that the Hebrews -whom she had hidden among dried flax -had run away.

Rahab used a word which in Hebrew is OTH-"a token" or "sign". She was demanding nothing less than a covenant with accompanying sign. The old Jewish usage of circumcision itself had gone into abeyance. The spies themselves are described as "ENOSH" which can mean uncircumcised. (cf. Joshua 5.7) Yet the idea of a covenant or contract was prevalent in the world of the time. Every moment whilst hidden the spies like Isaac on the altar must have feared the sword would fall on them-but Rahab's ruse worked. She hazarded her life for them and she puts them under oath "**Swear to me in the household of Jehovah that as I have shown you covenant love you will show covenant love to my father's house and give me a covenant sign**" (2.12) and so Salmon and his companion-men totally conversant with the covenant of God with Abraham respond "Our lives for yours" (*that is substitution*) if you utter not this business of ours.

The "scarlet cord" [TIKEWAH HOT SHANI ZEH "This rope of thread strands double dyed bright red" v.18] was seen only by Israel's troops since Jericho was "shut up." Its name signifies "rope of expectation or waiting". She had to wait for the salvation of which she was assured. The rope was "double dyed" much like her sin itself. When

Isaiah in 1.18 picks up this story he tells Israel in the 7th century B.C. "Though your sins red as Rahab's rope they will be forgiven so you can be white as snow." Like the Passover mark on the door this rope "guaranteed the life of all who were in Rahab's house"

The rope was "secured firm" **QASHER** for her life depended on it. This word is the same as that used by Jeremiah when he tosses his oracle tied to a stone into the Euphrates. (Jeremiah 51.63-4) The flax rope the spies used to escape is the very same which was a token of Rahab's salvation. There is but one source of security for her and them-this covenant of lives placed at risk. There is but one source of salvation for us too-the shed blood of our Saviour who gave His life for ours.

ALAN REDPATH'S NOTICE

In "Victorious Christian living" the famous 20th century bible teacher Dr. Redpath observes, "first there was a soul to be saved". And what enlargement or space was in Rahab's believing heart. One might go further and suggest that as a flax worker - despite her "sin" Rahab had the potential of a goodly wife (Proverbs31) God would not snuff out her faith. There was room for the king of Glory in her needy soul.

A GLORIOUS ROOFTOP CONFESSION 8-13

Before your faces Canaanites melt -as soil-as snow-Jehovah has given you the land
Before your faces Jehovah opened the Red sea and defeated Sihon & Og
Before your faces soldiers have lost spirit-for Jehovah is Lord of heaven & earth
Rahab has faith in God as the provider, God who saves, in this God alone.

A COVENANT BENEATH THE STARS 14

Rahab sought a covenant and "a true sign"-lit, "a past event that foretells a future event".

Kindness (HESED) Faithfulness (EMETH) Deliverance (NATZAL) was sought-and her great test of Salmon and his men was the "**true sign.**" The spies had the perfect answer- "**OUR LIVES FOR YOURS**". They knew at the heart of covenant was **substitution**-what Judah promised for Benjamin (Gen 43.9)-what God provided for Abraham. That is what Salmon's forefather promised and what he promised Rahab-if she kept counsel and he challenged her to "add" or persuade her relatives to join her in the house on the wall-without an iniquitous foundation sacrifice!!! This man knew what he wanted-he was persuaded that this woman had faith and desired that she would become his wife-and his heart went out to her family too-at the wedding she would have her family. His heart was like that of the LORD-who plans a marriage feast at which the rounded family for which he has been striving will be present. We too should strive to bring our families within the walls of salvation.

WHAT DOES THE CORD OF PURPLE SIGNIFY? 15-21

The conversation continued -one must guess-spiritedly -as the men descended downwards from a window of the wall house. The Hebrew word for "twisted rope"(QAWAH) means also "meeting anticipated". The word for "bound" (QASHER) also means "**a bride's girdle.**" So the man of Judah stays for a last look at the face he had grown to love & respect in the candlelight she binds the rope in a

lovely circlet-signifying so much-her sinful trade is finished-she is the Lords-she is Salmon's too-she is headed for the royal tribe-she is drawn by grace to God and the bloodline of Messiah. No doubt her skills in purple were later in huge demand and best of all she became the means of the deliverance of her beloved parents in Gods sovereignty entered the royal lineage of our incarnate Lord-"a true token" within "true token". What a trophy of grace!

WIDESPREAD FEAR HAD GRIPPED THE LAND 22-24

And they left and came to the mountain and remained there three days till those who pursued them turned back for they had sought them along the entire route and failed to find them. But the two men returned and descended from the mountain crossed over and came to Joshua son of Nun and related to him a report of all their escapades. And they told Joshua that the LORD had given the whole land into our hand and that even the inhabitants in their entirety were despondent [*literally "melting away from before us"*]

CHAPTER 3

The Absolute proof of future victory is here. A signal act of faith in the living God of covenant mercy stands at the opening of this new chapter in the nation's life. The story is an epic of faith.

THE EVENTS SERIALISED

The events took place in the month Nisan-probably 5-16. A suggested chronology is set out below.

Spies sent out

Spies leave Jericho for Shittim

Sabbat-on Shittim mountains 2.22 (Day 1-Saturday)

Orders to provide supplies and move 2.22 (Day 2 Sunday)

Report of the Spies 2.22(Day 3 –Monday)

Crossing of Jordan-Tuesday

Hill of foreskins-circumcision (Chapters 3-4)

People sore and abiding in the hill of foreskins

Sabbat-Passover 5.10)

Use of old corn of the new land ceased

(16) Manna Ceased (5.12)-ate fruit and new corn of the land The spies were hidden as "treasure" for a night in Jericho and "abode"(Hebrew YASHAB)or "lay down" in the mountains while Israel "passed the night" cf 3.1(Hebrew YALINU) just over 1/2mile from the swollen Jordan.

MOVE IN FAITH AND AWE 1-4

The people were to walk 1000 yards downstream from the priests-so Bethabara which is north of the crossing of the people was where the river-bed testimony stood. The water came back in a modest flow otherwise it would have tossed the river bed testimony,

The elders –“God’s word on the first day of the week”

When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God and the priests the Levites bearing it you shall remove and walk after it.

*There are 8 references to **the Ark** of the Covenant in this chapter. Eight is the numeral associated with something new. Joshua says, "You have not passed this way since yesterday and the third day." Joshua is saying that they prepared to cross for three days-during which the spies accomplished their mission and now it was time for action-the third day or Tuesday crossing was under way. (cf 1.11 & 2.22) God speaks to Joshua who rises early and sends men to call for the faith that takes out the tent poles and moves with God-even in the face of the impossible (cf 4.18). Not like any time before in all 19 times of striking camp -not with guidance of "cloud & fire" but as in Numbers 1.35-36 and with Judah's warriors in the vanguard. This time the ark was 1000 yards northwards-over half a mile -and the people were to move quite differently from "**The day before yesterday**" So as the ark was lifted up God was lifted up as sovereign of His people now fully in step with the purposes of God.*

OBSTACLES TO FAITH WILL BE REMOVED 5

Joshua's word on Monday was that God would make the way plain.

God spoke to Joshua daily and the demand of the Lord was that all the people be "sanctified". This probably involved washing and also a conscious consecration.

THE EPIC TUESDAY CROSSING-Gods word to Joshua 7-8

The priests who lifted the ark went off at Joshua's command, and Joshua was told "*Today I will **open a window** to make you great in the sight of Israel like Moses was.* So God promised vision to his people to recognise a man of faith-this was to prove vital (cf v12). The idea of a window comes from the time of the deluge-when Noah sent out his dove and raven. The spies had just returned and the leaf of olive plucked off we might characterise as the signal faith of Rahab.

God's second word through Joshua to the priests was to "Do a Noah stand as victors" in the swelling Jordan.(v.8) God was instructing in terms of JUDGMENT and Genesis 7 was so appropriate for the Nephilim giants and grossly immoral Amorites were to be judged and God's people of covenant like Noah were to re-people the land

JOSHUA'S WORD TO THE PEOPLE 9-13

"Come near"(v.9) i.e. near to the tabernacle or place of the tabernacle. Here is a mighty proof of the destruction of the 7 races by the God of Covenant -whose lifted ark is referred to 7 times. Joshua continued speaking of the Canaanites-who were to be "humbled" and "folded as straw"; the Hittite "terrorists" who were to be "broken"; the Perizzites like "breaching torrents" were to be to be breached; the Girgashites "swept away" were indeed to be swept before the Lord; the Amorites "tall as palms" were to be cut down and the Jebusites "dried up ones" whose capital was ripe for Judgment were to wither before Israel. The proof of the fall of these nations was twofold -the "**cutting off of the waters above**" and the "**melting of the waters below**". This was what Joshua promised -trusting in the Lord's own word

THE ACT OF GOD IN RESPONSE TO SIMPLE FAITH 14-17

And it happened when the people struck camp to cross Jordan...

The people moved taking their tents down in faith. (According to Judges 7.8 & 20.19 etc tents were used in war though they took over splendid houses in battle Deut. 6.11) The priests stood with the waters lapping their ankles in faith (far from the river course-because of flooding (3.15) and a great wonder took place. David in Psalm 33.7 speaks of the waters as piled up like stones (Heb KONES) or hay piling up in granaries. In 3.16 we read of the waters standing (Heb YAAMEDU) like "conquerors" "united and uniquely." The Hebrew words intimate a miraculous event. (Heb EHAD). On the other side of the ark the waters melted. The miracle was so very great that the waters stretched to Adam-30 miles or so northwards. From 4.18 it appears the waters had been cut off over 10 miles to the north and returned immediately the people had passed over and the priests came out.
 NOTE: God loves to honour the exercise of faith. "Faith mighty faith the promise sees and trusts in God alone-laughs at impossibilities and says "It shall be done"

CHAPTER 4

Israel had now crossed Jordan under Joshua. On the third and fourth occasions when God speaks to Joshua the LORD plans Acts of Testimony to the saving and holding power of His arm –the first of which is to lie hidden in the midst of the river Jordan-placed there by Joshua and twelve men where the priests stood.

STONES

The most precious memorials on earth must be gravestones which hold the deepest sentiments of so many hearts. Cairns all over Scotland tell of worthies of the past and the ploughman poet & Bard. One doctor in America collected 1500 stones-many from the 48 states and some from 23 other lands and built a monument of the States-symbolising the friendship of the Union. Two stone monuments are at the heart of Joshua chapter 4. They relate to the passage of the Ark of **the Covenant** and are testament to our Lords death & resurrection

THE TWELVE MEN-AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE 1-3

And it happened when all the people were over that the Lord spoke to Joshua-take out twelve stones from where the priest's feet stood and carry them with you... One man for each tribe was to carry a stone from the midst of Jordan. The distributive is unusual expressed by repetition as "from the people twelve men- one man-one man per tribe." Each was to take a stone from where the priests' feet had stood as garrison soldiers (MZZB). These stones were to be laid in the Gilgal camp-literally "rested" **where Israel stayed for the night**. There they would remain for some time. These men here called ENOSHIM or "men of the flesh" must with all Israel leave their flesh life behind and be circumcised within hours of entering Canaan

JOSHUA AND HIS JOB 9

Joshua set up twelve stones in or below the place where the priests' feet stood. They were still standing there and as they stood he erected twelve stones. **They were in the "middle" of the Jordan. Some prefer to translate fondly that Joshua arranged the former stones on the bank-but the Hebrew is clear.** Joshua was concerned to make a living memorial **in the river itself**. Joshua's stones stood well into the future-

although it is not certain if Matthew Henry is correct in suggesting that John the Baptist could have seen them when he said "God will raise up children unto Abraham from these stones"(Matthew 3.9)- John did significantly baptise at "the House of the passage" (Bethabara). The act of Joshua certainly fits the prophetic context of the proto-evangelium of John in a fascinating way.

It complimented the act at Gilgal. The N.T. says Israel came in with Joshua-this strange work in the midst of the Jordan is significant of **salvation**-every moment God preserves him from the oncoming waters-and also of **obedience** such as was seen supremely in Christ at His baptism & on the cross. (cf the witness of Israel and the Church)

THE PRIESTS COME UP 18

The final testimony was when the priests according to the Word of God came up from the River. The people had seen them go in and watched from the other side as they came out. They went right over to the Arabah-the desert beyond the flood basin. The people were now in the east extremity of Jericho. Joshua pitched the stones in a heap and declared them to be a testimony to **the powerful grasp of the hand of God** who was able to hold back the Jordan. After 40 years His power was still the very same. The ark was in their care-and so the presence and word of the Lord was the authority and centre of this whole act of religious initiation. Here the matter opens up to present day interpretation in that the whole beginning of the apostolic church centred here in the elements of baptism Spirit Gods voice & the Son of God seen as the lamb whom we with the first apostles are to follow. It was harvest-time-Jordan was in spate. The waters had been cut off northwards at Adam by Zarethan and water that ran towards the Dead Sea ebbed to an end so the people crossed opposite Jordan,

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

John the Baptist -whether he saw the stones or not was well aware that some of the stones must have been placed around about the place where he ministered. So the statement of Matthew 3.9 would not just be an acclamation of what God could do. It is prophetic of the foundation of the N.T. church which would be built by the Lamb on the testimony of the apostles and the work of the cross-supreme act of obedience that it is. Nothing less could serve by the working of the Holy Spirit to cleanse the heart and bring Fruit -the fruits of the Spirit in the life of believers.

JORDAN AND PRAEVIS-COFFIN 1676-1749

Charles Coffin wrote two advent preparation hymns-conscious as he was of the return of Christ and so he applied the theme to our hearts by way of preparing not only for the season but for the Lord's return!

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh
Awake and hearken for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings
Then cleansed be every breast from sin- make straight the way for God within
Prepare we in our hearts a home where such a mighty guest may come
For Thou art our salvation Lord our refuge & our great reward
Without Thy grace we waste away like flowers that wither & decay

CROSSING JORDAN

The notion is applied to death-and that is not far-fetched for we thus enter the tm "Promised land" which faith ever foresaw-but here at the Jordan passage the message of Holiness and Obedience and God's power by the gospel -the lamb-and the Spirit to call forth a people for Himself is the true theme of the book

THE COMPLIMENTARY WITNESS 4-7

What unifies the witness of the twelve men-the witness of Joshua and the witness of the High Priest and other priests? Is it not the death and resurrection of Christ? The priests who stood firm speak to us of Christ whose priesthood of person and work meant standing faithfully in face of all the judgment of God and preventing that it touch us. *This is a beautiful picture of His salvation*

The labours of the twelve who built a memorial altar in the midst of |Jordan at the command of the LORD and Joshua in the midst of the sea-along with the testimony of the priests-speaks of the labours of our dear Lord and Saviour who had this testimony placed at Bethabara-the baptismal site, Baptism itself speaks of "death to self" and points to Christ's "death on the cross" that act of atonement which the whole cascade of future history can never erase-and to which the whole history of Israel was preliminary shadowing.

The twelve men who brought the stones on their shoulders work under the orders of Joshua and bring testimony to the priesthood of Christ-his person & work-to the sons of Israel. Their witness prefigures the apostles -and the wider world referred to in Joshua 4.24

FOR EVER

THE REFERENCE TO THE STONES IS "AGE-LONG"

v.7 (Heb AD AOLAM).The reference to Israel living in godly fear is "for all the days" (Heb KAL HAYAMIM). Here is the ultimate significance of John the Baptist's remark- "God can raise up children to Abraham"-a witness more precious and far reaching than the glorious pile-and to a more Glorious fulfilment in the era of Grace through the atoning death of Christ. An era would pass-but "all the days" continues as Jesus said in Matthew 28.20 -a gospel that teaches of a kingdom and inheritance more enduring than Canaan itself.

CHAPTER 5

In this chapter the Captain of the Lords host speaks on three occasions to Joshua on the subjects of "the circumcision of sons"-on the reversal of the reproach of slaves "shut in by desert" Exodus 14.3 and on "salvation". In very great favour of the Lord touches Joshua in the 6th speech recorded from Joshua 5.14.

SONS OF ISRAEL CROSS JORDAN -CIRCUMCISION! 1-9

And it happened when the Kings on the west of Jordan heard their hearts melted.... The peoples to the west were stunned-even as far as the Mediterranean. The stopping of Jordan in flood was like the cracking of the Magino line. Notice "until we passed over" v.1 Joshua shows Gods care for every man and woman boy & girl who passed over in faith. Suddenly people far to the west who had no fear of the sea were

spiritless in face of the sons of a prince with God. Here were true sons of Israel-people learning to walk with God. Not since Peniel had God such an obedient people. The men of war who left Egypt died without circumcising their sons-because they were disobedient v6. This "brought to nothing" Gods land promise for them. They were less favoured than Moses-they would not even see it afar v6. The national circumcison marked Israel as sons of God' being a sign of obedience. In v7 circumcison is called AREL-'Heb-meaning impure. God seeks a people who know him (cf Israel) and an obedient & pure people. The second circumcison doubtless symbolic of a "pure heart"

And it happened (v.8) when they finished circumcising that they rested in the camp will they were whole...

SHUT IN NO MORE-PASSOVER 10-12

The Egyptians in Ex 14.3 were on record as saying "For mischief they were brought out -the wilderness has shut them in". This reproach was no more. They were slaves no more. God had maintained them for 40years in the desert and after Passover they ate Mazzah and roasted corn on 15 Nisan and on 16 Nisan there was no more Manna. The bible says "Manna had a sabbat" -clearly the reference being *-until Christ the bread from heaven*. Further it was a bumper crop and Israel ate of "what came out of the earth" that year. There is a distinct change over from "heavenly food" to "earthly crops." As in Deut6.11 it is very easy to forget God provides & keeps. Passover and manna and the prophesied "unplanted fields "speak of a Saviour who keeps

SALVATION BLESSING 13-15

And it happened (v.13) as Joshua stood over against Jericho that he looked and behold a man with a sword drawn in His hand...

The captain of salvation appears by Jericho. He observes the drawn sword which must signify the word of God. Joshua approaches and asks if He is for the "besieged" or "for us". The Lord answers "I am come as captain of the Lord's army. Joshua worships. Joshua now recognises this to be the Lord and says, "Why are you continually speaking to your servant?" or ""How much grace you show me in speaking often" or "To what end your speeches" "Take off your sandal" says the Lord "For the ground where you minister is consecrated." Ministry means worship, grace, and consecration, and prayer, gospel soldiering and using the sword of the Spirit. Salvation is an overwhelming privilege!

CHAPTER 6

The chapter records one of history's great events. It is an event still relevant to faith. The walls fell underneath right to the ground. The city did put up a fight-Joshua 24.11 but it was "netted", its inhabitants destroyed its treasures went to the Lord and Rahab's family were added to the camp of Israel

A FRAGRANT PLACE 1

Jericho is a very ancient city. It lay just over seven miles from Jordan and Josephus tells us Joshua pitched about one and a quarter miles from Jericho at Gilgal. The city may have derived its name from its balsam groves and sugar cane plantations. If it

was a fragrant place it was also a fortified place. Its great tower predates the pyramids by several thousand years. (Thompson) Its walls were 25 feet high in earliest times. Its doors were of iron and bars of brass (Gesenius) The walls in Joshua's day were of rammed earth. (Baedeker)

WORD OF GOD –THE LESSON-VICTORS MUST BE ACTIVE AND HOLY 1-7

God instructions were for a daily march around by the army-40,000 strong (4.13)- after them seven priests and then the ark of the Lord. At the heart of this demonstration was a coffin like ark-visualising the deepest mystery of faith and the death of the Messiah. The rule of Christ was typified by the rod; the incarnation of Christ by the manna and atoning death of Christ by the blood which covers the mercy seat. **The eleven references** to the ark are suggestive of a great victory but also of that greater and fuller victory of Christ at Calvary yet lies ahead-completed when He comes with the trumpet in the long war of the latter days

DAYS ONE TO SIX- THE LESSON-FAITH IS TO INCREASE

We read in Hebrews 11 that by faith the walls of Jericho fell down. The increase of Israel's faith is no light thing. What happened is Joshua shouted "Advance"(literally-"Be Hebrews)-the result of this was that day by day more men joined the ranks of those from the camp who circled the walls. Men who took courage were strengthened to march with the infantry for God had challenged all "men of war"v3 and Joshua called on those equipped for battle to go in front (v7)

THE LAST DAY-A LESSON ON “THE REARGUARD” 8-21

And it came to pass (v8) when Joshua spoke to the people that the seven priests bearing seven rams horns passed on and blew with the trumpets...

And it happened (15) on the 7th day that they rose at dawn and compassed the city seven times...

And it happened (16) at the seventh time Joshua said “Shout” for the LORD is giving you the city....

And it happened (20) when the people heard the trumpet and shouted the wall fell down ...

Israel rose at sunrise and Joshua commanded silence and devotion of the city's people & livestock to death, **its precious metals to God**, while Rahab and her family and maids were to be saved-because she received the messengers with peace and hid them. A shout of triumph was to be uttered when the priests blew the trumpets. So the walls sank downwards with all life in the city itself before it was burned. **We are told that ‘many were “added” to the rearguard’** to fight in that day v.13. This is a lesson on the involvement of the people of God in Christian Warfare.

THE SILVER AND DROSS 22-27

The lesson of silver and dross is that of remaining in fellowship with His people & keeping near the Lord. Silver lambs gold brass iron came out-but Rahab was brought out and rested with her elderly parents a mile away at the camp where they would have seen the smoke of Jericho ascend. In v25 we learn **she settled at the centre of**

Israel's (spiritual) life where she lived even when the story was written -after the death of Joshua's son. Like any evil the resurrection of Jericho was associated with a divine curse. Its memorial would be the deaths of firstborn and tender children. So the changed life must sacrifice past evil, live near to God and beware of backsliding and covetousness.

CHAPTER 7

THE MAN OF JUDAH WHO BROKE RANK AND SINNED 1

But the sons of Israel committed secret treachery in the prohibited or consecrated thing and Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah who belonged to the tribe of Judah took of the consecrated [*spoil*] and the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel.

JOSHUA'S SPIES REPORT ON TERRAIN AND ADVISE A SMALL STRIKE FORCE WHICH IS SUMMARILY DEFEATED 2-5

And Joshua sent men out with haste from Jericho to Ai which is near Beth-Aven-east of Bethel and told them saying "Go up and walk or reconnoitre the land and the men went up and explored towards Ai on foot. And they returned to Joshua and said to him "Do not let all the people go up but about two or three thousand go up and they will strike or knock out Ai. Do not let all the people weary *to get* there for they are few.

And about three thousand men of the people went up there and they hastened in flight before the soldiers of Ai. And the men of Ai stuck 36 of them dead and pursued them from in front of the gate to Shebarim and also smote them in the steep decline and the heart of the people melted and became as water. *The cheery jubilant heart of Israel after the fall of Jericho dissolved in weeping as they lamented the fatalities and being worsted before such a small force. Doubtless fresh well fed troops are superior to tired forces and the high ground stood in favour of those who prevailed-nevertheless it was an unexpected reversal and Joshua sought God since this defeat ran against the promise of victory from his Captain- "every place where the sole of your feet shall tread shall be yours to possess".*

JOSHUA GOES TO GOD 6-12

And Joshua tore his outer garment into rags and fell on his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD till evening. He and the elders of Israel threw dust on their heads. *Joshua appears like David to have entered the holy place and bowed low before the second veil. He did not undertake any ministry within the priestly prerogative but only that open at all times to all believers-the ministry of prayer. The beautiful name that Moses conferred on him-Jehoshua- suggests that he was set to occupy the role of Israel's "saviour" in warfare and like the heroic Moses he had his first training at the tent of the congregation. Salvation belongs to the LORD and Joshua was well aware of that. He and the elders knelt on the ground and threw dust or ashes backwards over their heads. And Joshua said "Ach-ah LORD God why have you caused this people to cross the Jordan to give them into the handoff the Amorites to cause our entire destruction?"*

“But on the matter of crossing we might have been content and lived on the other side of Jordan. O LORD what shall I say about myself after a time when Israel turned the back before the enemy?

The Canaanites and all those that dwell in the land shall hear and surround us and cause our name to be cut off from the earth

And what will You do about Your great name?

And the LORD said to Joshua “Arise and go-for what reason have you fallen on your face?

Israel has sinned

And they have also “crossed over” the covenant which I commanded them

And they have taken from the consecrated booty

And have stolen

And have disavowed

And set it among their possessions.

So the sons of Israel were not able to rise before their enemies but turned backwards before their enemies because they were associated with the “Harem” or put themselves under “Harem” curse. I will not continue to be with you if you do not lay waste the “accursed Harem” from your midst.

GOD COMMANDS SANCTIFICATION 13-15

Arise [*mq*], sanctify the people and say “Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow for thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘There is a Harem curse in your midst O Israel; you are not able to stand before your enemies until you cause the Harem curse to be taken from your midst. In the morning you shall bring yourselves near [*to me-the LORD*]by your tribes and it has to be thus-the tribe the LORD takes shall approach by family and the family the LORD selects by house and the house the LORD selects by soldiers. Then it has to be that the one who is taken with the Harem curse shall be burned by fire and with him all his possessions for he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD and because he has created disgrace and loss of strength [*l bn*] in Israel.’” *The LORD brought into association theft with dissimulation and weakness or loss of strength. The moral fibre of a family suffers when its head commits wilful sin. Today such acts are commonplace but because there is no national covenant with God or theocracy every man suffers for his own guilt and none suffers so severely because penalties have been softened though crime has multiplied in society. Nevertheless the association of weakness and deliberate sin remains a principle of morality.*

JOSHUA AND THE HIGH PRIEST ACT AS THE LORD DISCERNES THE HEART OF ACHAN AND THE SINNER CONFESSES FULLY 16-21

So Joshua rose from sleep without delay [*mkv*] in the morning and brought Israel near *the tent of meeting* and the tribe of Judah was selected *by lot* and he brought the *entire* family near and the family of Zarah was selected. He brought near the Zarites by its soldiers and Zabdi was selected. And he brought his household near by soldiers and Achan [*troubler*] the son of Carmi the son of Zabdi [*my gift*] the son of Zerah [*rising sun*] of the tribe of Judah [*praise*] was selected. *It is notable that this family chose glorious names until Achan was born and then this man was named “trouble”-a*

name that was to prove prophetic of trouble ahead. And Joshua said to Achan “My son please impute [mnc] glory to the LORD God of Israel and give Him confession or praise and explain to me what you have done-do not covered it up from me.” And Achan answered Joshua and said “The truth is I have sinned concerning the LORD God of Israel and like this and like this I have done for I saw among the spoil one beautiful SHINAR [Today’s Sanghar] and two hundred shekels of silver and one ingot [literally “a long tongue”] gold fifty shekels by silver weight and I was delighted and desired them and I took them and behold they are hidden as treasure in the earth in the midst of my tent and the silver is also under it.” This confession shows the universal nature of sin-springing as it does from desire and when desire is fulfilled it appropriates what is not its own. (cf James 1.15)The confession also brings to mind the very first sin-the “desire of Eve”. The sinister thing is that damning sin begins so simply. What Achan most regretted and taught the nation was “How simple it is to fall into sin”! Achan is also observing in the matter of the easily disposable silver that he first buried it and if a search was made they should not fail to go deeper and uncover it. The “depth” reflects the depth of sin and what later designs this man might have had for the use of his Harem booty. Written all over this incident is what one man’s sin can do to a family and nation. The pleas of Joshua should not be forgotten because “if we confess our sin He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Achan through confession did not lose his standing with God.

THE SEARCH AND THE PUNISHMENT 22-26

And with expedition Joshua sent men with a remit and they ran to the tent and behold the hidden treasure in the midst of the tent and the silver underneath it. And they took them from the midst of the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the sons of Israel and poured them out before the LORD. And Joshua took Achan son of Zerah and the silver and the beautiful garment and the ingot of gold and his sons and daughters and his oxen asses and sheep and his tent and all that belonged to him and all Israel was going with Joshua and they brought them up to the valley of Achor. [“Affliction”] And Joshua said “**Why should you have troubled us?** The LORD shall trouble you this day-and all Israel stoned him to death [mgr] with a stone so they cleared the stones and stoned them with stones and burned them with fire. And they raised over him a great circle of stones which is **there till this day**. And the LORD turned from the ardour of His wrath. For this reason the name of that place is called “the valley of trouble” **until this day**. *Despite extorting a confession from Achan Joshua chided him on his great callousness which resulted in the death of many Jewish soldiers. The valley Joshua spoke about was prominent above the plains of Jericho. George Adam Smith thought the valley was the Wadi Kelt-the Old Jericho Road which is most improbable. The preferred location is El Buqea –a valley of 4 miles long running from Wadi Qumran northwards.*

A NOTE ON THE ELDERS WHO SUCCEEDED JOSHUA CF 24.31

On the matter of the historical note “until this day” we cannot with certainty tell the exact decade or century but it may well be in the line of Salmon Boaz and then onward to David that we are to look for the provenance of narratives of Israel’s

earlier history. The alternative is that the spiritual records of the period passed through the family of Caleb who “wholly followed the LORD” and his younger brother Othniel upon whom the Spirit of the LORD fell. There does not seem to be another candidate with family stability through this period. These two “elders” between them would like Matthew and John have annals and anecdotal evidence for the whole period and the written records left by Joshua are most likely to have fallen into the hands either of Salmon-one of his godly soldiers-or Caleb his fellow spy and valiant veteran who would visit him and survived him to provide leadership into the future.

CHAPTER 8

THE LORD RE-ASSURES JOSHUA 1-2

And the LORD said to Joshua “Do not fear and do not be broken or terrified-take all the people of war with you and rise-go up to Ai. **See I am giving the king of Ai into your hand** –and his people-and his city-and his land. And you shall do to Ai and her king just as you did to Jericho and her king except that the booty and the beasts shall be your trophy. Set an ambush which you shall supervise from the rear or western side of the city.” [hjrj am]

JOSHUA ARRANGES THE ASSAULT 3-8

Thus Joshua arose and all the people of war to go up to Ai but Joshua chose 30,000 men-mighty warriors and sent them up like an arrow at night. And he commanded them “Behold you are to be ambushers to the city from behind it. Do not go very far from the city and you shall all be stationed there prepared for action [mk] And I and all the people that are with me will approach the city and what will then happen is that they will come out to meet us as before and we will flee before their faces. And they will come out after us until we make them draw away from the city for **they will say** “They are fleeing before our face as at first” and we will flee before them. *Joshua has been accused of an unworkable strategy but by any standards it was masterly plan combining as it did the element of surprise, a precise reading of enemy tactic, a feigned withdrawal and precisely timed assault behind enemy lines. Besides fighting a rearguard action with big numbers and for a very short time till the men of Ai spotted the rouge and turned tail only to be trapped ensured speedy resolution with minimal loss of infantry .So you shall rise and take possession of the city and **the LORD your God will give it into your hands** Joshua spoke to the people with the assurance that God had given him-it was a done deal-he realised the value of confidence-he sent them off with the thought of victory. And it will happen when you have captured the city that you will burn the city with fire according to the oracle of the LORD-see to it-I have given you command.*

THE SECOND DAY-JOSHUA POSITIONS THE TROOPS 9-13

Joshua sent them speeding away and they went to the ambush position and settled in between Bethel and Ai on the seaward western side of Ai. And Joshua stopped overnight in the centre of the main body of the people. And Joshua rose and visited reviewed and charged the people so he and the elders of Israel went up before the people to Ai. And all the army that was with him went up and positioned themselves and came before the city and lay low [hjj] North of Ai and a valley lay between them

and Ai. *Joshua placed this large army unit on the North in the Wadi el-Mutyah probably just under a ridge overlooking the city where the troops had possession of high ground and maximum visibility from the viewpoint of the Ai watchtowers.* And he took about five thousand men and positioned them as an ambush between Bethel and Ai westward of the city. And when he had positioned the troops of the whole army on the north of the city and his trap or rear army [*Literally “Jacob” – “heel” or supplanting group*] to the west of the city Joshua went in that very night into the middle of the valley.

AI REACTS AS PREDICTED 14-17

And it happened as the King of Ai saw this, the men of the city hastened and rose early and went out to engage Israel in battle. He and all his people went out to a point of assembly fronting the Arabah but he did not know there was a trap set for him to the west of the city. And Joshua and all Israel were meddled with and fled before their face in the **wilderness direction**. And all the people that were in the city were called to pursue after them so they pursued Joshua and were drawn from the city. And there was not a man remaining in the city of Ai or Bethel that did not go after Israel. So they forsook the city’s open gates to go after Israel.

THE TOTAL ROUT OF AI 18-24

And the LORD said to Joshua-“stretch out the spear in your hand toward the city and the ambush arose fast from their place and ran even as he stretched out his hand and captured it and were swift to set the city on fire. And the men of Ai turned their faces back and looked and beheld the smoke of the city went up and there was no power left to go this way or that-and the people that **fled to the wilderness** turned back upon those who chased them. And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush force had taken the city and that the smoke of the city billowed up they turned back and smote the men of Ai. Also the other force came out of the city to engage them and they were there for Israel-some fighting this way some that way and they smote them till there was none left that fled and was safe. And they took hold of the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua. And so it happened that Israel completed the slaughter of all the inhabitants of Ai in the field and in the wilderness into which they pursued them and when they had all fallen by the edge of the sword till they were consumed. And all Israel returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. *The King of Ai expired and the smoking city turned to ashes and rubble. So ends for 500 years the story of this city which was built before Abraham’s day-500 years prior to the conquest. The Canaanite royal seat had fallen-tough news for the trembling population of the land of ten nations.*

A SEVERE JUDGMENT FELL UPON CANAAN 25-29

And it happened that all the fallen that day –both men and women –were 12 thousand-all mighty ones of Ai. For Joshua did not return his hand from when he stretched out the spear till all that lived in Ai were devoted to destruction. It was just the cattle and the spoils of the city that Israel took for their trophy of war according to the LORD’S word which he commanded Joshua. And Joshua burned Ai and made it a Tel heap for a whole era-desolate till this day. And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree

till evening and as the sun was setting Joshua gave orders for his corpse to be taken down from the tree and they threw it at the open gate of Ai and raised over it a circle of stones that remains there until this day. *The merchant Canaanites of the 15th century BC were a maritime people who developed a chariot owning upper class along with a slave underclass. The inland Canaanites suffered a series of military defeats under Joshua. It is of interest that Procopius relates that in Numidia a Phoenician inscription reads “We are those who fled from the face of Joshua, the robber, the son of Naue.”(Kitto) So severe were the assaults of Joshua that Canaanites fled to East Africa.*

CHAPTER 9

And it happened *much as Joshua must have suspected* that all the kings which were across Jordan (westward) in mountain and plain and in all the coastland by the Great Sea even over against Lebanon-the Hittite and Amorite,, Canaanite and Perizzite, Hivite and Jebusite heard (about Israel and Jericho etc) they had gathered as one to make war with Joshua and with Israel with one consent. [Literally “one mouth”] And the residents of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai.

THE GIBEONITE TRICK

So these people worked an artifice and walked and they will have prepared a circuitous journey and would take old worn grain sacks on their asses and old torn and rebound leather bottles of wine. And they had old patched up sandals on their feet and wore old clothes and all their bread they had prepared was dry and spotted with mould.

THE ROUGE OF LONG DISTANCE TRAVEL

THE CLAIM THAT THEY HAD BECOME GODFEARERS

So they went to Joshua to the Gilgal camp and said to him and the men of Israel “We have come from a far country so make a covenant with us now. And the men of Israel said to the Hivites “Perhaps you live in our midst so how could we make a treaty with you?” And they said to Joshua “We are your servants.” And he said to them, “Who are you and from where have you come?” And they said to Joshua “Your servants have come from a land very far away because of the name of the LORD your God for we kept hearing of all He had done in Egypt. We heard of all He did to the two kings of the Amorites which were (formerly) on the other side of Jordan-Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan who was in Ashtaroth. So the elders and inhabitants of our land said “Take victuals in your hands for your journey and go to meet them and say to them ‘We are you servants, so now make a covenant with us.’”

STALE FOOD DID THE TRICK

This bread we prepared was hot from our homes on the day we set out to come to you-now look –it is dry and mouldy. And these bottles of wine which we filled when they were new –look- they are broken. Even these clothes and our sandals are worn out from the very great distance of our journey. And they received the men by reason of how their food looked and did not ask counsel at the mouth of the LORD. *We do*

well to pause and reflect on the sacred writer. In the first instance the blame is Joshua's and he knew very well he should have tested this claim before God. We would say so likewise in uncertain situations where the deceit of the world claims to have part with us.

OUR WORD OUR BOND

So Joshua made peace with them and cut a covenant with them that they should live and the princes of the congregation swore an oath to them. And it happened three days after they had made a covenant with them that they herd they lived among them and had their home in the neighbourhood. And the sons of Israel set out and came to their cities within three days and their cities were Gibeon, Cephirath and Beeroth and Kirjath-Jearim. And the sons of Israel did not attack them because the princes of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel and they would not have been able to touch them. We will do this –we will let them live so that there will be no provoking of God's wrath upon us because of what we swore to them. And the princes said to them "They shall live but they shall live as woodcutters and water carriers for the entire assembly in accordance with the order the princes gave them. *In view of this incident and the general danger of entrapment our LORD taught us to speak without oath. He said, "Let you yea be yea and your nay, nay." To go further opens up danger of evil and falling into the hands of Satan.*

THE GIBEONITE CONFESSION REVEALS THE KEY TRUTH OF THE BAN GOD HAD IMPOSED FROM OF OLD

But Joshua called for them and queried them legally saying "Why did you act fraudulently with us saying you were from a very distant land and now you dwell in our midst? For you are now accursed and shall not be separated from service as woodcutters and water-carriers for the house of my God." And they answered Joshua "Because what you God commanded Moses had been explained-it had really been explained to your servants-that He would give you all the land and **destroy all the inhabitants of the land before their faces** so we were very frightened for our lives as you faced us and so we did this thing. And now behold we are in you power. What you think is good and right –you do that to us. And this is what he did-he delivered them out of the power of the sons of Israel and they did not slay them. And Joshua offered them that day that they should be wood cutters and water carriers for the congregation and the altar of God until this day at the place where he should choose. *Joshua did something quite wonderful. He delivered the Gibeonites from their fate under the princes but applied the same servitude only making it binding during the course of his life only. Thus as a man after the heart of God-*

(1)Joshua answered the prayer of the Gibeonites

Joshua showed Grace

Joshua released future generations of these people from a curse their fathers undertook. It is a splendid forecast from the former prophets of our Joshua who seeks what is in our hearts and understands our wish to avoid judgment –and releases us from the curse granting us freedom.

CHAPTER 10

THE AMORITE CONFEDERACY 1-8

And it happened as Adoni-Bezek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and put it to the destructive “Harem” as he had done to Jericho and her king doing exactly the same to Ai and her king and that those who lived in Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were living among them and he was very fearful for Gibeon was a great city as the first city of the kingdom and because it was greater than Ai and all its men were warriors. And Adoni-Bezek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron and to Piram king of Yarmuth and to Yaphia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon saying “Come up and help me that we may attack Gibeon for they have made peace with Joshua and the sons of Israel. So the five kings of the Amorites gathered together- the kings of Jerusalem Hebron Yarmuth Lachish and Eglon and their entire armed host went up and pitched at Gibeon and made war against it. But the men of Gibeon sent swiftly to Joshua to the Gilgal camp saying “Do not let down your authority or relax your hold on your servants come up to us quickly and make your salvation ours... *[The sense is somewhat of a pun-meaning “Make yourself real to us as Joshua]... and help us for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the mountains are gathered before us. One day our glorious Messiah will make Himself real once more to His people in their extremity.*

NATURAL OR COSMIC COMPLIANCE WITH JOSHUA’S NEED 9-11

So Joshua went up from Gilgal –he and all the battle troops with him and all the mighty warriors. **And the LORD said to Joshua “Do not fear them for I have given them into your hand-not a man from among them shall stand before your face.**

And Joshua went up all that night from Gilgal and came on them suddenly. And the LORD was routing them before Israel and was smiting them with huge losses at Gibeon and they pursued them by the way that passes Beth Horon and continued to strike them from Azekah to Makkedah.

And it happened in their flight before Israel in their descent by Beth Horon that the LORD also caused great stones to come down upon them from heaven right till Azekah and the great numbers that were killed by the stones that hailed down were more than those that the sons of Israel slaughtered by the sword.

God reinforced His word by what may well have been a lethal meteor shower which destroyed the power of the Amorite kings.

THE DAY GOD FOUGHT FOR ISRAEL 12-14

There and Then Joshua spoke with the LORD **in the day** that the LORD delivered the Amorites before the face of the sons of Israel and he said in the sight of all Israel “Sun stand quiet or cease *[mmd]* and moon remain where you are to minister until my people is avenged of their enemy-is it not written in the book of Jasher. So the sun remained still in the centre of the heavens and did not press on or hasten *[xwa]* for an entire day. But there was not a day like this before it or after that when the LORD listened to the voice of a man for the LORD Himself fought for Israel. *As Joshua anticipates Christ the Saviour of Israel another day is to be expected when the*

Messiah discovers again to his people the power of His saving name and fights against her enemies in the Armageddon crisis.

ARMY INTACT –ENEMY ELIMINATED 15-22

And Joshua and all the people with him returned to the camp at Gilgal. *This statement is testimony to divine providence. Not a man died in the long day of battle. But these five kings fled and concealed them in an empty cave at Makkedah [a place of sheep folds or a cattle corral] and it was communicated to Joshua saying “The five kings have been discovered hiding in a cave at Makkedah! And Joshua said “Roll great stones round at the mouth of the cave and appoint men to keep watch over it. But you are not to stay there-pursue your enemies and smite the rearguard-you must not give them a chance to enter their cities for the LORD has given them into your hands.*

And it happened when Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished smiting them with an immense slaughter until they had done and the remainder of those who escaped of them went to the defensible cities. And the entire host returned to the Makkedah camp to Joshua in peace –**Not one sharpened his tongue** about a man of the sons of Israel. And Joshua said “Open the mouth of the cave and cause these five kings to be brought out to me from the cave. *There was not a man who directed a challenge to an Israeli soldier. Even the kings who were cooped up never uttered a word. The situation was exactly as the Gibeonites reported concerning Egypt-the Five Kings faced the wrath of God. This wholesale defeat mirrors the destruction of the northern armies in the Day of the Lord at Megiddo-a war that is pending in the century we have entered if not in the few decades ahead.*

FIVE KINGS SLAIN 23-26

And they did just that and caused these five kings to be brought to him from the cave-the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron (20miles south, the king of Yarmuth (15miles SW), the king of Lachish (30 miles SW) and the king of Eglon (35 miles SW).

And it happened when they brought out these kings to Joshua that he called every man of Israel and said to the commanders [*nyxq*] of the soldiers that went with him "set your feet on the back of the neck [*rawx*] of these kings" and they came near tentatively[*future imperfect*]and put their feet on their necks. But Joshua said to them "Fear not be not dismayed or terrified [*ttj*] for as here and now so the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you are warring. *Joshua saw the timorous nature of his generals and taught them to be confident as each placed his boot on the neck of powerful kings. And after preparing or standing them up Joshua struck them and they died and he hanged them [*hl t*] on five trees and they hung on the trees till evening. Joshua was not simply bloodthirsty-he was using the occasion which he may even have reserved when he thrust stones at the cave earlier-to teach all Israel a lesson in how God is faithful to his promises. He called "all Israel" as a token that **not one man** had lost his life in this great initial struggle. This second thrust deep thrust beyond the Judean ridge westward and south west in the Shephelah had been an unparalleled success-with nature and the very solar system conspiring against Israel's enemies. It is little wonder Joshua drew attention to the providence of God in this matter.*

MAKKEDAH FALLS THE SAME DAY 27

And it happened at the time of the going down of the sun that they should take them down from the trees and cast them into the cave where they had hidden and they placed great stones at the mouth of the cave -it remains strong **TILL THIS VERY DAY**. *The reference like that on the stones at Gilgal may have held good at least till the days of Samuel when the book of Judges was virtually complete. The book of Joshua must also have passed his scrutiny and been used in the school of the prophets-so these books though not ostensibly prophetic were studied by prophets. Joshua is sometimes taken along with the Torah but it may also enjoy a deserved place along with the "former prophets."*

LIKE DOMINOES 28-39

And within that day Joshua also took Makkedah and struck it with the sword-and its king and every living soul in it he put to the Ban (HAREM) and did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

And Joshua passed on and all Israel in company with him from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. The LORD also gave it and its king into the hand of Israel and he struck it and every soul within with the sword and there was no remnant in it that escaped and he did to its king what he did to the king of Jericho.

And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish and gathered his troops [*hij*] against it and made war against it. And the LORD gave Lachish into the hand of Israel and took it in the second day and struck dead every soul within as He had done to Libnah. *It is notable that this is not a reference to Joshua or Israel but the subject of this sentence is the LORD and "He" is the true "Captain" of the host. The writer-Joshua-is bringing us to appreciate that he sees the LORD as the one who reduces these cities in such short order to rubble and summary defeat.* Then Horam king of Gezer came up to reinforce Lachish but Joshua struck him and the host with him until no remnant of his escaped.

And Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon and he made war against it and fought against it-took it the second day and struck every soul within with the sword-on that day they were destroyed under ban according to all he did to Lachish.

And Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron and made war against it. And they took it and struck it and its king and all its cities and every soul within with the sword and there was no remnant within it that escaped as he did to Eglon and he put it and every soul within to the ban.

And Joshua and all Israel with him returned to Debir and fought against it. And he took it and its king and all its cities and they smote them with the sword and caused it to be destroyed under the ban as he did to Libnah and its king.

And Joshua smote the entire land-the mountainous country-the Negev-the low-lying Shephelah and stream-strewn hills and all their kings and there was no surviving remnant for all their souls were put to the ban as the LORD God of Israel commanded.

And Joshua struck from Kadesh Barnea (*70 miles due south of Gaza*) to Gaza and all the land of Goshen (*between Debir and Hebron -near Zanoah-a fertile valley*) and to

Gibeon ("*pertaining to a hill*"-the war ended at the southern scarp which runs for over 100 miles between the desert and the Dead Sea) The annals close so far as this campaign goes and include a wide isosceles triangle of land 100 miles at the base by 50 on the sides from the original Gibeon to Gaza on the coast and south to Kadesh The war memoir includes this southern strike of about 75 miles right to the river of Egypt. And all these kings and their land Joshua captured at one footstep [*m[p "step of the foot" or "strike of the anvil"]*] for the LORD God of Israel Himself fought for Israel. And Joshua returned and all Israel with him to the camp at Gilgal. God had promised Joshua (1.3) that everywhere his foot fell was his. He cares to recount that word "footstep" in this memoir.

NOTE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "THE BAN"

The utter destruction of cities from Jericho to Debir meant that there was no need for rear-guard action and there was no possibility of regrouping on the part of the Amorites. This set of victories was irreversible. It also meant that the culture of the Amorite was extinguished. This latter was unapologetically the purpose of God who gave the initial order. "HARAM" itself means "devoted"-it is a cognate of HEREM- the "net" of fish in a fisherman's "kill." Another cognate is HAREM- "devoted" women who were King's wives. In Malachi 4.6 we read "HARAM" as the final word of the O.T. It tells us that if Elijah were not sent to earth before the "dreadful shining day" of the LORD and the hearts of the young were turned back to the earlier dealings of God with their fathers and the fathers to the future of their children the future of the holy land could not be guaranteed but would end with destructive war. Again in Zechariah 14.11 God says there shall be no further "HARAM" after the Armageddon during the kingdom of Christ. Thus this manner in which God sent Joshua to deal with the iniquity of the Amorite does not end with Joshua-it heralds God's sending Elijah to save Israel from a future of ruin and it heralds God's sending Jesus as a guarantor of an aeon of unrivalled peace and prosperity at the end of the history of our globe.

CHAPTER 11

THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN SPARKED BY JABIN 1-5

And it happened as Jabin king of Hazor heard these reports that he sent post-haste to Jobab king of Madon and to the king of Shimron and the king of Achsaph and to the kings north of the mountains and on the Arabah of the Negev of Chinneroth, in the Shephelah and in the highland of Dor by the Sea. He sent to the Canaanite on the sunny east and the seaward west and to the Amorite Hittite Perizzite and Jebusite by the mountain and the Hivite under Hermon in the land of the watchtower or Mizpeh. So they went out and all the camp of their host-much people-even as the sand on the lip of the (Mediterranean) Sea for bulk and numerous horses and chariots. And when all these kings had assembled [*d[y]*] they went and set themselves in battle order unitedly at the waters of Merom to fight with Israel. *This grand northern alliance of nine or ten kings and 6 remaining groups of endemic peoples massed together on the high ground 20 miles north of Galilee on strategic high ground.*

ROUTED IN A DAY 6-9

And the LORD said to Joshua "Do not fear their appearance for tomorrow at this time I will deliver them all slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire. Then Joshua came against them and the entire warring host with him at the waters of Merom suddenly [mwt p] and fell upon them. And the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel and they struck them and they took flight to Great Zidon and westward to Mishrephoth-by the sea and to the valley of Mizpeh to the east and they struck them until there was no remaining survivor. And Joshua did to them as the LORD told him to do-continually tying up their horses and burning their chariots with fire.

HAZOR-THE CROWNING TRIUMPH 10-11

And Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor and slew her king with the sword-because Hazor was in earlier times the primary kingdom over all these kings. He slew every soul within with the sword-there was no one left who breathed and he burned Hazor with fire.

JOSHUA WAS UTTERLY FAITHFUL 12-20

So Joshua captured all the cities of these kings and all their kings and slew them with the edge of the sword devoting them to destruction as the LORD commanded Moses the servant of the LORD. A thin line of all the cities that remained standing with lofty walls [m/ t] Israel did not burn excepting Hazor alone which Joshua burned with fire. And all the spoil of these cities and their cattle the sons of Israel claimed as prey-excepting that they slew every man by the sword until they had totally destroyed them-not one remained with breathe. Exactly as the LORD commanded Moses His servant thus Moses commanded Joshua and he did exactly that-he neglected or turned away from nothing [r#s-"became apostate"] or no instruction that the LORD commanded Moses. *There was a chain of command which though traceable to Moses and God's command was executed by the explicit military instructions of the "captain of the LORD'S host."*(Deuteronomy 7.1-6)

EXTENT OF THE CONQUEST 16-18

And Joshua took all this land and the mountain country and the entire Negev and all the land of Goshen-the Shephelah -the Arabah and **the mountain of Israel and it's Shephelah**. From the mountain of Halak that rises up towards Seir in Edom to Baal Gad in the Bequa'a valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon and he took all their kings and smote them and killed them. *The writer sets down seven huge territorial tracks of which this mountain and its valley is the creme de la creme-Jerusalem the city God chose for himself-on whose mountains his name is written. He tells of exploits from the southern mountain belt of Seir to the Anti Lebanon range.* Over a multitude of days Joshua made war against all these kings.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE BAN 19-20

There was not a city which sought peace terms with the children of Israel with the exception of the Hivites who lived in Gibeon-they captured them all in battle. For it was from the LORD to harden their hearts to proclaim war with Israel in order that he

might cause them to be devoted to destruction in order that there might be no grace belonging to them or for them because they are for destruction as the LORD commanded Moses.

(1)It was from the LORD that the hardening of their hearts belonged. They had despised and turned from Him and He had given them over. This is elsewhere called the "fullness of the iniquity of the Amorite"

(2)They were "for war" with His people-and proclaimed war with the "prince with God"

(3)They therefore belonged to destruction and were to be given to destruction

(4)There was to be no favour-no grace that belonged to them. This concept of Grace to which no natural right exists but which is the right or blessing of those whom the LORD sets His love upon and who love God and open their hearts-who humble themselves before him-is vital.

Without grace destruction follows and that under the direct command of God-which we call judgment.

PEACE AND SECURITY 21-23

And Joshua went at that time and struck the Anakim from the mountainous strongholds from Hebron, Debir, Anab and all the hilly region of Judah and the hills of Israel. And Joshua destroyed them with their cities. There was no remainder of Anakim in the land of Israel only in Gaza Gath and Ashdod did they remain. And Joshua captured the entire land according to all that the LORD spoke to Moses and Joshua gave it as inheritance to Israel according to the lots that belonged to their tribes. And the land had quiet security and tranquillity from war. *We see in this final comment a foreshadowing of the time of Messiah-that latter day Joshua who shall free Israel from all insurgency and bring Jerusalem and the whole world the long awaited freedom from war that only Shiloh-the one to whom the peace belongs-can afford mankind.*

CHAPTER 12

The writer now sets down the entire roster of the rulers and their seats of power-all these 33 kings. A highly organised network of rulers was totally destroyed by the earlier campaign of Moses and the three-pronged campaign of Joshua,

SIHON ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK-EAST OF JORDAN 1-3

So these are the kings of the land whom the Sons of Israel slew and took possession of their land in Trans-Jordan-towards the sunrise from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon and all the eastern plain to the sunrise. Sihon king of the Amorites dwelt in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer on the banks of the River and the middle river boundary from the half of Gilead to the River Jabbok-the boundary limit of the sons of Ammon. Also from the Arabah plain to the sea of Chinnereth on the east and to the sea of the Arabah-the Salt Sea eastward -the route to Beth Jeshimon and from the south to the springs of Pishgah.

OG ON THE NORTHERN FLANK-EAST OF JORDAN 4-7

The boundary of Og king of Bashan from the remaining giants that lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei- he ruled over Mount Hermon and over Salcah and the whole of Bashan to the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites -also over half of Gilead-to the border of Sihon King of Heshbon. These Moses the servant of the LORD and the sons of Israel slew and Moses the LORD'S servant gave their inheritance to Reuben Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh.

THIRTY ONE WESTERN RULERS TOPPLED 7-24

These are the kings of the land which Joshua and the sons of Israel struck on (the other or) western side of Jordan from Baal-Gad in the valley of the Lebanon to the mountain range of Halak that rises to Seir and Joshua gave it to the tribes of Israel by lot. *It extended* through hills, through Shephelah, the Arabah, springs, wilderness and the southern Negeb of the Hittites, Amorites and Canaanites and Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusite 1-2 The king of Jericho one, the king of Ai which is on the flank of Bethel one

3-4 The king of Jerusalem one, the king of Hebron one

5-6 The king of Jarmuth one, the king of Lachish one

7-8 The king of Eglon one, the king of Gezer one

9-10 The king of Debir one, the king of Geder one

11-12 The king of Hormah one, the king of Arad one

13-14 The king of Libnah one, the king of Adullam one

15-16 The king of Makkedah one, the king of Bethel one

17-18 The king of Tappuah one, the king of Hopher one

19-20 The king of Aphek one, the king of Sharon, one

21-22 The king of Madon one, the king of Hazor one;

23-24 The king of Shimron-Meron one, the king of Achsaph one

25-26 The king of Taanach one, the king of Megiddo one

17-28 The king of Kedesh one, the king of Jokneam of Carmel one

29-30 The king of Dor one, the king of the nations of Gilgal one

30-31 The king of Tirzah one-all the kings thirty-one

CHAPTER 13

AN AGEING LEADER 1

And Joshua became old with the passage of days and the LORD said to him "Now you have become old and there is a very great deal of land to be possessed. This is the land that remains:

FIVE LARGE LAND AREAS STILL UNPOSSESSED 2-6

All the region of the Philistines

And all the Gashur area-from Sihor which faces Egypt to the border of Ekron northward-*still* belongs to the Canaanite-also land of five princes of the Philistines-the Gazathites, the Ashdodites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, the Echronites and the Avites.

From the south the whole land of the Canaanites and the Cave area belonging to the Sidonians right to Aphek-to the border zone of the Amorites-also the land of the

Gibelites and all Lebanon from the sunrise-from Baal Gad under Mount Hermon to where you enter Hamath.

THE WAR LONG SINCE ENDED-JOSHUA HAS UNCOMPLETED BUSINESS 7-12

I will drive out all the inhabitants of the mountains from the waters of Mishrehoph and all the Sidonians I will dispossess before the sons of Israel. **Be certain to divide it to Israel as their inheritance as I commanded you.** Now allot this land to the nine tribes and **the half tribe of Manasseh.** With him the Reubenites and Gadites have taken up their inheritance which Moses gave them on the other side of the Jordan eastward, in accordance with what Moses the LORD'S servant gave them. From Aroer which is on the banks of the River Arnon and the city that is in the midst of or surrounded by the river and all the level country from Medeba to Dibon. And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites who reigned in Heshbon to the border of the sons of Ammon, and Gilead and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites. He gave them the whole mountain of Hermon all Bashan to Salcah. The whole kingdom of Og of Bashan who ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei-who was the last remnant of what was left of the giants but Moses smote them and dispossessed them. *This is an acutely significant observation. These giants like the Nephilim before the flood represented a further Satanic encroachment on the divine plan for man and the conquest appears to have dealt a death blow to the deadly danger of a new encirclement of humanity. The gene-pool found its death knell through the ban which God directed to be imposed on the network of Amorite kingdoms in Canaan.*

TWO CANAANITE TRIBES RETAIN SOME HERITAGE 13

But the sons of Israel did not dispossess the Geshurites or Maachathites and Geshur and Maachah dwell right in the midst of Israel until this day. *If we are speaking about the times of Samuel who would have handled this literature these remnants of Canaanite tribes lived on for some centuries.*

THE LEVITES LIVE BY FAITH AND OFFERINGS 14

An exception is the tribe of Levi to whom he (Joshua) gave no inheritance-the burnt offerings of the LORD God of Israel are his inheritance as he said to them *In Numbers 18.20 we read "The LORD said to Aaron 'You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites.'" It is now a well understood fact that Levi's and Cohens during the closing days of the Gentile era have quite appreciable holdings among the Gentiles-not precluded by this statement concerning the Theocracy.* But Moses gave inheritance to the sons of the tribe of Reuben according to their family divisions.

PROVIDENCE OVERTHROWS THE BAALITE SYSTEM 15-20

And it is so that their border is from Aroer which is on the bank of the river Arnon and the city which is in the middle of that river and all the level plain to Medeba-Heshbon and all the cities that are in the plain. Debir and the high places of Baal and Beth Ball Meon *[the house and refuge of Baal-his last hide-out]* Then Jahzah,

Qedmoth and Mepaath. Then their border was to Kirjathaim and Sibmah and Zareth Shahar [*The rising of the morning star*] in the mountain of the valley. Joshua whose foot passed along by these borders may well have stood there one morning and taken in the breath-taking view. Then the border ran on to Beth-Peor and the Springs of Pisgah and Beth-Jeshimon. I stood on Pisgah in 1995 and looked toward Peor and surveyed the Jeshimon area "the house of destruction"-the Sodom plain. The writer of Joshua would have stood where Moses stood to survey the Jericho area-the view yields 180 degrees of landscape stretching into the far distances. Nowadays it is not possible to view Lebanon from the West-bank side-if it ever was. A Jordanian guide whom we met suggested Moses was miraculously lifted up in a "miracle of elevation". Maybe natural erosion has taken some hundreds of feet from the peak since those days-though it looks most unlikely. Moses could not cross the river by command of God so the wider view he desired may never have been seen till he stood with Jesus on Mount Hermon in N.T.times. (cf Deuteronomy 3 22-29 Whether from the north or taking a closer view in the south awesome thoughts arise in the mind of the onlooker.

MOSES DESTROYS THE AMORITE CORE OF POWER 21

The borders included all the cities of the plain and all the kingdoms of Sihon king of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon whom Moses slew with the princes of Midian - Evi, Reqem, Zur Hur and Reba who were anointed rulers (of Sihon)dwelling in the land. Sihon was such a monarch as could anoint other rulers as their ceremonial head so binding the rule of the Amorite states in a network of power that Moses initially destroyed-a vital first blow to the people of the land.

THE MENACING FALSE PROPHET BAAL DIED IN THIS LOT 22

And Balaam the son of Beor the man who practiced divining by cutting [*ssq*] the sons of Israel slew with the sword among their victims.

THE SPIRITUAL PROVIDENCE WITHIN REUBEN'S BORDERS 23

And it happened that the border of the Jordan and this border was the inheritance of the sons of Reuben and the cities and villages (cf 15-21) belonged to their families. *The territories of Baal became the land of Jacob's firstborn son. This is not a throw-away remark-it is a matter of great providence that God reserved these "bad lands" for the firstborn flag-bearer of the God of Jacob. Yahweh had shown Him strong. Not the god who demands his servants cut themselves and bleed but the God of covenant who bleeds for His servants is on the ascendant and this ancient providence foreshadows His final world rule.*

A FURTHER PROVIDENCE-GAD'S PENIEL TERRITORY 24-28

Moses also gave inheritance to Gad and the sons of Gad for their families. **And it is so** that their border was Jazer [*"may He help him"*] and all the cities of Gilead and half the land of the sons of Ammon to Aroer which looks toward Rabbah [*John Thompson suggested this town was Rubute of the Tell -El- Amarna letters but Aroer is modern Wadi Mojib on the north bank of the Arnon overlooking a deep gorge 30 miles south of Nebo or Pisgah.*] Their border was from Heshbon to Rammath Mizpeh and Betonim and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir. *This territory -25 miles*

north-south stretched from Mahanaim-where the host of Angels stood and Jacob anciently divided his retinue to Debir which I associate with the **Inner Sanctum of the oracle** at Peniel he received from the Angel of God though J.P.U.Lilley of Magdalen College Oxford interestingly suggests either Lodebar or Umm 10 miles south of Lake Chinnereth. Gad seems to have had inheritance stretching along a narrow corridor to the west of Manasseh's territory. The spiritual significance that the writer attaches in this case to the heritage is the visit of the LORD to Jacob the patriarch. Along with this went the valley of Beth-Aram and Beth Nimrah [the house of clear waters] and Succoth and Zaphron and the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon-the Jordan and its natural border limit to where it was cut off by the sea of Chinnereth across the Jordan to the east. This was the heritage of the sons of Gad for their families-their cities and villages.

MANASSEH'S HERITAGE-REACHES TO THE GALILEE OF JESUS 29-32

And Moses gave an inheritance to the half tribe of Manasseh and **it happened to be** for the half tribe of Manasseh and their families. *The area now set out though not exclusive of Gad's territories was according to Moses allotted as a settlement territory for Manasseh. It essentially runs far north to the mountain terrain north of Chinnereth east of Jordan. It is important to note that in Numbers 2 Dan's numbers are far superior -its men under arms totalling 157,600 as opposed to Manasseh's 32,200-Dan is 5 times the larger tribe and when Manasseh was divided in two Dan could be 10 times larger.*

Their border was from Mahanaim-all Bashan-all the kingdoms of Og and all the villages [*tʷj*] of Jair. ["*May He wake up*" or "*may He enlighten*"] that are in Bashan-sixty cities. Together with the half of Gilead and Ashtaroth and Edrei-cities of the kingdoms of Og in Bashan belonged to Machir the son of Manasseh-*actually* to one half of the sons of Machir and their families. These are what Moses gave as inheritance in the Arabah of Moab on the other side of Jordan east of Jericho.

YAHWEH-BEST HERITAGE OF ALL-BELONGS TO LEVI 33

But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no heritage-Yahweh the Strong God of Israel-He is their heritage-as he said to them. *To recap in Numbers 18.20 God Himself said to Aaron "You will have no heritage in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites" This is the choicest of futures-and with it the Levis and Cohens have survived and thrived till this very day. This for the Christian too is the inheritance of Faith-to know the LORD and His salvation and **the power** of the Resurrection of Christ.*

CHAPTER 14

EARLY MENTION OF JERUSALEM 1-5

So these territories are that which the sons of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan which Eliezer the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the chiefs of the fathers of their tribes caused the sons of Israel to take as their possession. Their heritage was given by lot according to the command of Yahweh by the hand of Moses for the nine tribes and the half tribe of Manasseh for Moses had given the heritage of the two

tribes and the half tribe on the other side of Jordan but he had not given any heritage to the Levites among them. *Joshua is signifying that the religious centre and the place of God's name was to be could already easily be surmised-it was as we now know to be Jerusalem.*

For **it is so** that the sons of Manasseh were two tribes-Manasseh and Ephraim and they gave no lot to the Levites in the land but only cities to inhabit with their pastures for their cattle and what they owned or bought. The sons of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses and divided the land by lot.

JUDAH AND CALEB APPROACH JOSHUA 6-11

Now the children of Judah approached Joshua [*vgn* -much as slaves would a taskmaster] in Gilgal and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said to him "You are familiar with the word which the LORD spoke to Moses on my account [*dw*] plus the pronominal suffix in each case-meaning "'surrounding" or because we will live on in Canaan] and on yours at Kadesh Barnea. I was a youth of forty years when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh on foot to spy out the land and I returned with a word according to what was in my heart and mind. My brothers who went up with me caused the heart of the people to "kindle like brushwood" or melt [*smh*] but I filled my heart with courage after the LORD my God-or fully followed or filled all my days in maturity after the LORD. *Caleb -whose name means "dog" is speaking with a pun-he says "I have been a faithful if unequal companion of the LORD at that time and since".* And Moses swore that day saying "Will not the land over which you walk be yours and your sons for ever for you have *been faithful* to follow the LORD your God. And now behold the LORD **has made it happen** according to that which He spoke forty five years ago when the LORD spoke this word to Moses and the children of Israel were walking in the desert and behold today I am a youth of eighty five years of age. Still today I am strong as when on the day Moses sent me out like an arrow-as was my power then so is my power now-for battle and for going out and coming in. *This speech of Caleb is renowned as the man is himself stalwart in faithfulness. He could be understood to say "I have not allowed space to develop between God and me" Like a dog at heel Caleb went where God went and followed the master.*

A MOUNTAIN FOR A BIRTHDAY PRESENT 12-15

But now (on my 85th birthday) give me this mountain-for you heard on that day the Anakim were there and the cities were great and walled "If or supposing the LORD is with me I will cause them to be driven out as the LORD promised. And Joshua blessed Caleb and gave Hebron to Caleb son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. On this account **HEBRON BELONGED TO CALEB SON OF JEPHUNNEH THE KENEZITE TILL TODAY** because he fully followed the LORD God of Israel. And the name of Hebron before the day of Joshua and Caleb was Kirjath Arba-he was a great man among the Anakim-so the land was tranquil and secure from war [*fqv*]

CHAPTER 15

In translating records of the cities and boundaries I have used the verb to be in the present indicative where the AV & NIV use the past tense in an attempt to revive the first hand writing of Joshua.

THE LAND AND SEA BORDERS OF JUDAH 1-12

And so it is and will be the lot of the sons of Judah for their families-to the border of Edom-the wilderness of Zin to the Negev was the southern limit.

And it is and will be so that their Negev border is from the limit or extremity of the salt sea and from the tongue of the sea that looks south or faces the Negev. And it went southwards to the rising ground of Acrabbim. [*Scorpions*] and passed Zin and rose on the south to Kadesh Barnea passing Hezron and rose to Adar and went right round Karkaa. And it passed Azmonah [*"strength"*] and came out at the River of Egypt and that border petered out at the Sea. This will be your southern limit. And the Eastern border is the Salt Sea to the end of the Jordan [*at the entrance to the Sea*] and the border at the northern quarter is from the tongue of the sea to the end *or entrance of Jordan at the Sea*. And the border ascends up Beth Hogla [*place of "partridge"- the "red-legged" partridge appeared in the Wadis of Naphtali in huge flocks until modern hunting techniques reduced the species.*] passing north of Bethabara and going up by the stone of Bohan the [*"stone of the thumb" -presumably its unique appearance-like a hitchhiker's thumb*] son of Reuben.

So the border rose to Debir from the valley of Achor and north facing Gilgal which is over against rising land belonging to Adummim [*"red rocks"*] on the south of the River and the border goes on to the waters of the fountain or pool of Shemesh whose outflow is at the fountain of Rogel [*"the fuller's fountain" where garments were trodden and washed*] The border went up the valley of Ben Hinnom [*the Hinnom valley*] **TO THE SIDE OR SHOULDER OR GATE OF THE HIGH PLACE** [*"Jebusi" means "temple" or "high place"*] **THAT IS JERUSALEM** and the border **WENT UP TO THE TOP OF THE HILL** which is over the face of the valley of Hinnom westward which is at the end of the valley of the Giants to the north. And **THE BORDER WAS MARKED OUT FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL** to the fount of the waters of Netophah [*"distillation"*] and goes to the cities of Ephron and the border was marked through the rising ground -that is Kirjath Jearim. And the border took itself round westward from Baalah to [Mount Seir. [*An unknown location in Judah*] *The welter of the geographical remarks speaks of the first-hand familiarity of the writer-who must have been Joshua. The reference to the city of Jerusalem and many similar notices of a later date suggest to me the hand of Samuel or like later person.*

The border passed on the shoulder of Mount Jearim -that to the north is Chesalon [*hope*] so it went down to Beth Shemesh and passed to Timnah [*allotment*] So the border continued to the side of Ekron and was drawn to Shicron [*drunkenness*] and passed to Mount Baalah and went out to Jabneel [*"may God cause him to be built up"*] **and so it happened** that the border reached the sea. So the Great Sea [*the Mediterranean*] was the western border. This is the border encircling the territory of the sons of Judah which belonged to their families.

CITY OF WRITTEN REVELATION RECOVERED 13-17

And to Caleb son of Jephunneh he gave an allotment in the middle of the sons of Judah at the command of the LORD to Joshua.-Kirjath Arba -the patriarchal seat of the father of the Anak that is Hebron. For Caleb dispossessed from thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshi Ahiman and Talmi, the offspring of Anak. **AND HE WENT UP FROM THERE TO THOSE WHO LIVED IN DEBIR AND THE NAME OF DEBIR BEFORE THEIR APPEARANCE WAS KIRIATH SEPPER.** *This statement draws attention to the fact an "oracle" existed at that location but testimony is given suggestive that the history ran further back to ancient written inscriptions or even a writer or book. Now writing passed from Iraq circa 2500BC and it may be that the account written by Joshua takes account of the fact that in this vicinity in high antiquity-might it be too much to think that in the in the time-the days of Shem the early records of man lodged here. The move of Abraham to Beersheba less than 15 miles to the south would then be significant and intelligible. The importance of the possession of this desert city would be of some moment.*

And Caleb said "To the man who strikes Kiriath Sepher and captures it I will give Acsah ["ankle-chain" or "tinkling ornament"] my daughter as his wife. And Othniel son of Kenaz the brother of Caleb captured it and he gave him Acsah his daughter in marriage. *Thus what had been prior to the Israelite invasion the power base of the Anakim at Debir and a settlement of Rephaim in the valley around Jerusalem -early Shemite territory intermediately overwhelmed by peoples practicing occult was now retrieved. Caleb was the man whose insight into the Spiritual Battle for Canaan lead the way from the first and finished off the task most remarkably.*

THE REQUEST OF ACSAH 17-19

And it is so that in her entering into his house and relationship with him that she instigated or "drove out" [t#s] of him to won a prayer or request from her father a field or track of land and she dismounted from her ass and Caleb said to her "What would you like for yourself?" And she answered "you have already given me a blessing because you have given me the land of the Negev so give me global or round pools [hlg] of water. And he gave her both high pools and low pools. *It would appear that Caleb was an expert in irrigation. We might wonder what he was doing all these 40 years-he was doubtless a man of acumen and so what we have here is not necessarily a simple transfer of his land to her but probably a construction of water systems to serve her land. Acsah had got the land through her husband's request but for herself she got pools which were the specialty of ladies of the period-warm bathing pools and reservoirs-or places of potable water and water for washing and irrigation. It must also be noted that Othniel in time became one of the judges-in fact the very first Judge of all Israel. His seat was of high significance. His family was of high renown. His capacity as a warrior was proven.*

JUDAH'S 29 UTMOST & SOUTHERN CITIES 20-32

This is the inheritance of the sons of Judah for their families. **And the cities on the border extremity** of the sons of Judah toward the border of Edom in the Negev or south were 1Kabziel and 2 Adar ["chief"] and 3Jagur; also 4Kinah and 5Dimonah

["languishing"] and 6 Adadah; and 7 **Kedesh and Hazor** and 8 Ithnan. 9 Ziph and 10 Telem, ["oppression"] 11 **Bealoth** ["mistresses"] and 12 **Hazor Haddatah** [Newcastle] and **Kerioth** and 13 **Hezron which is Hazor**. The word *Hezron* means "surrounded by a wall" so that *Hazor* which means "a village enclosure" would be the original state and at the time of the new built wall the old village still stood. 14 Amam ["mother"] and 15 Shema["famous"] and 16 **Moladah**["begetter"] and **Hazar-Gaddah** and 17 Heshmon and 18 **Beth-Palet and Hazar-Shual** and 19 Beersheba and 20 Biz-Jothjah ["contempt of Jah"], 21 **Baalath and Iim** ["heaps of ruins] and 22 Azem["strength"], and 23 Eltolad ["God's generation"]and 24 Chesil ["hope"]and 25 Hormah, and 26 Ziklag and Madmannah ["dung hill"]and Sansannah["palm branches"], and 27 Lebaoth and 28 Shilhim ["armed men"]and Ain ["spring"] and 29 Rimmon ["pomegranate"]: all **the cities and their "fenced villages"** are twenty nine. *No contemporary scholar not to speak of anyone in bygone days has distinguished from well over forty names which are the main cities and attendant villages-the above simply claims to be a step in that direction. It is virtually certain that the spies passed or surveyed some of these cities when they took their first soundings of the strength of Canaan.*

FOURTEEN CITIES OF THE VALLEY 33-36

When we read of "villages" in the text of Joshua we are not to think of sleepy hamlets but of villages as un-walled but protected instead by hedges or woven thorn fences. Protection against roaming animals and other nomadic people of the time remained important even when peace was secured.

In the Shephelah or plain of enquiry [an allusion to the area the spies checked out carefully] Judah had Zoreah, AshnahI, and Zanoah and Engannim, Tappuah [5 miles west of Hebron on a ridge along the modern road to the coast], Enam, Jarmuth and Adullam, Socoh and Azekah,, Sharaim and Adithaim and Gederah and Gederothaim: fourteen cities with their fenced hamlets.

SIXTEEN FURTHER CITES 37-41

Judah had Zenan and Hadashah and Migdalgad, and Dilean, and Mizpeh, and Jotheel. Judah also had Lachish and Bozkath and Eglon and Cabbon and Lahmam and Kithlish and Gederoth, Beth-Dagon and Naamah and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their fenced hamlets.

NINE MORE CITIES 42-44

Judah had Libnah and Ether and Ashan and Jiphtah and Ashnah and Nezib and Keilah and Achzib and Mareshah-nine cities and their fenced hamlets.

FOUR GREAT PHILISTINE CITIES 45-47

Judah had Ekron with her daughter or satellite towns and villages; Ekron and her west or seaside all that area down to near Ashdod and her villages; Ashdod with her daughter settlements and fenced hamlets. Gaza with her settlements and villages to the River of Egypt and the Great or Mediterranean Sea was her coast.

ELEVEN MOUNTAIN CITIES 48-51

And in the mountain terrain Judah had Shamir and Jattir [*"eminent"-the city lay 14 miles NE of Beersheba-20 west of Masada*] and Socoh and Dannah and Kirjath-Sannah [*city of palms*] which is **Debir**; and Anab [*2 miles west of Debir-both cities being high in the mountains from which the Wadi Khalil runs to Beersheba and the Wady Simsim to the Mediterranean*] and Eshtemoh [*"obedience"-8 miles across the ravine from Debir in the mountain range above the Salt Sea*] and Anim and Goshen and Holon [*"sandy"*] and Giloh; [*"exile"*] eleven cities with their fenced hamlets.

NINE FURTHER CITIES 52-54

Judah had Arab and Dumah and Eshean and Janim [*"Janos"*] and Beth-Tappuah and Aphekah and Humtah and **KIRJATH-ARBA WHICH IS HEBRON** and Zion; nine cities with their fenced hamlets.

TEN CITIES 55-57

Judah had Maon Carmel and Ziph and Juttah and Jezreel and Jokdeam and Zanoah, Cain, Gibeah and Timnah; ten cities with their fenced hamlets.

SIX CITIES 58-59

Judah had Halhul, Bethzur and Gedor and Maarath and Beth-Anoth and Eltekon; six cities and their enclosed hamlets.

TWO CITIES 60

Judah had Kirjath-Baal which is Kirjath-jearim [*"villages of the wood"*] and Rabbah; two cities with their enclosed hamlets

SIX WILDERNESS CITIES 61-62

In the desert wilderness Judah had Beth Arabah, Middin and Secacah and Nibshan and the city of Salt and Engedi; six cities together with their fenced hamlets.

THE ADAMANT JEBUSITES 63

But the sons of Judah who belong to Jerusalem were not able to drive out the Jebusite inhabitants of Jerusalem and the Jebusites live alongside the sons of Judah in Jerusalem till this day. *These people were Canaanites and their name originates in the word "threshing floor". Not until David's day did the city become thoroughly Jewish (see 2 Samuel 5.6-9) Even in David's day the "threshing floor" of the agricultural and mighty Canaanite core remained as represented by Araunah. His actions in 2 Samuel 24 18-24 show he is still a pagan but most respectful of Yahweh. Of all the Canaanite cities Jerusalem was most readily defended and as to why Joshua skirted it and left it untouched we have to speculate. My best guess is that its defences were erected by the Rephaim in the earliest times following Shem and that it was from then an imposing and highly defensible city formed around Mt Zion with the Kidron valley eastward, Hinnom southward, Cheesemakers westward and strong defences on the northern ridge where the land fell away between Moriah (where Abraham sacrificed Isaac) and the Hill of the Skull.(where Adam may have been*

buried)The intrinsic worth of the city and its nigh-impregnable walls did not detain Joshua. He did not have siege equipment and he worked to the LORD'S directions.

CHAPTER 16

THE INHERITANCE OF JOSEPH'S TRIBES 1-5

And the land allotted to the sons of Joseph went from the Jordan close to Jericho to the waters of Jericho on the east to the wilderness that rises from Jericho through to the mountain of Bethel. And it goes out from Bethel to Luz and passes to the borders of Archi [*"the one who lived long" or "Archite"*] of Ataroth [*"crowns" or "surrounding fortresses"*] So it goes down to the Sea to the border of the Japlati to the margins of Beth-Horon underneath or at a lower level and on to Gezer and the border directions out from that point reach the sea.

Thus the Sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim received their inheritance.

EPHRAIMITE CITIES-SUBURBIA 5-8

And it is and is to be the border of the sons of Ephraim for their families so the border of their inheritance **happened to be** from the eastern sunny side of Ateroth Adar [*"fortressed chief" (city)*] to Upper Beth-Horon. So the border went out west toward the sea at Michmethah on the north and the border circled eastward to Taanach Shiloh and passed it by eastward to Janohah. And it ran down from Janohah to Araroth and Naarath and stretched out to reach [*[gp]*] Jericho. and went on to the Jordan. From Tappuah the border went west to the River Kanah and **it is and will be so** that its outward direction finished at the sea. This is the inheritance of the sons of Ephraim for their families.

SUBURBIA 9-10

And the distinguished [*l db -suggesting a "suburbia" fit for a royal people used to the best in the days of Joseph*]or secluded cities of the Sons of Ephraim were in the middle of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh-all their cities and villages. But they did not dispossess the Canaanites that lived in Gezer-but the Canaanites dwell in the midst of Ephraim until this day and it happens that they serve under imposed tribute.

CHAPTER 17

THE NORTHERN FRONTIER FALLS TO A WARRIOR AND HIS BROTHERS 1-2

And it is and will be so that the border for the tribe of Manasseh -for he was the firstborn of Joseph-*that is the border* for **Machir** the firstborn son of Manasseh father of Gilead because he was a warrior Gilead and Bashan **is and will be** for him **And it is to be** for the remaining sons of Manasseh the possession of their families-for the sons of Abiezer, the sons of Helek, the sons of Asriel, the sons of Shechem, and for the sons of Shemida; -these sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph -for the male line and their families.

ZELOPHEHAD'S GIRLS GET THEIR PORTION 3-6

But for Zelophehad [*"first rupture" or "first-born"*] son of Hephher son of Gilead son of Machir Son of Manasseh there were no sons but only daughters and these are the names of his daughters-Mahlah [*"sickness "*] and Noah [*"rest"*], Hoglah [*"partridge"*], Milcah [*"Queen"*] and Tirzah [*"pleasant"*]. And they approached Eliezer the High Priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the princes saying "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers so he gave them an inheritance at the mouth of the LORD among the brothers *and partners* of their father. And ten lots fell to Manasseh apart from the land of Gilead and Bashan which lay on the other side of Jordan because the daughters of Manasseh received inheritance among his sons and the land of Gilead was allotted to the remaining sons of Manasseh.

MANASSEH INTERSPERSED WITH EPHRAIM AND INDIGENOUS CANAANITES 7-13

And it is so that the border of Manasseh is from Asher to Michmethah [*"that which is hidden"*] which is located facing Shechem and the border goes to the right of those who dwell by the well of Tappuah. *These places are reminiscent of Joseph's journey in search of his brothers and of the "place of hiding" and the Shepherd's well in that area.*

And it is so that the land of Tappuah [*"apple"*] belongs to Manasseh but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belongs to the sons of Ephraim. And the border goes down to the River Kanah and continues south of the river. These cities that belong to Ephraim are in the encircled by cities of Manasseh and the border of Manasseh goes north along the River's length to run out by the sea. To the south it belongs to Ephraim and to the north to Manasseh and the sea is his western limit. And the borders meet [*[gp]*] in Asher to the North and in Issachar to the East. **And it happens that** Manasseh had allotment in Issachar and in Asher-Beth Shean, Endor and her daughter towns-three beautiful regions. [*pmm*] But the sons of Manasseh were not able to dispossess the citizens of these countries and the Canaanites were willing [*/aj*] to remain at rest in this land.

And it is so because the sons of Israel became strong that they made the Canaanites pay tribute but did not thoroughly dispossess them.

EPHRAIMITE FAITH FLAGS-JOSHUA ENCOURAGES THEM 14-18

And the sons of Joseph spoke to Joshua saying "Why have you given me one single inheritance and one allotment and I am a large nation whom until the present the LORD has blessed." And Joshua said to them "If you are a great nation rise up and go to the wooded areas and continually create *room* and cut out space for yourself in the land of the Perizzites and the Giants because Mount Ephraim is restricting or too narrow for you." And the sons of Joseph said "the mountain will not offer sufficient for us and the chariot of iron is with all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley *between* that belongs to Beth-Shean and her daughters who belong to the valley of Jezreel" *Manasseh was instancing a sobering development-that the Canaanites were becoming warlike and could command the north from two interlocking valleys-moving across the country and travelling north and south at will.*

And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph and to Ephraim and to Manasseh saying "You are a great people and have great strength -you will not only have one lot. For the mountain will belong to you because there is a wood there and you will cut it and you shall grow and go forward and escape the danger [ax]/for you will dispossess the Canaanite **although he has the iron chariot** and although he is strong. *Joshua had in his later life come to believe that there was another way than war to weaken a military race-it was to grow in number and to work hard and to produce inventions and fortifications from the wood. The children of Israel increased and worked hard in Joseph's Egypt and like Joseph himself eventually proved too great a people for the indigenous Egyptians-this is the way Joshua advised the sons of Joseph to circumvent their political problem of the time. By reference 19.5 it is possible that Joshua already knew that Benjamin had perfected the art of Chariot construction in the south and was urging Ephraim to use the resources of the woods to do some construction work. Equally effective lighter chariots could soon offset the strength of the Canaanite whose heavy chariots would get bogged down and would not accelerate as quick or travel as fast..*

CHAPTER 18

SHILOH ENCAMPMENT-SEVEN TRIBES A-WANDERING 1-7

And the entire congregation of the sons of Israel assembled at Shiloh and caused the tent of the congregation to reside there and the land was subdued before their faces. And seven tribes remained among the sons of Israel that had not been allotted their inheritance. And Joshua said to the sons of Israel "Until I entreat you, you are slack to go to possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers gave you." Give me three men on your behalf from each tribe and I will send them and they shall rise they will; have gone through the land and they will write a description of the inheritance and come again to me. And they shall have it divided into seven parts. Judah shall stand over his boundary in the south and the house of Joseph will stand guard over his boundary in the north. You shall delineate the land in seven parts in writing and bring it to me and I will throw lots for you here(at Shiloh) before the LORD your God. *Here* because the Levites have no inheritance in your midst for the LORD is the heritage of the priests and Gad and Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh have taken up their inheritance which Moses the LORD'S servant gave them on the other side of Jordan eastward.

SEVEN SECTION MAP-MAKING SURVEY COMES BACK 8-9

So the men arose and went out and Joshua commanded those that went to describe the land saying "Go and when you have walked through the land write its description and return to me and here that I may cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land and they wrote a plan of its cities in seven separate allotments in a book and brought it to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh. *Joshua, himself of the tribe of Ephraim had already sorted his tribe though he remained in the camp which was all too large. He was very concerned that the tribes took up their options-and yet not till now was a mechanism set in place to enable an amicable settlement. Previous settlements were made by tribes staking claims across Jordan and the 1st, 3rd, 5th,*

7th and 11th brothers were settled or sorted in practice. Seven tribes needed chivvying up.

THE BOUNDARIES OF BENJAMIN 10-20

And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the face of the LORD and there Joshua apportioned the land to the sons of Israel for their families. And the lot of the sons of Benjamin with their families came up. And the border of their lot was between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph. So it was that their border as to its north district is from the Jordan and the border goes up to the north side of Jericho and rises westward into the mountain terrain and it extends out to the wilderness of Beth-Aven. From there the border passes to Luz-along the south side of Luz **which is now Bethel** and it goes down to Ataroth Adar over the hill which is on the south side of lower Beth-Horon. So the border drawn encircled the edge of the sea southwards from the hill that stands above facing Beth-Horon to the south and it extends to Keriath Baal-that is *now* **Keriath Jearim** a city of the sons of Judah. This is the western region. *Twice in this boundary record reference to the original boundary in the mapping script is qualified by a current name suggesting the time of the judges and indeed the days of Samuel.*

And the southern area is from the extremity of Kirjath Jearim and the border goes west and goes to the springs of the waters of Nephtoah. And *from there* the border drops down to the foot of the mountain which overlooks the valley of Ben Hinnom which is by the valley of the Giant Rephaim northwards and it runs down the Hinnom valley to the side of the Jebusites southwards and on downwards to the fountain of Rogel. It was also drawn northwards and went to Ein Shemesh and onwards to Geliloh which is straight opposite the rising ground to Adummim and descends to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. So the boundary passes along the shoulder northwards over the wilderness plain and descends to the Arabah. The border then passes by the side of Beth Haglah northwards and so the border extends to the northern edge of the Salt Sea at the end of the Jordan looking south. This is the southern border. So the Jordan is its border on the east side. This is the inheritance of the Sons of Benjamin right around- adequate for their families.

THE 26 CITIES OF BENJAMIN 21-28

And the cities of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin and for their families were **Jericho** and Beth Haglah and the valley of Keziz. Beth Arabah and Zemararim and **Bethel**; also Avim and Parah and Ophrah; also Kephaz Haamonai and Ophni and Gaba - twelve cities and their villages-were Benjamin's with Gibeon and **Ramah** and Beeroth. Also Mizpeh and Chephirah and Mozah and Rekem and Irpeel and Taralah and Zelah Eleph and **Jebusi which is now Jerusalem** Gibeah and Kirjath-fourteen cities and their villages-these are the heritage of the sons of Benjamin and their families. *We know from Samuel's circuit in 1 Samuel 7.16 that Bethel and Ramah were from earliest days important spiritual centres and from 2 Kings 2 3-7 that Jericho though unsettled as a city till the disobedience of Hiel of Bethel in the days of Ahab (1Kings 16.34) became a spiritual centre and one of two prophetic schools-the other being Bethel. The result is that the territory of Benjamin which tribe produced Israel's first king was an area where at various times spiritual revival flourished and*

where both Samuel and Elijah as prophets moved among disciples and virtually re-founded the nation's theocratic life.

CHAPTER 19

SIMEON'S DIVISION ABSORBS UNNEEDED LANDS ALLOTTED TO JUDAH-SEVENTEEN CITIES 1-9

And the second lot came out in favour of the tribe of the sons of Simeon and for their families **and it happens that their inheritance is** in the midst of the sons of Judah. *It would appear that already there were pockets of Benjamites settled prodigally amongst the sons of Judah and that this settlement was confirmed in a measure by the boundaries that are now drawn.* And it happens that they already had in their inheritance Beersheba and Sheba and Moladah [12 miles die east of Beersheba] and Hazar Shual (*the village of Prayer*) and Balah and Azem. Also Eltolad and Bethul and Hormah and Ziklag, Bethmarcaboth (*"house of chariots"-could it be that Benjamites were already building chariots?*) and Hazar Susah (*village of the mare-the proximity of a "stud" is important. Mares were valued as more easily trained and good working horses*). They also had Beth Lebaoth and Sharuhem; **thirteen cities with their fenced hamlets.** They also had Ain, Remmon, Ether and Ashan; **four cities with accompanying enclosed hamlets.** These together with all the fenced villages which encircle their cities to Baalath Beer, Ramoth of the south constitute the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon accounting for their family requirements. From the lot measured out to the sons of Judah came the inheritance of the sons of Simeon for the apportioned lot or division of the sons of Judah was great beyond their need and the sons of Simeon took up their inheritance in the midst of their (Judah's) heritage.

THE DIVISION OF ZEBULUN-TWELVE CITIES 10-16

And the third lot fell in favour of the sons of Zebulun to provide for their families and **the border of their inheritance is** to Sarid and their border went up towards the Sea (*of Galilee*) and Maralah meeting Dabbasheth and reaching to the torrent valley [1 j n] facing Jokneam. And it returns the other way from Sarid eastward into the sunrise above the border of Chisloth Tabor and goes on to Daberath and upward to Japhia. It passes eastward from there into the sunrise of Gittah Hopher, Ittah Qazin and extends to Rimmon Methoar to Neaah. And the border circles round it northward to Hannarhon and its full extension is to the valley of Jiph Thathel and Kattath and Nahalal and Shimron and Idalah and Bethlehem; **twelve cities with their fenced villages.** This is the inheritance of the sons of Zebulun tapered to their families-these cities and their fenced villages.

THE DIVISION OF ISSACHAR-SIXTEEN CITIES 17-23

And the fourth lot went to Issachar for the sons of Issachar and to provide for their families. **And the border is** in the direction of Jezreel and Chesulloth and Shunem; and Hapharim and Shion and Anaharath; and Rabbith and Kishion and Abez; and Remeth and Ein-Gannim and Ein Haddah and Beth-Pazzez. And the boundary reached Beth-Bor and Shahazimah and Beth-Shemesh and the full extent of the border was at the Jordan-**sixteen cities** with their fenced hamlets. This is the heritage

divided to the tribes of the sons of Issacher to suit their families-their cities and fenced villages.

THE DIVISION OF ASHER-TWENTY TWO CITIES 24-31

And the fifth lot came out in favour of the tribe of the sons of Asher in the interest of their families. And **the border is** Helkath and Hali and Beten [cities in the valley NNE of the Carmel ridge and Achshaph [*The name is similar to that of Achsah – Caleb’s daughter cf Joshua 15.16 but it means “bewitching” as opposed to “wearing tinkling chains” and it had a Canaanite king-cf 12.20*] and Alam-Melech [*“oak of the king” (of Achsaph?)*] and Amad and Misheal; and the boundary reached through Carmel towards the sea and Sihor Libnath. It turned eastward towards sunrise to Beth Dagon and extended through Zabulon and the valley of Jiphthah-El [*“The Lord opens up”*] northward to Beth-Emeq [*“house of the valley”*] and Neiel and goes out to Kabul [*“pledge of friendship”*] on the left. And Hebron (north) and Rehob and Hammon and Kanah right to Great Sidon. So the boundary bends round to Ramah [*a northern “high place”*] and to the fortress city of Tyre and the boundary turns *again* to Hosah and so it is at its final extent in the west at the seacoast by Achzib, Ummah, Aphek and Rehob; **twenty two cities** and their fenced villages.

THE DIVISION OF NAPHTALI 32-39

The sixth lot came out in favour of the sons of Naphtali to suit their growing families [*jpv*] and the boundary is from Heleph from Allon through Zaananim and Adami, Nekeb and Jabneel to Lakum and its extent is to Jordan. So the boundary turns westward to Aznoth Tabor and goes from there to Hukkokah and reaches through Zebulun to the south and touches Asher on the west and by Judah on Jordan to the sunrise. And the walled cities are Ziddim, Zur, Hammath, Rakkath and Chinneroth and Adamah and Ramah and Hazor, and Kedesh and Edrei and Ein Hazor, and Iron [*“fearing God”*] and Migdal-El, Harem [*“devoted” to ruin*] and Beth Aneth and Beth Shemesh; **nineteen cities with their fenced villages**. This is the inheritance divided to the sons of Naphtali for their growing families with their cities and fenced villages.

THE DIVISION OF DAN 40-48

So the seventh allotment came out in favour of the tribe of the sons of Dan. And the boundary of their inheritance is Zarah and Eshtaol and the City of Shemesh, and Shaalabim and Ajalon and Jethlah, and Elon and Thimnathah and Ekron, and Eltekeh and Gibbethon and Baalath, and Jehud and Bene-Berak and Gath-Rimmon and the Waters of Jarkon and Rakon **with the border cut off at Jaffa**. And the border of the sons of Dan was caused to extend or expand from them and the sons of Dan went up and made war with Leshem and took it and smote it with the edge of the sword and took possession of it and took up residence in it and called it LESHEM DAN [*“Jacinth Dan” – a gem of a city-namely “amber”*] by the name of Dan their father. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Dan for their family needs **with these cities** and their fenced villages. *No number is set on Dan’s cities for he extended his reach to fit the considerable expansion of the tribe. There are at least*

eighteen cities in this section-but the silence may indicate that Dan expanded in other directions too.

THE DIVISION OF JOSHUA-HIS PRAYER ANSWERED 49-51

Thus they completed the division of the land for their borders and the sons of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua son of Nun in their midst. At the mouth and command of the LORD they gave him the city for which he made request or “prayed” –Timnath Serah [*“a portion of the sun” or perhaps “a redundant or superfluous place allocated.” It may have been a city notable for Canaanite “worship of the sun”*] in the hill country of Ephraim and he built the city and dwelt in it. *It is notable that Joshua found value in what even his people counted a superfluous ruin. To Joshua it was an ideal location twenty miles inland from Joppa and equi-distant from Jerusalem Shechem in Manasseh and the Jordan river. It would have beautiful vistas toward the sea in the distance and upwards to the eastern mountain ridge and spine of Israel. Whatever its other attributes it was a prime location and sat on its own.* These are the inheritances which Eliezer the High Priest and Joshua son of Nun and the chiefs of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel allotted by casting lots in Shiloh before the faceoff the LORD at the door of the tent of the congregation. So they completed the division of the land.

CHAPTER 20

CITIES OF REFUGE 1-6

And the LORD spoke again to Joshua saying “Speak to the sons of Israel saying “give for your benefit cities of asylum or refuge which I spoke about to you by the hand of Moses that the manslayer who kills a soul in error or ignorance without being aware *or purposing it [ggv]* may flee there. So it shall be a place of escape for you from the one who avenges the blood of the dead. And the fugitive to any one of these cities shall stand at the *ever* open gate of the city and give his spoken account of his affair or actions to the acute audience of the elders of that city and they shall add him to the city along with themselves and give him a place and he shall dwell with them. And if the avenger of blood follows after him they shall not deliver up the manslayer into his power for it was through no plan or foresight of his [*t[d]*]that he struck his friend or companion and he bore him no animosity **the day before yesterday** or ever before. And he shall dwell in the city till he stands before the congregation to be judged until the death of the high priest who is alive in those days. Then the manslayer shall return and go back to his own city and his own home and to the city from which he ran away.

SIX CITIES IN PRIME LOCATIONS AND OF EASY ACCESS AND OPEN GATES ON THE EAST AND SIX WEST OF JORDAN 7-9

So they set apart or sanctified Kadesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali and Shechem in Mount Ephraim and Kirjath Arba which is Hebron in Mount Judah. *It is fascinating that the first place of refuge was in Galilee. It was to be there that Christ brought forgiveness and hope to so many at a later time. It was of course there also that many Gentiles lived among the people-and they too had rights under this enlightened*

*legislation coming from God. The tribes of Joshua and of Caleb led the way in next setting apart two cities within their boundaries. And across Jordan east of Jericho they gave Bezer in wilderness on the level plain from the tribe of Reuben and Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh. These were the cities of appointed **shelter** [hd[mm]] for all the sons of Israel and for the stranger who sojourned among them-that every one who struck anyone to death unawares so that he should not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stand before the assembly.*

God's word through Joshua to the priests was to "Do a Noah stand as victors" in the swelling Jordan. At the time of the deluge Noah sent out his dove and raven. The spies had just returned and the equivalent to the olive leaf plucked off we might characterise as the hope of Rahab mixed with faith.

God was instructing in terms of JUDGMENT and Genesis 7 was so appropriate for the Nephilim giants and grossly immoral Amorites were to be judged and God's people of covenant like Noah were to re-people the land

Joshua's word to the people "Come near"- i.e. near to the tabernacle or place of the tabernacle. Here is a mighty proof of the destruction of the 7 races by the God of Covenant -whose lifted ark is referred to 7 times. Joshua continued speaking of the Canaanites-who were to be "humbled" and "folded as straw"; the Hittite "terrorists" who were to be "broken"; the Perizzites like "breaching torrents" were to be to be breached; the Girgashites "swept away" were indeed to be swept before the Lord; the Amorites "tall as palms" were to be cut down and the Jebusites "dried up ones" whose capital was ripe for Judgment were to wither before Israel. The proof of the fall of these nations was twofold -the "cutting off of the waters above" and the "melting of the waters below". This was what Joshua promised -trusting in the Lord's own word

THE ACT OF GOD IN RESPONSE TO SIMPLE FAITH 9-17

And it happened when the people struck camp to cross Jordan...

The people moved taking their tents down in faith. (According to Judges 7.8 & 20.19 etc tents were used in war though they took over splendid houses in battle Deut. 6.11) The priests stood with the waters lapping their ankles in faith (far from the river course-because of flooding (3.15) and a great wonder took place. David in Psalm 33.7 speaks of the waters as piled up like stones (Heb KONES) or hay piling up in granaries. In 3.16 we read of the waters standing (Heb YAAMEDU) like "conquerors" "united and uniquely"

(Heb EHAD). On the other side of the ark the waters melted. The miracle was so very great that the waters stretched to Adam-30 miles or so northwards. From 4.18 it appears the waters had turned away backwards as they heaped up-backing up far north-whilest forming a wall where the priests stood. This was a token of divine support and an earnest of future victories.

NOTE: God loves to honour the exercise of faith. "Faith mighty faith the promise sees and trusts in God alone-laughs at impossibilities and says "It shall be done"

CHAPTER 21

THE APPEAL TO A STATUTE ON ANIMAL PASTURE LAND1-2

This appeal makes the case based on God's statute and enforces the claim by appealing to five examples of such gift being made-including one to Joshua himself.

Then the heads of the fathers of the Levites approached Eliezer the Priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the Sons of Israel. And they spoke with them in Shiloh in the land of Canaan saying **"THE LORD COMMANDED BY THE HAND OF MOSES TO GIVE US CITIES TO REST IN AND PASTURE LANDS OR GARDENS ATTACHED FOR OUR ANIMALS."**

THE CASE OF THE KOHATHITES 3-5

But the sons of Israel gave the Levites their inheritance at the bidding of the LORD such cities as there with their surrounding land. And that lot came out in favour of the families of the **Kohathites** and it is the same for the sons of Aaron the Priest who were of the Levites. *They had* from the tribe of Judah Simeon and Benjamin thirteen such cities by lot. And for the remaining the sons of Kohath from the families of the tribe of Ephraim and the tribe of Dan and from the half tribe of Manasseh by lot **ten** cities were allotted.

THE CASE OF THE GERSHONITES 6

And to the sons of **Gershon** from the families of the tribes of Issachar and Asher and from the tribe of Naphtali and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan and Golan **thirteen** cities were set apart.

THE CASE OF THE MERARITES 7

For the sons of **Merari** from the families of the tribe of **Reuben** and of **Gad** and Zebulun twelve cities were allotted. Thus the sons of Israel gave these cities by lot to the Levites with their surrounding land as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses. And they gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and Simeon these cities which will *now* be named. And they belong to the sons of Aaron of the Kohathite family from the sons of Levi for that was the first lot. And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak which is now the city of Hebron in the mountain of Judah and the pasture land surrounding it.

A FURTHER EXAMPLE-CALEB'S ALLOTMENT 12

And the fields of the city and the fenced villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for him to hold in possession.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE-AARON'S ALLOTMENT 13-19

And to Aaron the priest they gave the city of refuge for the manslayer-Hebron and her pastureland and Libnah and her pastureland-and Jattir with her pasture and Eshtemoa with her pastures and Holon and her pastures and Diber and her pastures. *They also gave* Ain [*"Ashan" of 1 Chronicles 6.59*] and her pastures and Juttah and her pastures and Beth-Shemesh and her pastures; **nine** cities from these two tribes. (*Reuben and Gad*) And from the tribe of **Benjamin** *they gave* Gibeon and her pastures and Geba and her pastures and Anathoth and her pastures and Almon and her pastures; four cities of *Benjamin*. All the cities of the sons of Aaron the Priest were **thirteen** cities and their surrounding pastures.

THE KOHATHITE CITIES 20-26

And for the families of the sons of Kohath –the **remaining and increasing** Levites of the sons of Kohath there were also cities allotted from the tribe of **Ephraim**. They gave them Shechem and her pasturelands the city of refuge in the hill of Ephraim and Gezer and her pastures. They also gave Kibzaim with her pastures and Beth-Horon with her pastures; **four cities**. And from the tribe of **Dan** Eltekeh with her pastures and Gibbethon with her surrounding pastures, Aijalon with her pastures and Gath-Rimmon with her pastures; **four cities**. And from the half tribe of Manasseh *they gave* Tanach with her pastures and Gath-Rimmon with her pastures; **two cities**. All ten cities and their pastures are for the remaining families of the sons of Kohath. *These “remaining” families are also to be considered “excellent” and “abundant”; there were a very considerable number of priestly persons among the new inhabitants of the land.*

THE GERSHONITE CITIES 27-33

And to the sons of Gershon from among the families of the Levites from the half tribe of Manasseh *they gave* Golan in Bashan-the city of refuge and her pastures and Beesh-Terah with her pastures-**two** cities. And from the tribe of **Issachar** *they gave* Kishon and her pastures and Daberah and her pastures; Jarmuth with her pastures and Ein Gannim with her pastures; **four** cities. And from the tribe of **Asher** Mishal and her pastures with Abdon and her pastures; Helkath and her pastures and Rehob and her pastures; **four** cities. And from the tribe of **Naphtali** *they gave* Kadesh in Galilee with her pastures as a refuge for the manslayer and Hamoth Dor and her pastures and Kartan her pastures; **three** cities. All the cities of the Gershonites for *the settlement* of their families were thirteen cities with their pasturelands.

THE MERARITE CITIES 34-40

And for the growing Levite families of the sons of Merari out of the tribe of **Zabulun** Joknean with her pastures, Kartah with her pastures, Dimnah with her pastures, Nahalal with her pastures; **four** cities. And out of the tribe of **Reuben** Bezer with her pastures, Jahazah with her pastures, Kedemoth with her pastures and Mephaath with her pastures; **four** cities. And from the tribe of Gad *were given* Ramoth-in-Gilead-refuge of the manslayer and Mahanaim with her pastures; Heshbon and her pastures, Jazer with her pastures; **four** cities in all. All the cities that belonged to the sons of Merari for their families-*those* growing families of the Levites were **twelve** cities by lot.

FORTY EIGHT LEVITE CITIES 41

All the cities of the Levites in the holding of the sons of Israel were forty eight cities and their pasturelands. These cities taken city by city were provided with pasturelands-all these cities were thus. *Thus the petition of the Levites was answered by the substantial gift of 48 land sectors –wholly adequate for the sustenance of their growing families.*

THE LORD’S PROPHETIC WORD WAS FULFILLED 43-45

And the LORD gave Israel all the land He swore to their fathers to give them and they came into possession of it and dwelt in it. And the LORD gave them rest from round about in line with what He sword to their fathers and not one man remained as an adversary from all their enemies and the LORD gave all their enemies into their hand.

Not a word of promise failed from the entire good promise which the LORD promised the house of Israel. The whole has come about-or come to pass. [ab lkh] *This observation is without doubt the comment of Joshua though it could have been echoed in the time of David and much later in the time of Hezekiah.*

CHAPTER 22

SOLDIERS OF THE TWO AND A HALF TRIBES ENCOURAGES AND DESPACHED 1-5

At that time Joshua called the Reubenites, Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh. And he said to them “You have guarded all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you and have obeyed His voice concerning all that I commanded you. You have not forsaken this man over an immense number of days till this very day and you have been vigilant to watch the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers as He promised to them and now “about turn all of you” and go as you please to your tents to the land you hold in possession which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of Jordan. Only be very watchful to obey the commandment and the Torah which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you **to love** the LORD your God and **to walk** in his ways and **to guard** His commandments and **to adhere** to Him and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul. *This exhortation of Joshua was bathed in spirituality. The Commander under his great Captain of Salvation desired in these brave soldiers a like faithfulness to God as to him. The Hebrew for “cleave” or “adhere” is qbd which signifies “to be soldered to” or “to be damasked into” or “to be united” like marquetry.*

WESTERN MANASSEH SHARES WAR TROPHY WITH THE EASTERN BROTHERS 6-

So Joshua blessed them and sent them away and they went to their tents. But to the half tribe of Manasseh Moses had given his half in Bashan but Joshua gave *allotment* among their brothers on the opposite western side of Jordan and when he sent them to their tents he also blessed them and said “Return with much treasure [skn] to your tents and very many cattle and gold and silver and brass and very many garments; divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers. So the sons of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned and left the children of Israel –they left Shiloh which is in Canaan to go to the land of Gilead to the land of their possession of which they took possession at the word of the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

A RELIGIOUS GESTURE MISINTERPRETED 10-12

So they came to the round stones of the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan the sons of Reuben Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar at the Jordan-a great altar to look at. And the sons of Israel heard about it saying “Behold the sons of Reuben Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built that altar over against the land of Canaan at the stones of Jordan at the passing spot of the sons of Israel.” And when the sons of Israel heard of it the whole congregation of the sons of Israel gathered at Shiloh to go up against them for battle.

AMBASSADORS LEVEL AN UNJUST ACCUSATION 13-16

And the sons of Israel sent Phineas the son of Eliezer the high priest to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half tribe of Manasseh to the land of Gilead. And there were ten princes with him; each prince the one prince of the house of his father belonging to each tribe of Israel and the chief man of the house of their fathers of the thousands of Israel.

And they came to the sons of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh to the land of Gilead and spoke with them saying “Thus the whole congregation of the Lord says “What treachery or sin against God [l [m] is this that you have put up against the God of Israel to turn this day from following the LORD by building for yourselves an altar that you might rebel this day against the LORD?”

TWO PARALLELS UNSUITABLY INVOKED-PEOR & ACHAN 17-20

Is the iniquity of Peor diminished as far as we are concerned for we are not clear and clean from it till this day and there was a plague that struck through the congregation of the LORD? And now do you have to turn from following the LORD and it will follow tomorrow because you revolt or in contumacy against the LORD that He will be provoked to anger against the entire congregation of Israel.

But certainly if the land you possess is contaminated you should pass over to us to hold the land where the LORD dwells for your own and take possession in our midst and not rebel against the LORD and us in building an altar out of separation from the altar of the LORD our God. Didn't Achan the son of Zerah act in treacherous perversity in the banned *trophy* and there was wrath provoked on the entire congregation for his iniquity-it did not touch that one man alone.

THE DEFENCE OF THE TWO AND A HALF TRIBES 21-29

And the sons of Reuben Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered saying to the chiefs of the thousands of Israel “Yahweh is God of Gods; Yahweh is God of Gods-he is knows (present indicative) everything and he must or should know (future indicative) Israel if it is rebellion [drm] or faithless treachery [l [m] against the LORD you will not be able to save us today. *The thorough-going theology of the eastern tribes was put in the light of the presentation of Phineas. They reasoned that if indeed they had gone the way of Peor or Achan the interposition of Phineas and his idea of re-location could not pull back the situation from doom and divine wrath. The tribes do not bring on themselves a curse as the AV tends to suggest but rather they state a hypothetical dilemma which mercifully is not theirs.* To build an altar for ourselves to turn from the LORD and whether it is to rise up against Him or to make a bloodless offering to Him-a peace offering the LORD Himself will search *into that*. And whether it is not form concern that we did this thing saying “*At some future* tomorrow your sons will talk to our sons and tell them “What have you to do with the God of Israel? For Yahweh has provided Jordan as a border between us and you sons of Reuben and sons of Gad; you have no part with Yahweh; so your sons shall made our sons simply Sabbath and no longer fear the LORD.” So we said to ourselves “Please let us do something for ourselves in building the altar not for offering and not for sacrifice. But that it might be a testimony between our sons and your sons and our generations after us to continue doing the service of the LORD before His face with our burnt offerings sacrifices and peace offerings so that your sons will not say

in some tomorrow to our sons “You have no part in the LORD” *Effectively they were setting up a symbolic public witness to their faith in Yahweh of Israel who is worshipped in Shiloh.* So it shall be that when they speak to us and our generations in any tomorrow we will say “Just look at the character of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made not for offering or burnt offering-for this is a witness between our sons and your sons. *The development of their argument disposed of the criticism levelled against them. They knew very well they could not substitute another tabernacle and they were aware that the natural separation of the tribes could make for indifference and suspicion. The plain altar of stones on which it would be evident blood was never spilt would show the link with Abram who built a field stone altar.*

Far be it from us-it would be profane [! !] to revolt against Yahweh and to turn today from following Yahweh to build an altar to make approach offering, for bloodless offering and for the slaughter of animals separate from the altar of Yahweh our God which stands before the face of His dwelling place. *The final statement of faith in Yahweh and His dwelling place between the cherubim confirmed the good faith of the tribes across Jordan. They knew that the “Presence of God” among His people was made real by the ark and that it was their duty to appear before Him there.*

THE REPORT OF PHINEAS AND THE PRINCES 30-34

Thus Phineas the priest and the chiefs of the congregation and the heads of the thousands of Israel heard with what words the sons of Reuben Gad and Manasseh spoke with them and it was good in their eyes. And Phineas the son of Eliezer said to the sons of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh “Today we know that the LORD is among us for you have not lifted yourselves up in this treacherous perversity **of that time**[za] against the LORD-you have caused the sons of Israel to be delivered *from such thing.*

*Phineas was publicly stating that the act was one of safeguarding-not one of perversity and rebellion-and it had nothing to do with the earlier acts of Peor and Achan-it was positively good. It demonstrated how precious the LORD was to Reuben Gad and Manasseh. It certainly was no **causa Belli** –no pretext for war.*

And Phineas the son of Eliezer the priest and the princes returned from the sons of Reuben and Gad; from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan to the sons of Israel and brought them the declaration. And the declaration was good in the eyes of the sons of Israel blessed God and did not speak of going up against them for war to destroy the land where the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad were living. So the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad gave the altar a name for it is a **witness** between us that the LORD is God. [myhl ah]*The final comment is that of the writer who acknowledges along with the original builders and the delegation that his altar continues to witness to Yahweh in Gilead.*

CHAPTER 23

JOSHUA ON GOD AND ISRAEL’S FUTURE 1-16

And there was along period of time afterward when the LORD had given Israel rest from all their encircling enemies and Joshua became an old man through those days. And Joshua called for all Israel and for their elders and chiefs and judges and the recording magistrates and said to them I have grown old and am coming into my *final* days and you have seen what the LORD has done to all these nations before your faces; for the LORD your God himself went to war on your behalf.

- (1) Look into the future plan [*har* “look” with a prophetic eye]-I have caused these nations that remain to “fall” before you in an inheritance for your tribes from the Jordan.
- (2) And look at all the nations that I caused to be cut off from the going down of the sun to the western sea. *Such look at Joshua sought was a look of faith that saw the absence of present threat and the thoroughness of past victory-but he was not such a man as to rest on his laurels. Vigilance is the price of peace. He is not saying “It ended there!” He is saying “Keep subduing”. It is even so with Satan and sin-we may like Paul shortly see Satan trodden down but sin has a nasty habit of awakening.*
- (3) And *look* the LORD your God He shall push them before you and cause them to be dispossessed and move from your presence and you will possess their land as the LORD your God promised you. So you be very strong to observe and to do all that is written in the book of the Torah of Moses-not turning from it to the right or to the left. Do this so that you do not go among those nations that remain with you and you must **neither recall their gods by name nor swear by them nor serve them nor worship them. But rather stick close to the LORD your God as you are doing till this very day.**
Joshua was a good leader. He gave encouragement where encouragement was due. He commended the cementing of the bond between the LORD and His people-so plain to be seen in the foregoing declaration.
- (4) *Look* for the LORD has dispossessed before you great and strong nations and as for yourselves no man has remained standing before your faces until this day.
- (5) One man of you will chase a thousand for the LORD your God He makes war on your behalf as He promised you. **Watch your souls very much in the area of your souls or lives to love the LORD your God.** *Joshua is going back to the inception of the conquest and the appearance of the Captain of salvation and in the light of what He expects we are to be supremely careful of our souls-our love for Him is to be a predominant consideration of everyone-and in our era of every Christian. For if you turn back with determination [“turning you finally turn”]and bind yourselves to the remnant of these nations and have been in mutual affinity of marriage[*nth*] with them and go in to them and they to you then know very definitely [“knowing get to know”] that the LORD your God will not continue to dispossess the Gentiles and they will be to you(a) a spread net and (b) a fowler’s snare or gin and (c)a whip of calamity on your sides and (d)thorns in your eyes until (e)you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you. *This message is unashamedly prophetic and it insists that in failing of loving likeness to the LORD and cementing affinities of a wicked sort the people would lose their heritage.**
- (6) And look this day I am travelling by the path of all the earth and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing of all that the LORD your God promise you has fallen or weakened. Everything has come to you-not one word has fallen *from the promise. In soldiers jargon Joshua was saying “not one promise had died”-the words of God are all living words.*
- (7) But it shall happen just as all the good things have come upon you that the LORD your God promised you so the LORD your God will bring upon you all the evil

event or word until He has destroyed you from upon this good and fertile land which the LORD your God has given you. **IN YOUR PASSING OVER THE COVENANT OF THE LORD YOUR GOD WHICH HE COMMANDED** you and you are walking with and serving different gods and making yourselves bow to them the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and you will hastily be destroyed from upon the good land which He gave you. *This solemn caution mirrors the last words of Moses in Deuteronomy 28 15-68 and 32 15-30. Joshua's passage of qualified ruin is shorter but still stunning as they are his final words to the nation's leaders. The prediction fits perfectly with Deuteronomy 28 49-52 and the Roman period. The "move away" from God's covenant may be interpreted as Israel's rejection of the Messiah-at which time the people were wrested from the land by slaughter and by deportation and death. Joshua instances the "continual command" of the LORD about His covenant-which was a covenant of blood-signified at Passover-and broken at Passover when Christ died for us men and women and our salvation. The continual command is "to love the LORD your God with all your heart"(cf Section 5 of this leadership speech)*

CHAPTER 24

And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel and their chiefs and judges and recording and ruling magistrates and they stood firm before God. *[As ministers and conquerors would]*

And Joshua said to all the people "Thus says the LORD God of Israel 'Your fathers lived on the other side of the River (*Euphrates*) of old; Terah Abraham's father and the father of Nahor and they served other gods;

(1) **But** I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River and I was causing him to journey through all the land of Canaan and gave him Isaac and I increased his seed largely.

(2) **But** I gave Jacob and Esau to Isaac and I gave Esau Mount Seir for his inheritance but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.

(3)**But** I sent Moses and Aaron and I **struck** [*pgn* with "calamity"-with "the hand"-with "disease"] the Egyptians according to what I was doing in their midst and after that I brought you out. So I brought your fathers out of Egypt **but** they came to the Red sea and the Egyptians were after your fathers in hot pursuit with chariot and cavalry to the Sea of Red Reeds."

(4) **BUT THEY CRIED OUT TO THE LORD AND HE PLACED** [*lpa*] **THICK DARKNESS BETWEEN THEM AND THE EGYPTIANS.** *At this point Joshua speaks from his fearful and exciting experience deferring from the direct speech of God. That direct speech resumes immediately. This unforgettable experience of Joshua is related and then God says "You were watching"- it is vital not to mistranslate Joshua said "You were watching" because the generation that saw these things was dead "all that generation of those who had done evil in His sight and their fighting men (including Moses) perished in the wilderness."(Numbers 32.13 & Deut.2.14). But God was saying "you (Joshua – and Caleb as witnesses saw all that) And He caused the sea to come upon them and they were covered and YOUR OWN EYES WERE WATCHING what I was doing among the Egyptians and you lived in the desert for a huge number of days.*

- (5) **But** I caused you to come to the land of the Amorite that lived on the other (or Eastern) side of Jordan and they made war with you;
- (6) **But** I gave them into your hand and you came to possess their land
- (7) **But** I caused their destruction before or apart from your faces. [The captain of salvation went before always-sometimes with the hornet (Deut 7.20 & 24.12). Then Balak son of Zippor king o Moab arose and made war with Israel and sent and called for Balaam son of Beor to put a curse upon them.
- (8) **But** I was not inclined or I did not wish to listen to Balaam and he kept on blessing you and I delivered you from his power. So you went over Jordan and came to Jericho and the Lords or “fly gods” [yl aab] of Jericho made war with you, the fly gods of the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites and Jebusites
- (9) **But** I gave them into your hand. And I sent the hornet [*rx* “a wasp like insect which is possessed of a very painful and dangerous sting-whose actions probably had seriously disabled the armies of the indigenous nations] like an arrow [*cf* the promise of Exodus 23.28 given to Moses and known to Joshua] and dispossessed them quite apart from your presence –the two kings o f the Amorites [*Sihon and Og*] but not with your sword or your bow. *This text tells us that Israel’s armies wielded both sword and bow.*
- (10) **But** I have given you the land for which you did not exert yourself in fatigue[*gy*] and cities which you did not build though you settled down to live in them eating of vineyards and olive-groves that you did not plant.

JOSHUA’S CHALLENGE TO DEDICATION 14-15

So now fear the LORD and serve Him in wholeness or completely and in truth and **put aside** [*rws* “escape from” or “depart from”] the gods that you fathers served on the other side of the River (*Euphrates*) and in Egypt and serve the LORD. And if it seem evil unhappy or a misfortune [*r*] in your eyes to serve the LORD choose for yourselves today whom you will or should serve-if it is the gods whom your fathers served when they were at home across the River Euphrates and if it is to be the gods of the Amorites where you are dwelling in the house of their land.
But I and my house we ourselves will serve the LORD.

THE POPULAR DESIRE TO SERVE YAHWEH 16-18

But the people answered and said “It would be profane or a *defilement* [*lh* literally “wounding or piercing as in prostitution-this is the basic concept behind Paul’s “God forbid”] to forsake the LORD to serve other gods. Because Yahweh our God is *He* who brought us and our fathers up from the land of the Egyptians; from the house of slaves and who did those great signs for our eyes and has watched over us in all the route we have walked and among all the peoples through whose centre we have passed. And the LORD drove out all the peoples and the Amorites that lived in the land before we were present; however truly [*mq*] we would serve Yahweh because he is our God.

COVENANT UNDERTAKINGS: PRELIMINARY RESPONSES

(1) JOSHUA STRESSES THE HOLINESS OF GOD 19-20

But Joshua said to the people “You are not able to serve Yahweh for He is a Holy God; He is a God burning with zeal-jealous of those He loves; He will not or may not lift the burden of your transgressions and deliberate sins. *Joshua is telling them that if they*

promise so to live and serve God and fail in the endeavour by default or intent they are in grave danger. Because you will forsake Yahweh and serve the gods of the stranger so that He will turn and cause you calamity and put an end to you after He has been the cause of your prosperity and happiness.

(2) EMPHATIC “YES” OF THE PEOPLE 21

But the people said to Joshua “No-because we will serve Yahweh.” *The nation’s spokesmen were stating the present determination and the imperative they felt so deeply.*

(3) JOSHUA PUTS DOWN AN HISTORIC PROPHETIC MARKER 22A

So Joshua said to the people “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen Yahweh for yourselves”

(4) UNDERSTOOD-THE DIE IS CAST 22B

And they said “We are witnesses.”

(5) IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED 23

So now put away the gods of the stranger alien or foreigner which are in your midst... *Joshua was not so much referring to the strangers in their midst but the gods of the stranger. This might mean some Gideon like taking apart of images... and cause your hearts to stretch out and incline to [hfn] Yahweh Elohe Israel.*

(6) THE NATIONAL RESPONSE 24

And the people said to Joshua “We will serve Yahweh our God and we will obey His voice” *Some important implications follow when at the Baptism of Jesus the voice from heaven was heard; also when at the mount of Transfiguration Yahweh said, “This is my beloved Son-hear and obey Him” (Matthew 17 1-13, Mark 1.9-12, Luke 9 33-36 and Acts 9.3-6, Apocalypse 4.1, 16.1, 18.4 & 21.3) also when Paul on the Damascus Road heard this voice from the excellent glory saying “It is hard for you to kick against the ox goads” (of conscience) and in the Apocalypse of John the divine.*

Under Section 7 of Chapter 23 we read that Joshua essentially forecast expulsion and a future covenant refusal. It is difficult to disentangle the Mosaic and Joshuaic predictions from the events that ensued after the claims of Yeshua were rejected-however the commitment made is very distant from the Common Era voice from heaven but nevertheless latent within the warnings of Israel’s first leadership.

(7) THE COVENANT SEALED BY SACRIFICE 25

So Joshua cut a covenant with the people that day and established an ordinance and judgment belonging to it in Shechem. *Shechem is the place where Moses directed as recorded in Deuteronomy 27.12-13 that this covenant would be affirmed when the nation was settled in the land.*

(8) THE TOKENS OF COVENANT 26-

And Joshua (a) wrote these words in a book of Torah of God and (b) took a great stone and caused it to be raised up there under the oak which is by the sanctuary of Yahweh.

Joshua created witness on papyrus which is essentially within the book of Joshua-this document in its original would have been stored in the tabernacle along with the Torah of Moses-a volume of law which points to Messiah-as this legal covenant points to days of good and evil ahead.

And Joshua said to the people “Behold this stone shall be a stone of **witness** [*hd*[-this word for witness means “witness to the passer-by” and “a perpetual witness” as the word is related to *d* [“still-but it may mean “a witness that will depart”] for it has heard all the words which Yahweh spoke with us and it shall be among us lest you disavow or fail or are false with your God. And Joshua sent the people-each man to his inheritance. *We are not given in a preamble the setting of this covenant engagement but it is unquestionably the valley between Ebal and Gerazim as v.25 attests.*

THE DEATH OF JOSHUA 29-30

And it happened after these acts that Joshua the son of Nun –the servant of the LORD died –a man of **one hundred and ten years of age**. And they buried him in a mound or sepulchre [*rbq*] at the border of his inheritance at Timnath Serah which is in mount Ephraim on the north of the hill Gaash. *Joshua may have been a boy of about 10-25 on coming out of Egypt and quite early in his life joined Moses as a helper-rising in rank until at the end of 40 years in the desert and then in the middle of his life he commanded the host.*

ISRAEL HOLDS TO THE FAITH FOR A GENERATION 31

And Israel served the LORD during all the days of Joshua and during the days of the **elders** whose days reached long after Joshua but who had not known all that the LORD had done for Israel.

ELIEZER FULFILLS THE PROMISE ABOUT JOSEPH 32

And the bones of Joseph which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt they buried or placed in a mound in Shechem in an allotment of the field which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred “lambs” of silver so it came to belong to the sons of Joseph as an inheritance.

ELIEZER DIES AFTER A LONG LIFE

And **Eliezer** the son of Aaron died and they interred him in a mound or tomb in Gibeath **Phineas** [*a hill of Phineas*] his son which he gave to him in the hill of Ephraim. *Eliezer may have been born like Joshua about the time of the Exodus. His age is not given but the final sentence of the book suggests strongly that Phineas who interfaced with the two and a half tribes writes the footnote to the book and possibly makes the interspersed “to this day” comments. The book was deposited at Shiloh where it would have become familiar reading for Samuel. Eli was blind and probably was not interested for himself but it was far different for Samuel who began to spread the word of God and was established as a prophet although also a Levite.*

TEXTUAL COMMENT qzj

There follows a two liner comment called “HAZAK” or “HAZEK” in the Hebrew text. The comment means “He was strong” or “becoming strong” and it would provide a good subject under which to study the life of Joshua himself.

The strength of Joshua and the conquest was seen in the re-naming of all the cities and territories by Jewish names and the territories of which this scribe provides us the impressive number of 656. It would be difficult for a gentile scholar to reach such precision although I have found over 500 conquests in a cursory check.

The scribal comment tells us that Israel’s banner carried the name-YAHWEH NISSI.

The purpose of the book is not simply historical but it is a story that shows us how Joshua from the early trauma of seeing God at work in the Exodus became like Caleb a man who wholly followed the LORD and remained HAKEK “a man bound fast” to God; “a man girding on the armour of faith”; “a man undaunted”; “a man increasing in prosperity” and “a man prevailing”. The textual comment to which I have made reference reads:-

(A)THE SEPARATE PARTS OF THE BOOTY AT SHECHEM FROM THE CONQUEST OR “CASTING OF THE SHOE” OF JOSHUA BEING MARKED OFF WAS 656.

(B)AND THE VICTORIOUS FLUTTERING BANNER WAS SIGNED IN THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE (cf Psalm 20 5 –THE SIGN OF YAHWEH is ADONAI ELOHIM-and in this name victory cries of YESHUA would rend the air.

(C) ALSO THE HALF PORTION

(D) AND THE COUNT OF THE SPOIL

(E) AND HIGH PLACES AND WATCHTOWERS WERE ESTABLISHED OR NAMED IN OUR ANCIENT LANGUAGE

THE END

Bob Coffey

A BIBLE COMPANION