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Joshua

God Chooses Joshua to Lead Israel

1 Moses was the Lord's servant. Joshua son of Nun was Moses' helper. After Moses died, the Lord spoke to Joshua. The Lord said, **2**"My servant Moses is dead. Now you and these people must go across the Jordan River. You must go into the land I am giving to you, the people of Israel. **3**I promised Moses that I would give you this land. So, I will give you that land wherever you go. **4**All the land of the Hittite people, from the desert and Lebanon all the way to the Great River (that is, the Euphrates River) will be yours. And all the land from here to the Mediterranean Sea in the west (that is, the place where the sun sets) will be within your borders. **5**I will be with you the same as I was with Moses. No person will be able to stop you all your life. I will not abandon you. I will never leave you.

6"Joshua, you must be strong and brave! You must lead these people so they can take their land. I promised their fathers that I would give them this land. **7**But you must also be strong and brave about another thing. You must be sure to obey the commands my servant Moses gave you. If you follow his teachings exactly, then you will be successful in everything you do. **8**Always remember the things written in that book of law. Study that book day and night. Then you can be sure to obey the things that are written there. If you do this, then you will be wise and successful in everything you do. **9**Remember, I commanded you to be strong and brave. So don't be scared, because the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua Takes Command

10So Joshua gave orders to the leaders of the people. He said, **11**"Go through the camp and tell the people to get ready. Say to the people, 'Get some food ready. Three days from now we will go across the Jordan River. We will go and take the land that the Lord your God is giving you.'"

12Then Joshua spoke to the family groups of Reuben, Gad, and half of the family group of Manasseh. Joshua said, **13**"Remember what the Lord's servant Moses told you. He said that the Lord your God would give you a place to rest. The Lord will give you that land! **14**In fact, the Lord has already given you this land east of the Jordan River. Your wives and children can stay in this land with your animals. But your fighting men must cross the Jordan River with your brothers. You must be ready for war and help them [take their land]. **15**The Lord gave you a place to rest, and he will do the same for your brothers. But you must help them until they get the land that the Lord their God is giving them. Then you can come back to your own land, the land east of the Jordan River. The Lord's servant Moses gave you that land."

16Then the people answered Joshua, "We will do whatever you command us to do! We will go wherever you tell us to go! **17**We will obey whatever you say, the same as we obeyed Moses. We only ask one thing from the Lord. We ask that the Lord your God will be with you the same as he was with Moses. **18**Then, if any person refuses to obey your commands or if any person turns against you, that person will be killed. Just be strong and brave!"

Spies in Jericho

2 Joshua son of Nun and all the people were camped at Acacia.* Joshua sent out two spies. No one knew that Joshua sent out these men. Joshua said to the men, “Go and look at the land, especially the city of Jericho.”

So the men went to the city of Jericho. They went to the house of a prostitute and stayed there. This woman’s name was Rahab.

²Someone told the king of Jericho, “Last night some men from Israel came to look for weaknesses in our country.”

³So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: “Don’t hide those men that came and stayed in your house. Bring them out. They have come to spy on our country.”

⁴The woman had hidden the two men. But the woman said, “Those two men did come here, but I didn’t know where they came from. ⁵In the evening, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don’t know where they went. But if you go quickly, maybe you can catch them.” ⁶(Rahab said those things, but really, she had taken the men up to the roof,* and she was hiding them in the hay* she had piled up there.)

⁷So the king’s men went out of the city, and the people closed the city gates. The king’s men went to look for the two men from Israel. They went to the Jordan River and looked at all the places where people cross the river.

⁸The two men were ready to sleep for the night. But Rahab went to the roof and talked to them. ⁹Rahab said, “I know that the Lord has given this land to your people. You frighten us. All the people living in this country are afraid of you. ¹⁰We are afraid because we have heard about the ways that the Lord helped you. We heard that he dried the water at the Red Sea when you came out of Egypt. We also heard what you did to the two Amorite kings, Sihon and Og. We heard how you destroyed those kings living east of the Jordan River. ¹¹We heard about those things and we became very afraid. And now, none of

our men are brave enough to fight you. Why? Because the Lord your God rules the heavens above and the earth below! ¹²So now, I want you to make a promise to me. I was kind to you and helped you. So promise before the Lord that you will be kind to my family. Please tell me that you will do this. ¹³Tell me that you will allow my family to live—my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all of their families. Promise that you will save us from death.”

¹⁴The men agreed. They said, “We will trade our lives for yours. Don’t tell anyone what we are doing. Then, when the Lord gives us our land, we will be kind to you. You can trust us.”

¹⁵The woman’s house was built into the city wall. It was part of the wall. So the woman used a rope to let the men down through a window. ¹⁶Then the woman said to them, “Go _{west} into the hills so the king’s men will not accidentally find you. Hide there for three days. After the king’s men come back you can go on your way.”

¹⁷The men said to her, “We made a promise to you. But you must do one thing or we will not be responsible for our promise. ¹⁸You are using this red rope to help us escape. We will come back to this land. At that time, you must tie this red rope in your window. You must bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your family into your house with you. ¹⁹We will protect every person who stays in this house. If anyone in your house is hurt, then we will be responsible. But if any person goes out of your house, then that person might be killed. We will not be responsible for that person. It will be his own fault. ²⁰We are making this agreement with you. But if you tell anyone about what we are doing then we are free from this agreement.”

²¹The woman answered, “I will do exactly what you said.” The woman said goodbye, and the men left her house. Then the woman tied the red rope in the window.

²²The men left her house and went into the hills. They stayed there for three days. The king’s men looked all along the road. After three days, the king’s men gave up and went

Acacia Or, “Shittim,” a town east of the Jordan River.

roof In Israel, the roofs were flat and people used them like an extra room to store things.

hay Literally, “flax,” a plant used to make linen.

back to the city. ²³Then the two men went back to Joshua. The men left the hills and crossed the river. They went to Joshua son of Nun. They told Joshua everything that they had learned. ²⁴They said to Joshua, “The Lord really has given us all of the land. All of the people in that country are afraid of us.”

Miracle at the Jordan River

3 Early the next morning, Joshua and all the people of Israel got up and left Acacia.* They traveled to the Jordan River and camped there before they went across. ²After three days, the leaders went through the camp. ³The leaders gave orders to the people. They said, “You will see the priests and Levites* carrying the Box of the Agreement* of the Lord your God. At that time, you must follow them. ⁴But do not follow too closely. Stay about 1,000 yards* behind them. You have not been here before. But if you follow them, then you will know where to go.”

⁵Then Joshua told the people, “Make yourselves pure. Tomorrow the Lord will use you to do amazing things.”

⁶Then Joshua said to the priests, “Take the Box of the Agreement* and go across the river in front of the people.” So the priests lifted the Box and carried it in front of the people.

⁷Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to make you a great man for all the people of Israel to see. Then the people will know that I am with you the same as I was with Moses. ⁸The priests will carry the Box of the Agreement.* Tell the priests this, ‘Walk to the shore of the Jordan River and stop just before you step into the water.’”

⁹Then Joshua said to the people of Israel, “Come and listen to the words of the Lord your God. ¹⁰Here is proof that the living God is truly with you. Here is proof that he will truly defeat your enemies. He will defeat the

Acacia Or, Shittim. A town east of the Jordan River.

Levites People from the tribe of Levi. The Levites helped the priests in the temple and also worked for the civil government.

Box of the Agreement Or, “ark of the Covenant,” the box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

1,000 yards Literally, “2,000 cubits.”

Canaanite people, the Hittite people, the Hivite people, the Perizzite people, the Gergashite people, the Amorite people, and the Jebusite people, he will force them to leave that land. ¹¹Here is the proof. The Box of the Agreement* of the Master of the whole world will go before you as you cross the Jordan River. ¹²Now, choose twelve men. Choose one man from each of the twelve family groups of Israel. ¹³The priests will carry the Box of the Lord.* The Lord is the Master of the whole world. They will carry that Box in front of you into the Jordan River. When they enter the water, the water of the Jordan River will stop flowing. The water will stop and fill behind that place like a dam.”

¹⁴The priests carried the Box of the Agreement* and the people left the place they had camped. The people started going across the Jordan River. ¹⁵(During harvest time the Jordan River overflows its banks. So the river was at its fullest.) The priests who were carrying the Box came to the shore of the river. They stepped into the water. ¹⁶And immediately, the water stopped flowing. [The water filled behind that place like a dam.] The water piled high a long way up the river—all the way to Adam (a town near Zarethan). The people crossed the river near Jericho. ¹⁷The ground at that place became dry, and the priests carried the Box of the Agreement* of the Lord to the middle of the river and stopped. The priests waited there while all the people of Israel walked across the Jordan River on dry land.

Rocks to Remind the People

4 After all the people had crossed the Jordan River the Lord said to Joshua, ²“Choose twelve men. Choose one man from each family group. ³Tell them to look in the river where the priests were standing. Tell them to find twelve rocks in that place. Carry those twelve rocks with you. Put the twelve rocks in the place where you stay tonight.”

⁴So Joshua chose one man from each family group. Then he called the twelve men

Box of the Lord Also called the Box of the Agreement.

together. ⁵Joshua said to the men, “Go out into the river where the Holy Box* of the Lord your God is. Each of you must find one rock. There will be one rock for each of the twelve family groups of Israel. Carry that rock on your shoulder. ⁶These rocks will be a sign for you. In the future, your children will ask you, ‘What do these rocks mean?’ ⁷You will tell the children that the Lord stopped the water from flowing in the Jordan River. When the Holy Box of the Lord’s Agreement crossed the river, the water stopped flowing. Those rocks will help the people of Israel remember this thing forever.”

⁸So the people of Israel obeyed Joshua. They carried twelve rocks from the middle of the Jordan River. There was one rock for each of the twelve family groups of Israel. They did this the way the Lord commanded Joshua. The men carried the rocks with them. Then they put the rocks at the place where they made their camp. ⁹(Joshua also put twelve rocks in the middle of the Jordan River. He put them at the place where the priests stood while carrying the Lord’s Holy Box.* Those rocks are still at that place today.)

¹⁰The Lord had commanded Joshua to tell the people what to do. Those were the things Moses had said Joshua must do. So the priests carrying the Holy Box* continued standing in the middle of the river until all those things were done. The people hurried across the river. ¹¹The people finished crossing the river. After that, the priests carried the Box of the Lord to the front of the people.

¹²The men from the family groups of Reuben, Gad, and half of the family group of Manasseh obeyed Moses. These men crossed the river in front of the other people. These men were prepared for war. They were going to help the rest of the people of Israel take the land God had promised to give them. ¹³About 40,000 soldiers, prepared for war, passed before the Lord. They were marching toward the plains of Jericho.

¹⁴That day the Lord made Joshua a great man to all the people of Israel. The people respected Joshua from that time on. They respected Joshua all his life, the same as they respected Moses.

¹⁵While the priests carrying the Box were still standing in the river, the Lord said to Joshua, ¹⁶“Command the priests to come out of the river.”

¹⁷So Joshua commanded the priests. He said, “Come out of the Jordan River.”

¹⁸The priests obeyed Joshua. They carried the Box with them and came out of the river. When the priests’ feet touched the land on the other side of the river, the water in the river began flowing again. The water again overflowed its banks as it had before the people crossed.

¹⁹The people crossed the Jordan River on the tenth day of the first month. The people camped at Gilgal, east of Jericho. ²⁰The people carried with them the twelve rocks that they had taken from the Jordan River. And Joshua set up those rocks at Gilgal. ²¹Then Joshua told the people, “In the future, your children will ask their parents, ‘What do these rocks mean?’ ²²You will tell the children, ‘Those rocks help us remember the way the people of Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry land.’ ²³The Lord your God caused the water in the Jordan River to stop flowing so you could cross it on dry land—just like the time the Lord stopped the water at the Red Sea so that we could cross it on dry land. ²⁴The Lord did this so that all the people in this country would know that the Lord is very powerful. Then those people will always be afraid of the Lord your God.”

5 So the Lord dried up the Jordan River until the people of Israel finished crossing it. The kings of the Amorites living west of the Jordan River and the Canaanites living by the Mediterranean Sea heard about this and became very scared. After that they were not brave enough to stand and fight against the people of Israel.

The Israelites Are Circumcised

²At that time, the Lord said to Joshua, “Make knives from flint rocks and circumcise* the men of Israel.”

³So Joshua made knives from flint rocks. Then he circumcised* the people of Israel at Gibeath Haaraloth.*

^{4–7}This is why Joshua circumcised* the men: After the people of Israel left Egypt, all the men that were able to be in the army were circumcised. While in the desert, many of the fighting men did not listen to the Lord. So the Lord promised that those men would not see the “land where much food grows.” The Lord promised our ancestors* to give us that land, but, because of those men, God forced the people to wander in the desert for 40 years—that way all those fighting men would die. All those fighting men died, and their sons took their place. But none of the boys that were born in the desert on the trip from Egypt had been circumcised. So Joshua circumcised them.

⁸Joshua finished circumcising all the men. The people camped at that place until all the men were healed.

First Passover in Canaan

⁹At that time, the Lord said to Joshua, “You were slaves in Egypt. And this made you ashamed. But today I have taken away that shame.” So Joshua named that place Gilgal.* And that place is still named Gilgal today.

¹⁰The people of Israel celebrated Passover while they were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho. This was on the evening of the 14th day of the month. ¹¹The day after Passover, the people ate food that grew in that land. They ate bread made without yeast and roasted grain. ¹²The next morning, the special food from heaven stopped coming. This happened the day after the people ate the food that grew in the land of Canaan. From that

circumcise(d) To cut off the foreskin. This was done to every Jewish male to show he shared in the Agreement God made with Israel. See Gen. 17:9–14.

Gibeath Haaraloth This name means “Circumcision Hill.”

ancestors Literally, “fathers,” meaning a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

Gilgal This name is like the Hebrew word meaning, “to roll away.”

time on, the people of Israel did not get the special food from heaven.

¹³When Joshua was near Jericho he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him. The man had a sword in his hand. Joshua went to the man and asked, “Are you a friend to our people, or are you one of our enemies?”

¹⁴The man answered, “I am not an enemy. I am the commander of the Lord’s army. I have just now come to you.”

Then Joshua bowed his face to the ground. [He did this to show respect.] He asked, “I am your servant. Does my master have a command for me?”

¹⁵The commander of the Lord’s army answered, “Take off your shoes. The place where you are standing now is holy.” So Joshua obeyed him.

Jericho Captured

6The city of Jericho was closed. The people in the city were afraid because the people of Israel were near. No one went in the city and no one came out of the city.

²Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Look, I will let you defeat the city of Jericho. You will defeat the king and all the fighting men in the city. ³March around the city with your army one time every day. Do this for six days. ⁴[Tell the priests to carry the Holy Box.*] Tell seven of the priests to carry trumpets made from the horns of male sheep and march in front of the Holy Box. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times. On the seventh day, tell the priests to blow the trumpets when they march. ⁵The priests will make one loud noise from the trumpets. When you hear that noise, tell all the people to begin shouting. When you do this, the walls of the city will fall down and your people will be able to go straight into the city.”

⁶So Joshua son of Nun called the priests together. Joshua said to them, “Carry the Holy Box* of the Lord. And tell seven priests to carry the trumpets and march in front of the Box.”

Holy Box The Box of the Agreement—the box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

⁷Then Joshua ordered the people, “Now go! March around the city. The soldiers with weapons will march in front of the Holy Box* of the Lord.”

⁸After Joshua finished speaking to the people, the seven priests began marching before the Lord. They carried the seven trumpets and blew them while they marched. The priests carrying the Lord’s Holy Box* followed them. ⁹The soldiers with weapons marched in front of the priests who were blowing the horns. And the rest of the men walked behind the Holy Box. _¶So they went around the city, _¶ marching and blowing the trumpets. ¹⁰Joshua had told the people not to give a war cry. He said, “Don’t shout. Don’t say a word until the day I tell you. Then you can shout!”

¹¹So Joshua made the priests carry the Holy Box* of the Lord around the city one time. Then they went back to the camp and spent the night there.

¹²Early the next morning, Joshua got up. The priests carried the Lord’s Holy Box* again. ¹³And the seven priests carried the seven trumpets. They walked in front of the Lord’s Holy Box, marching and blowing their trumpets. The soldiers with weapons marched in front of them. The rest of the people marched behind the Lord’s Holy Box. _¶They went around the city, _¶ marching and blowing the trumpets. ¹⁴So on the second day, they all marched around the city one time. And then they went back to the camp. They continued to do this every day for six days.

¹⁵On the seventh day they got up at dawn. And they marched around the city seven times. They marched in the same way they had marched on the days before, but on that day they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶The seventh time they marched around the city, the priests blew their trumpets. At that time, Joshua gave the command: “Now, shout! The Lord is giving you this city! ¹⁷The

city and everything in it belongs to the Lord.* Only Rahab the prostitute and all the people in her house will remain alive. These people must not be killed because Rahab helped the two spies. ¹⁸Also remember that we must destroy everything else. Don’t take those things. If you take those things and bring them into our camp then you yourselves will be destroyed. And you will also bring trouble to all the people of Israel. ¹⁹All the silver and gold and the things made from bronze and iron belong to the Lord. Those things must be put in the Lord’s treasury.”

²⁰The priests blew the trumpets. The people heard trumpets and began shouting. The walls fell down and the people ran straight into the city. So the people of Israel defeated that city. ²¹The people destroyed everything in the city. They destroyed everything that was living there. They killed the young men and old men, young women and old women, cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

²²Joshua talked to the two spies. Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute’s house. Bring her out. And bring all the people who are with her. Do this because of the promise you made to her.”

²³So the two men went into the house and brought out Rahab. They also brought out her father, mother, brothers, all her family, and all the other people that were with her. They put all the people in a safe place outside the camp of Israel.

²⁴Then the people of Israel burned the whole city. They burned everything in the city except the things made from silver, gold, bronze, and iron. They put those things in the Lord’s treasury. ²⁵Joshua saved Rahab the prostitute, her family, and all the other people that were with her. Joshua let them live because Rahab helped the spies that Joshua had sent out to Jericho. Rahab still lives among the people of Israel today.

²⁶At that time, Joshua made this important promise. He said:

Holy Box The Box of the Agreement—the box containing the flat stones with the Ten Commandments written on them and other things that proved God was with the people of Israel during their time in the Sinai desert.

belongs to the Lord This usually meant that these things were saved in the temple treasury or they were destroyed so that other people would not use them.

“Whoever builds Jericho again
will be in danger from the Lord.
Whoever lays the foundation of this city,
will lose his oldest son.
The man who sets up the gates
will lose his youngest son.”*

²⁷So the Lord was with Joshua. And Joshua became famous all throughout the whole country.

Achan's Sin

7 But the people of Israel did not obey God. There was a man from the family group of Judah named Achan son of Carmi, grandson of Zimri. Achan kept some of the things that should have been destroyed. So the Lord became very angry at the people of Israel.

²After they defeated Jericho, Joshua sent some men to Ai.* Ai was near Beth Aven, east of Bethel. Joshua told them, “Go to Ai and look for weaknesses in that area.” So the men went to spy on that land.

³Later the men came back to Joshua. They said, “Ai is a weak area. We will not need all of our people to defeat that place. Send 2,000 or 3,000 men to fight there. There is no need to use the whole army. There are only a few men there to fight against us.”

⁴⁻⁵So about 3,000 men went to Ai. But the people of Ai killed about 36 men of Israel. And the people of Israel ran away. The people of Ai chased them from the city gates all the way to the quarries.* The people of Ai beat them badly.

When the people from Israel saw this, they became very frightened and lost their courage. ⁶When Joshua heard about this, he tore his clothes [to show his sadness]. He bowed down on the ground before the Holy Box.* Joshua stayed there until evening. The leaders of Israel did the same thing. They also threw dirt on their heads [to show their sadness].

⁷Joshua said, “Lord my Master! You brought our people across the Jordan River. Why did you bring us this far and then allow

the Amorite people to destroy us? We should have been satisfied and stayed on the other side of the Jordan River! ⁸I promise by my life, Lord! There is nothing I can say now. Israel has surrendered to the enemy. ⁹The Canaanite people and all the other people in this country will hear about what happened. Then they will attack us and kill all of us! Then what will you do to protect your great name?”

¹⁰The Lord said to Joshua, “Why are you down there with your face on the ground? Stand up! ¹¹The people of Israel sinned against me. They broke the Agreement that I commanded them to obey. They took some of the things that I commanded them to destroy. They have stolen from me. They have lied. They have taken those things for themselves. ¹²That is why the army of Israel turned and ran away from the fight. They did that because they have done wrong. They should be destroyed. I will not continue to help you. I will not continue to be with you unless you destroy everything I commanded you to destroy.

¹³“Now go and make the people pure. Tell the people, ‘Make yourselves pure. Prepare for tomorrow. The Lord God of Israel says that some people are keeping things that he commanded to be destroyed. You will never be able to defeat your enemies until you throw away those things.

¹⁴“Tomorrow morning you must all stand before the Lord. All of the family groups will stand before the Lord. The Lord will choose one family group. Then only that family group will stand before the Lord. Then the Lord will choose one clan* from that family group. Then only that clan must stand before the Lord. Then the Lord will look at each family in that clan. Then the Lord will choose one family. Then the Lord will look at each man in that family. ¹⁵The man who is keeping those things that we should have destroyed will be caught. Then that man will be destroyed by fire. And everything that he owns will be destroyed with him. That man broke the Agreement with the Lord. He has done a very bad thing to the people of Israel!”

The man ... son See 1 Kings 16:34.

Ai This name means, “the ruins.”

quarry A place where people cut stones from the solid rock.

Holy Box Also called the Box of the Agreement.

clan A group of families.

¹⁶Early the next morning, Joshua led all the people of Israel before the Lord. All of the family groups stood before the Lord. The Lord chose the family group of Judah. ¹⁷So all the clans* of Judah stood before the Lord. The Lord chose the Zerah clan. Then all the families of the Zerah clan stood before the Lord. The family of Zimri was chosen. ¹⁸Then Joshua told all the men in that family to come before the Lord. The Lord chose Achan the son of Carmi. (Carmi was the son of Zimri. And Zimri was the son of Zerah.)

¹⁹Then Joshua said to Achan, “Son, ₁say your prayers₁. You should honor the Lord God of Israel and confess your sins to him. Tell me what you did, and don’t try to hide anything from me!”

²⁰Achan answered, “It is true! I sinned against the Lord God of Israel. This is what I did: ²¹₁We captured the city of Jericho and all the things in it.₁ I saw a beautiful coat from Babylon, about 5 pounds* of silver; and about a pound* of gold. I wanted these things for myself. So I took them. You will find those things buried in the ground under my tent. The silver is under the coat.”

²²So Joshua sent some men to the tent. They ran to the tent and found those things hidden there in the tent. The silver was under the coat. ²³The men brought the things out of the tent. They took those things to Joshua and all the people of Israel. They threw them on the ground before the Lord.

²⁴Then Joshua and all the people led Achan son of Zerah to the Valley of Achor. They also took the silver, the coat, the gold, Achan’s sons and daughters, his cattle, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and everything he owned. They took all these things to the Valley of Achor with Achan. ²⁵Then Joshua said, “You caused much trouble for us! But now the Lord will bring trouble to you!” Then all the people threw stones at Achan and his family until they died. Then the people burned them and everything he owned. ²⁶After they burned Achan, they put many rocks over his

body. Those rocks are still there today. ₁So God brought trouble to Achan.₁ That is why that place is called the Valley of Achor.* After this the Lord was not angry with the people.

Ai Destroyed

8 Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Don’t be afraid. Don’t give up. Lead all your fighting men to Ai.* I will help you defeat the king of Ai. I am giving you his people, his city, and his land. ²You will do to Ai and its king the same thing you did to Jericho and its king. Only this time you can take all the wealth and animals and keep it for yourselves. You will share the wealth with your people. Now, tell some of your soldiers to hide behind the city.”

³So Joshua led his whole army toward Ai.* Then Joshua chose 30,000 of his best fighting men. He sent these men out at night. ⁴Joshua gave them this command: “Listen carefully to what I tell you. You must hide in the area behind the city. Wait for the time to attack. Don’t go far from the city. Continue to watch and be ready. ⁵I will lead the men with me to march toward the city. The men in the city will come out to fight against us. We will turn and run away from them, like we did before. ⁶Those men will chase us away from the city. They will think that we are running away from them like we did before. So we will run away. ⁷Then you should come out of your hiding place and take control of the city. The Lord your God will give you the power to win.

⁸“You must do what the Lord says. Watch me and I will give you the command to attack the city. Take control of the city, and then burn it.”

⁹Then Joshua sent those men to their hiding place and waited. They went to a place between Bethel and Ai. This was to the west of Ai. And Joshua stayed the night with his people.

¹⁰Early the next morning Joshua gathered the men together. Then Joshua and the leaders of Israel led the men to Ai. ¹¹All of the

clan A group of families.

5 pounds Literally, “200 shekels.”

a pound Literally, “50 shekels.”

Achor This name means “trouble.”

Ai See Josh. 7:2. The name of this town means “the ruins.”

soldiers that were with Joshua marched to Ai. They stopped in front of the city. The army made its camp north of the city. There was a valley between the army and Ai.

¹²Then Joshua chose about 5,000 men. Joshua sent these men to hide in the area west of the city, between Bethel and Ai. ¹³So Joshua had prepared his men for the fight. The main camp was north of the city. The other men were hiding to the west. That night Joshua went down into the valley.

¹⁴Later, the king of Ai saw the army of Israel. The king and his people hurried out to fight the army of Israel. The king of Ai went out the east side of the city toward the Jordan Valley, so he did not see the soldiers hiding behind the city.

¹⁵Joshua and all the men of Israel let the army of Ai push them back. Joshua and his men began running east toward the desert. ¹⁶The people in the city began shouting and started chasing Joshua and his men. All the people left the city. ¹⁷All the people of Ai and Bethel chased the army of Israel. The city was left open—no one stayed to protect the city.

¹⁸Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Hold your spear toward the city of Ai. I will give you that city.” So Joshua held his spear toward the city of Ai. ¹⁹The men of Israel that were hiding saw this. They quickly came out from their hiding place and hurried toward the city. They entered the city and took control of it. Then the soldiers started fires to burn the city.

²⁰The men from Ai looked back and saw their city burning. They saw the smoke rising into the sky. So they lost their strength and courage. They quit chasing the men of Israel. The men from Israel stopped running away. They turned and went to fight the men from Ai. There was no safe place for the men from Ai to run to. ²¹Joshua and his men saw that his army had taken control of the city. They saw the smoke rising from the city. This was when they stopped running away, turned and ran toward the men of Ai to fight them. ²²Then the men that had hid themselves came out of the city to help with the fight. The army of Israel was on both sides of the men of Ai—the men of Ai were trapped. Israel defeated them. They fought until none of the men from

Ai were left alive—none of the enemy escaped. ²³But the king of Ai was left alive. Joshua’s men brought him to Joshua.

A Review of the Fighting

²⁴During the fighting, the army of Israel chased the men from Ai into the fields and into the desert. So the army of Israel finished killing all the men from Ai in the fields and in the desert. Then the men of Israel went back to Ai and killed all the people that were still alive in the city. ²⁵All the people of Ai died that day. There were 12,000 men and women. ²⁶Joshua had held his spear toward Ai as a sign to his people to destroy the city. And Joshua did not stop until all the people of Ai were destroyed. ²⁷The people of Israel kept the animals and other things from the city for themselves. This is what the Lord said they could do when he gave Joshua the commands.

²⁸Then Joshua burned the city of Ai.* That city became an empty pile of rocks. It is still like that today. ²⁹Joshua hanged the king of Ai on a tree. He left him hanging on the tree until evening. At sunset, Joshua told his men to take the king’s body down from the tree. They threw his body down at the city gate. Then they covered the body with many rocks. That pile of rocks is still there today.

Reading the Blessings and Curses

³⁰Then Joshua built an altar for the Lord, the God of Israel. He built the altar on Mount Ebal. ³¹The Lord’s servant Moses told the people of Israel how to build altars. So Joshua built the altar the way it was explained in the *Book of the Law* of Moses*. The altar was made from stones that were not cut. No tool had ever been used on those stones. They offered burnt offerings to the Lord on that altar. They also gave fellowship offerings.

³²In that place Joshua wrote the *Law* of Moses* on stones. He did this for all the people of Israel to see. ³³The elders (*leaders*), officers, judges, and all the people of Israel were standing around the Holy Box. They were standing in front of the Levite priests

Ai The name of this town means “the ruins.”

Law Or “Teachings”

who carried the Holy Box for the Lord’s Agreement. The people of Israel and the other people with them were all standing there. Half of the people stood in front of Mount Ebal and the other half of the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim. The Lord’s servant Moses had told the people to do this. Moses told them to do this for this blessing.

³⁴Then Joshua read all the words from the law. Joshua read the blessings and the curses. He read everything the way it was written in the *Book of the Law**. ³⁵All the people of Israel were gathered together there. All the women and children and all the foreigners that lived with the people of Israel were there. And Joshua read every command that Moses had given.

Gibeonites Trick Joshua

9All the kings west of the Jordan River heard about these things. These were the kings of the Hittite people, the Amorite people, the Canaanite people, the Perizzite people, the Hivite people, and the Jebusite people. They lived in the hill country and in the plains. They also lived along the sea coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon. ²All these kings came together. They made plans to fight against Joshua and the people of Israel.

³The people from the city of Gibeon heard about the way Joshua had defeated Jericho and Ai. ⁴So those people decided to try to fool the people of Israel. This was their plan: They gathered together old wineskins* that were cracked and broken. They put these old wine skins on the backs of their animals. They put old pieces of cloth on their animals to look like they had traveled from far away. ⁵The men put old shoes on their feet. The men wore old clothes. The men found some old bread that was dry and moldy. So the men looked like they had traveled from a faraway place. ⁶Then the men went to the camp of the people of Israel. This camp was near Gilgal.

The men went to Joshua and said to him, “We have traveled from a faraway country. We want to make a peace agreement with you.”

⁷The men of Israel said to these Hivite men, “Maybe you are trying to trick us. Maybe you live near us. We can’t make a peace agreement with you until we know where you are from.”

⁸The Hivite men said to Joshua, “We are your servants.”

But Joshua asked, “Who are you? Where do you come from?”

⁹The men answered, “We are your servants. We have come from a faraway country. We came because we heard of the great power of the Lord your God. We heard about the things he did. We heard about everything he did in Egypt. ¹⁰And we heard that he defeated the two kings of the Amorite people east of the Jordan River. This was Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, the king of Bashan, in the land of Ashtaroth. ¹¹So our elders (*leaders*) and our people said to us, ‘Take enough food for your journey. Go and meet with the people of Israel. Tell them, “We are your servants. Make a peace agreement with us.”’

¹²“See our bread! When we left home it was warm and fresh. But now you can see that it is dry and old. ¹³See our wineskins! When we left home they were new and filled with wine. Now you can see that they are cracked and old. See our clothes and sandals! You can see that the long journey has almost destroyed the things we wear.”

¹⁴The men of Israel wanted to know if these men were telling the truth. So they tasted the bread—but they did not ask the Lord what they should do. ¹⁵Joshua agreed to make peace with them. He agreed to let them live. The leaders of Israel agreed with this promise of Joshua.

¹⁶Three days later, the people of Israel learned that those men lived very near their camp. ¹⁷So the people of Israel went to the place where those men lived. On the third day the people of Israel came to the cities of Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. ¹⁸But the army of Israel did not try to fight against those cities. They had made a peace agreement with those people. They had

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wineskins A bottle made from the skin of an animal and used for storing wine.

made a promise to the people before the Lord, the God of Israel.

All the people complained against the leaders that made the agreement. ¹⁹But the leaders answered, “We have given our promise. We promised before the Lord, the God of Israel. We cannot fight against them now. ²⁰This is what we must do. We must let them live. We cannot hurt them or God will be angry at us because we broke the promise we made to them. ²¹So let them live. But they will be our servants. They will cut wood for us and carry water for all of our people.” So the leaders did not break their promise of peace to those people.

²²Joshua called the Gibeonite people. He said, “Why did you lie to us? Your land was near our camp. But you told us you were from a faraway country. ²³Now, your people will have many troubles. All of your people will be slaves—they will have to cut wood and carry water for the house of God.*”

²⁴The Gibeonite people answered, “We lied to you because we were afraid you would kill us. We heard that God commanded his servant Moses to give you all of this land. And God told you to kill all the people that lived in this land. That is why we lied to you. ²⁵Now we are your servants. You can do whatever you think is right.”

²⁶So the people of Gibeon became slaves. But Joshua let them live. Joshua did not allow the people of Israel to kill them. ²⁷Joshua made the people of Gibeon become slaves of the people of Israel. They cut wood and carried water for the people of Israel and for the altar of the Lord—wherever the Lord chose it to be. Those people are still slaves today.

The Day the Sun Stood Still

10 At this time Adoni Zedek was the king of Jerusalem. This king heard that Joshua had defeated Ai and completely destroyed it. The king learned that Joshua had done the same thing to Jericho and its king. The king also learned that the people of Gibeon had made a peace agreement with

Israel. And those people lived very near Jerusalem. ²So Adoni Zedek and his people were very scared. Gibeon was not a little town like Ai. Gibeon was a very big city—it was as big as any royal city.* And all the men in that city were good fighters. So the king was afraid. ³Adoni Zedek, the king of Jerusalem, talked with Hoham, king of Hebron. He also talked with Piram, king of Jarmuth, Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon. The king of Jerusalem begged these men, ⁴“Come with me and help me to attack Gibeon. Gibeon has made a peace agreement with Joshua and the people of Israel.”

⁵So these five Amorite kings joined armies. (The five kings were the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.) Those armies went to Gibeon. The armies surrounded the city and began fighting against it.

⁶The people in the city of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua at his camp at Gilgal. The message said: “We are your servants! Don’t leave us alone. Come and help us! Hurry! Save us! All the Amorite kings from the hill country have brought their armies together to fight against us.”

⁷So Joshua marched out of Gilgal with his whole army. Joshua’s best fighting men were with him. ⁸The Lord said to Joshua, “Don’t be afraid of those armies. I will allow you to defeat them. None of those armies will be able to defeat you.”

⁹Joshua and his army marched all night to Gibeon. [The enemy did not know that Joshua was coming.] So it was a complete surprise when he attacked them.

¹⁰The Lord caused those armies to be very confused when Israel attacked. So Israel defeated them and won a great victory. Israel chased the enemy from Gibeon on the road going to Beth Horon. The army of Israel killed men all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. ¹¹Then the army of Israel chased the enemy down the road from Beth Horon to Azekah. While they were chasing the enemy, the Lord caused large hailstones to fall from

house of God This might mean the “family of God” (Israel), or it might be the Holy Tent, or the temple.

royal city Strong well-protected cities that controlled smaller towns nearby.

the sky. Many of the enemy were killed by these large hailstones. More men were killed by the hailstones than by the swords of the soldiers of Israel.

¹²That day the Lord allowed Israel to defeat the Amorite people. And that day Joshua stood before all the people of Israel and said to the Lord:

“Sun, stop over Gibeon.
Moon, stand still over
the Valley of Aijalon.”

¹³So the sun did not move, and the moon stopped until the people defeated their enemies. This story is written in the *Book of Jashar*. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky. It did not move for a full day. ¹⁴That had never happened before. And it has never happened again! That was the day the Lord obeyed a man. The Lord really was fighting for Israel!

¹⁵After this, Joshua and his army went back to the camp at Gilgal. ¹⁶But during the fight, the five kings ran away. They hid in a cave near Makkedah. ¹⁷But someone found them hiding in that cave. Joshua learned about this. ¹⁸Joshua said, “Cover the entrance to the cave with large rocks. Put some men there to guard the cave. ¹⁹But don’t stay there yourselves. Continue chasing the enemy. Continue to attack them from behind. Don’t let the enemy get back to their cities. The Lord your God has given you the victory over them.”

²⁰So Joshua and the people of Israel killed the enemy. But some of the enemy were able to go to their cities that had tall walls around them and hide. These men were not killed. ²¹After the fighting, Joshua’s men came back to him at Makkedah. None of the people in that country were brave enough to say anything against the people of Israel.

²²Joshua said, “Move the rocks that are covering the entrance to the cave. Bring those five kings to me.” ²³So Joshua’s men brought the five kings out of the cave. They were the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. ²⁴They brought the five kings to Joshua. Joshua called all his men to come to that place. Joshua said to the officers of his army, “Come here! Put your feet on the necks

of these kings.” So the officers of Joshua’s army came close. They put their feet on the necks of the kings.

²⁵Then Joshua said to his men, “Be strong and brave! Don’t be afraid. I will show you what the Lord will do to all of the enemies that you will fight in the future.”

²⁶Then Joshua killed the five kings. He hanged their bodies on five trees. Joshua left them hanging in the trees until evening. ²⁷At sunset Joshua told his men to take the bodies down from the trees. So they threw the bodies into the cave where the kings had been hiding and covered the entrance of the cave with large rocks. Those bodies are still in that cave today.

²⁸That day Joshua defeated Makkedah. Joshua killed the king and the people in that city. There were no people left living. Joshua did the same thing to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

Taking the Southern Cities

²⁹Then Joshua and all the people of Israel traveled from Makkedah. They went to Libnah and attacked that city. ³⁰The Lord allowed the people of Israel to defeat that city and its king. The people of Israel killed every person in that city. No people were left alive. And the people did the same thing to that king as they had done to the king of Jericho.

³¹Then Joshua and all the people of Israel left Libnah and went to Lachish. Joshua and his army camped around that city and attacked it. ³²The Lord allowed them to defeat the city of Lachish. They defeated that city on the second day. The people of Israel killed every person in that city, just like they did in Libnah. ³³Horam king of Gezer came to help Lachish, but Joshua also defeated him and his army. Not one of them was left alive.

³⁴Then Joshua and all the people of Israel traveled from Lachish to Eglon. They camped around Eglon and attacked it. ³⁵That day they captured the city and killed all the people in the city. This was the same thing they had done to Lachish.

³⁶Then Joshua and all the people of Israel traveled from Eglon to Hebron. Then they attacked Hebron. ³⁷They captured the city and all the little towns near Hebron. The people of

Israel killed every person in the city. No one was left alive there. This was the same thing they did to Eglon. They destroyed the city and killed all the people in it.

³⁸Then Joshua and all the people of Israel went back to Debir and attacked that city. ³⁹They captured that city, its king, and all the little towns near Debir. They killed every person in that city. No one was left alive there. The people of Israel did to Debir and its king the same thing they did to Hebron and its king. This was the same thing they had done to Libnah and its king.

⁴⁰So Joshua defeated all the kings of the cities of the hill country, the Negev,* the western foothills, and the eastern foothills. The Lord God of Israel had told Joshua to kill all the people. So Joshua did not leave anyone alive in those places.

⁴¹Joshua captured all the cities from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza. He captured all the cities from the land of Goshen (*in Egypt*) to Gibeon. ⁴²Joshua captured all those cities and their kings on one trip. Joshua did this because the Lord God of Israel was fighting for Israel. ⁴³Then Joshua and all the people of Israel returned to their camp at Gilgal.

Defeating the Northern Cities

11 Jabin, king of Hazor, heard about all these things that happened. So he decided to call together the armies of several kings. Jabin sent a message to Jobab, king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, the king of Acshaph, ²and to the kings of the north, in the hill country and in the desert. Jabin sent the message to the kings of the Kinnereth,* the Negev,* and the western foothills. Jabin also sent the message to the king of Naphoth Dor in the west. ³Jabin sent that message to the kings of the Canaanite people in the east and in the west. He sent the message to the Amorite people, the Hittite people, the Perizzite people, and the Jebusite people living in the hill country. He also sent the message to the Hivite people living below Mount Hermon near Mizpah. ⁴So the armies

of all these kings came together. There were many fighting men and many horses and chariots. It was a very, very large army—it looked like there were as many men as grains of sand on the sea shore.

⁵All of these kings met together at the small river of Merom. They joined their armies together into one camp and made plans for the battle against Israel.

⁶Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Don’t be afraid of that army. I will allow you to defeat them. By this time tomorrow, you will have killed them all. You will cut the legs of the horses and burn all their chariots.”

⁷Joshua and his whole army surprised the enemy. They attacked the enemy at the river of Merom. ⁸The Lord allowed Israel to defeat them. The army of Israel defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon, Misrephoth Maim, and the Valley of Mizpah in the east. The army of Israel fought until none of the enemy was left alive. ⁹Joshua did what the Lord said he would do—Joshua cut the legs of their horses and burned their chariots.

¹⁰Then Joshua went back and captured the city of Hazor. Joshua killed the king of Hazor. (Hazor was the leader of all the kingdoms that fought against Israel.) ¹¹The army of Israel killed every person in that city. They completely destroyed all the people. There was nothing left alive. Then they burned the city.

¹²Joshua captured all of these cities. He killed all of their kings. Joshua completely destroyed everything in these cities. He did this the way Moses, the Lord’s servant, had commanded. ¹³But the army of Israel did not burn any cities that were built on hills. The only city built on a hill that they burned was Hazor. This is the city Joshua burned. ¹⁴The people of Israel kept for themselves all the things they found in the cities. They kept all the animals that they found in the city. But they killed all the people there. They did not allow any people to be left alive. ¹⁵Long ago the Lord commanded his servant Moses to do this. Then Moses commanded Joshua to do this. So Joshua obeyed God. Joshua did everything that the Lord had commanded Moses.

¹⁶So Joshua defeated all the people in that whole country. He had control over the hill

Negev The desert area south of Judah.

Kinnereth The area near the Sea of Galilee.

country, the Negev, all the area of Goshen, the area of the western foothills, Jordan Valley, and the mountains of Israel and all the hills near them. ¹⁷Joshua had control of all the land from Mount Halak near Seir to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. Joshua captured all the kings in that land and killed them. ¹⁸Joshua fought against those kings many years. ¹⁹Only one city in all the land made a peace agreement with Israel. That was the Hivite city of Gibeon. All the other cities were defeated in war. ²⁰The Lord wanted those people to think they were strong. Then they would fight against Israel. This way he could destroy them without mercy. He could destroy them the way the Lord had commanded Moses to do.

²¹The Anakite people* lived in the hill country in the area of Hebron, Debir, Anab, and Judah. Joshua fought them and completely destroyed all those people and their towns. ²²There were no Anakite people left living in the land of Israel. The only Anakite people that were left alive were in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. ²³Joshua took control of the whole land of Israel, just as the Lord had told Moses long ago. The Lord gave that land to Israel just like he promised. And Joshua divided the land among the family groups of Israel. Finally, the fighting ended and there was peace in the land.

Kings Defeated by Israel

12 The people of Israel had taken control of the land east of the Jordan River. They had all the land from Arnon Ravine to Mount Hermon and all the land along the eastern side of the Jordan Valley. Here are all of the kings the people of Israel defeated to take this land:

²They defeated₁ Sihon, the king of the Amorite people living in the city of Heshbon. He ruled the land from Aroer at the Arnon Ravine to the Jabbok River. His land started in the center of that ravine. This was their border with the Ammonite people. Sihon ruled over half of the land of Gilead. ³He also ruled over

the eastern side of Jordan Valley from Lake Galilee to the Dead Sea (Salt Sea). And he ruled from Beth Jeshimoth to the south to the hills of Pisgah.

⁴They also defeated₁ Og, king of Bashan. Og was from the Rephaite people. He ruled the land in Ashtaroth and Edrei. ⁵Og ruled over Mount Hermon, Salecah, and all of the area of Bashan. His land ended where the people of Geshur and Maacah lived. Og also ruled half of the land of Gilead. This land stopped at the land of Sihon, the king of Heshbon.

⁶The Lord’s servant Moses and the people of Israel defeated all these kings. And Moses gave that land to the family group of Reuben, the family group of Gad, and half the family group of Manasseh. Moses gave them this land to be their own.

⁷The people of Israel also defeated kings in the land that was west of the Jordan River. Joshua led the people in this land. Joshua gave the people this land and divided it among the twelve family groups. This was the land that God promised to give to them. This land was between Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon and Mount Halak near Seir. ⁸This included the hill country, the western foothills, the Jordan Valley, the eastern mountains, the desert, and the Negev.* This was the land where the Hittite people, the Amorite people, the Canaanite people, the Perizzite people, the Hivite people, and the Jebusite people lived. Here is a list of the kings the people of Israel defeated:

⁹	the king of Jericho	1
	the king of Ai near Bethel	1
¹⁰	the king of Jerusalem	1
	the king of Hebron	1
¹¹	the king of Jarmuth	1
	the king of Lachish	1
¹²	the king of Eglon	1
	the king of Gezer	1
¹³	the king of Debir	1
	the king of Geder	1
¹⁴	the king of Hormah	1
	the king of Arad	1

Anakite people Descendants of Anak. They were a family famous for tall and powerful fighting men. See Num. 13:33.

Negev The desert area south of Judah.

15	the king of Libnah	1
	the king of Adullam	1
16	the king of Makkedah	1
	the king of Bethel	1
17	the king of Tappuah	1
	the king of Hephher	1
18	the king of Aphek	1
	the king of Sharon	1
19	the king of Madon	1
	the king of Hazor	1
20	the king of Shimron Meron	1
	the king of Acshaph	1
21	the king of Taanach	1
	the king of Megiddo	1
22	the king of Kedesh	1
	the king of Jokneam in Carmel	1
23	the king of Dor at Mount Dor	1
	the king of Goyim in Gilgal	1
24	the king of Tirzah	1
	Total number of kings	31

Land Not Yet Taken

13 When Joshua was very old, the Lord said to him, “Joshua you have grown old, but there is still much land for you to take control of. ²You have not yet taken the land of Geshur or the land of the Philistines. ³You have not yet taken the area from the Shihor River* at Egypt to the border of Ekron and the land further north. That land still belongs to the Canaanite people. You must still defeat the five Philistine leaders at Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. You must also defeat the Avvite people ⁴who live south of the Canaanite land. ⁵You have not yet defeated the area of the Gebalites. And also there is the area of Lebanon east of Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath.

⁶“People of Sidon are living in the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim. But I will force out all of these people for the people of Israel. Be sure to remember this land when you divide the land among the people of Israel. Do this like I told you. ⁷Now, divide the land among the nine family groups and half of the family group of Manasseh.”

Shihor River Probably one of the eastern branches of the Nile River.

Dividing the Land

⁸The family groups of Reuben, Gad, and the other half of Manasseh had already taken all of their land. The Lord’s servant, Moses gave them the land east of the Jordan River. ⁹Their land started at Aroer by the Arnon Ravine and continued to the town in the middle of the ravine. And it included the whole plain from Medeba to Dibon. ¹⁰All the towns that Sihon the king of the Amorite people ruled were in that land. That king ruled in the city of Heshbon. The land continued to the area where the Amorite people lived. ¹¹Also the town of Gilead was in that land. And the area where the people of Geshur and Maacah lived was in that land. All of Mount Hermon and all of Bashan as far as Salecah was in that land. ¹²All the kingdom of King Og was in that land. King Og ruled in Bashan. In the past he ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei. Og was from the Rephaite people. In the past Moses had defeated those people and had taken their land. ¹³The people of Israel did not force out the people of Geshur and Maacah. Those people still live among the people of Israel today.

¹⁴The family group of Levi is the only family group that did not get any land. Instead, the people of Levi get all the animals that are offered made by fire to the Lord God of Israel. That is what the Lord promised them.

¹⁵Moses had given each family group from the family group of Reuben some land. This is the land they received: ¹⁶It was the land from Aroer near the Arnon Ravine to the town of Medeba. This included the whole plain and the town in the middle of the ravine. ¹⁷The land continued to Heshbon. It included all the towns on the plain. Those towns were Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, ¹⁸Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, ¹⁹Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the hill in the valley, ²⁰Beth Peor, the hills of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth. ²¹So that land included all the towns on the plain and all the area that Sihon the king of the Amorite people had ruled. That king ruled at the town of Heshbon. But Moses had defeated him and the leaders of the Midianite people. Those leaders were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba. (All these leaders fought together with

Sihon.) All these leaders lived in that country. ²²The people of Israel defeated Balaam son of Beor. (Balaam tried to use magic to tell the future.) The people of Israel killed many people during the fighting. ²³The land that was given to Reuben stopped at the shore of the Jordan River. So the land that was given to the family groups of Reuben included all these towns and their fields that were listed.

²⁴This is the land Moses gave to the family group of Gad. Moses gave this land to each family group:

²⁵The land of Jazer and all the towns of Gilead. Moses also gave them half of the land of the Ammonite people as far as Aroer near Rabbah. ²⁶That land included the area from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim. That land included the area from Mahanaim to the land of Debir. ²⁷That land included the valley of Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth and Zaphon. All the other land that Sihon, the king of Heshbon, had ruled was included in this land. This is the land on the east side of the Jordan River. The land continued to the end of Lake Galilee. ²⁸All this land is the land Moses gave the family group of Gad. That land included all the towns that were listed. Moses gave that land to each family group.

²⁹This is the land Moses gave to half of the family group of Manasseh. Half of all the families in the family group of Manasseh got this land:

³⁰The land started at Mahanaim. The land included all of Bashan, all the land ruled by Og, king of Bashan, all the towns of Jair in Bashan. (In all, there were 60 cities.) ³¹The land also included half of Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei. (Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei were the cities where king Og had lived.) All this land was given to the family of Makir son of Manasseh. Half of all those sons got this land.

³²Moses gave all this land to these family groups. Moses did this while the people were camped on the plains of Moab. This was across the Jordan River, east of Jericho. ³³Moses did not give any land to the family group of Levi. The Lord, God of Israel, promised that he himself would be the gift for the family group of Levi.

14 Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of all the family groups of Israel decided what land to give to the people. ²The Lord had commanded Moses long ago the way he wanted the people to choose their land. The people of the nine and a half family groups threw lots* to decide which land they would get. ³Moses had already given the two and a half family groups their land east of the Jordan River. But the family group of Levi was not given any land like the other people. ⁴[The twelve family groups were given their own land.] The sons of Joseph had divided into two family groups—Manasseh and Ephraim. [And each family group received some land. But] the people from the family group of Levi were not given any land. They were given only some towns to live in. [And these towns were in every family group’s land.] They were also given fields for their animals. ⁵The Lord had told Moses how to divide the land among the family groups of Israel. The people of Israel divided the land the way the Lord had commanded.

Caleb Gets His Land

⁶One day some people from the family group of Judah went to Joshua at Gilgal. One of those people was Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite. Caleb said to Joshua, “You remember the things the Lord said at Kadesh Barnea. The Lord was speaking to Moses, his servant.* The Lord was talking about you and me. ⁷Moses, the Lord’s servant, sent me to look at the land where we were going. I was 40 years old at that time. When I came back I told Moses what I thought about the land. ⁸The other men that went with me told the people things that made them afraid. But I truly believed that the Lord would allow us to take that land. ⁹So that day Moses made a promise to me. He said, ‘That land where you went will become your land. Your children will own that land forever. I will give you that land because you truly believed in the Lord, my God.’

lots Sticks, stones, or pieces of bone used like dice for making decisions. See Proverbs 16:33.

his servant Literally, “the man of God.”

¹⁰“Now, the Lord has kept me alive 45 years—like he said he would do. During that time we all wandered in the desert. Now, here I am, 85 years old. ¹¹I am still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. I am as ready to fight as I was then. ¹²So now, give me the hill country that the Lord promised me that day long ago. At that time, you heard that the strong Anakite people* lived there. And the cities were very big and well protected. But now, maybe the Lord will be with me, and I will take that land like the Lord said.”

¹³Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh. Joshua gave him the city of Hebron as his own. ¹⁴And that city still belongs to the family of Caleb son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite. That land still belongs to his people because he trusted and obeyed the Lord, God of Israel. ¹⁵In the past that city was called Kiriath Arba. That city was named for the greatest man among the Anakite people—a man named Arba.

After this, there was peace in that land.

Land for Judah

15 The land that was given to Judah was divided among the families of that family group. That land went to the border of Edom and south all the way to the desert of Zin at the edge of Teman. ²The southern border of Judah’s land started at the south end of the Dead Sea. ³The border went south to Scorpion Pass and continued on to Zin. Then the border continued south to Kadesh Barnea. The border continued past Hezron to Addar. From Addar the border turned and continued to Karka. ⁴The border continued to Azmon, the brook of Egypt, and then to the Mediterranean Sea. All that land was on their southern border.

⁵Their eastern border was the shore of the Dead Sea to the area where the Jordan River flowed into the sea.

Their northern border started at the area where the Jordan River flowed into the Dead Sea. ⁶Then the northern border went to Beth Hoglah and continued north of Beth Arabah. The border continued to the stone of Bohan.

(Bohan was the son of Reuben). ⁷Then the northern border went through the Valley of Achor to Debir. There the border turned to the north and went to Gilgal. Gilgal is across from the road that goes through the mountain of Adummim. That is on the south side of the brook. The border continued along the waters of En Shemesh. The border stopped at En Rogel. ⁸Then the border went through the Valley of Ben Hinnom beside the southern side of the Jebusite city. (That Jebusite city was called Jerusalem.) At that place the border went to the top of the hill on the west side of Hinnom Valley. This was at the northern end of Rephaim Valley. ⁹From that place the border went to the spring of water of Nephtoah. Then the border went to the cities near Mount Ephron. At that place the border turned and went to Baalah. (Baalah is also called Kiriath Jearim.) ¹⁰At Baalah the border turned west and went to the hill country of Seir. The border continued along the north side of Mount Jearim (Kesalon) and continued down to Beth Shemesh. From there the border went past Timnah. ¹¹Then the border went to the hill north of Ekron. From that place the border turned to Shikkeron and went past Mount Baalah. The border continued on to Jabneel and ended at the Mediterranean Sea. ¹²The Mediterranean Sea was the western border of the land of Judah. So the land of Judah was inside these four borders. The families of Judah lived in this area.

¹³The Lord had commanded Joshua to give Caleb son of Jephunneh part of the land in Judah. So Joshua gave Caleb the land God commanded. Joshua gave him the town of Kiriath Arba (Hebron). (Arba was the father of Anak.) ¹⁴Caleb forced the three Anakite families living in Hebron to leave there. Those families were Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. They were from the family of Anak. ¹⁵Then Caleb fought against the people living in Debir. (In the past, Debir was also called Kiriath Sepher.) ¹⁶Caleb said, “I want to attack Kiriath Sepher. I will give my daughter Acsah to the man that attacks and defeats that city. I will let that man marry my daughter.”

¹⁷Othniel was the son of Caleb’s brother Kenaz. Othniel defeated that city, so Caleb

Anakite people Descendants of Anak. They were a family famous for tall and powerful fighting men. See Num. 13:33.

gave his daughter Acsah to Othniel to be his wife. ¹⁸Acsah went to live with Othniel. Othniel told Acsah* to ask her father Caleb for some more land. [Acsah went to her father.] When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, “What do you want?”

¹⁹Acsah answered, “Give me a blessing.* You gave me dry desert land in the Negev.* Please give me some land with water on it.” So Caleb gave her what she wanted. He gave her the upper and lower pools of water in that land.

²⁰The family group of Judah got the land that God promised them. Each family group got part of the land. ²¹The family group of Judah got all the towns in the southern part of the Negev.* These towns were near the border of Edom. Here is a list of those towns: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²²Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵Hazor Hadattah, Keriath Hezron (Hazor), ²⁶Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, ²⁸Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, ²⁹Baalalah, Iim, Ezem, ³⁰Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, ³¹Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³²Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. In all, there were 29 towns and all their fields.

³³The family group of Judah also got towns in the western foothills. Here is a list of those towns: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (Gederothaim). In all, there were 14 towns and all their fields.

³⁷The family group of Judah was also given these towns: Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, ³⁸Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, ³⁹Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, ⁴⁰Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, ⁴¹Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah. In all, there were 16 towns and all the fields around them.

⁴²The people of Judah also got these towns: Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah. In all,

there were nine towns and all the fields around them.

⁴⁵The people of Judah also got the town of Ekron and all the small towns and fields near it. ⁴⁶They also got the area west of Ekron and all the fields and towns near Ashdod. ⁴⁷All the area around Ashdod and the small towns there were part of the land of Judah. The people of Judah also got the area around Gaza and fields and the towns that were near it. Their land continued to the River of Egypt. And their land continued along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴⁸The people of Judah were also given towns in the hill country. Here is a list of those towns: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, ⁴⁹Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (Debir), ⁵⁰Anab, Eshtemoah, Anim, ⁵¹Goshen, Holon, and Giloh. In all, there were eleven towns and all the fields around them.

⁵²The people of Judah were also given these towns: Arab, Dumah, Eshan, ⁵³Janim, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴Humtah, Kiriath Arba (Hebron), and Zior. There were nine towns and all the fields around them.

⁵⁵The people of Judah were also given these towns: Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah. In all, there were ten towns and all the fields around them.

⁵⁸The people of Judah were also given these towns: Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon. In all, there were six towns and all the fields around them.

⁶⁰The people of Judah were also given the two towns of Rabbah and Kiriath Beth (Kiriath Jearim).

⁶¹The people of Judah were also given towns in the desert. Here is a list of those towns: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶²Nibshan, Salt City, and En Gedi. In all, there were six towns and all the fields around them.

⁶³The army of Judah was not able to force out the Jebusite people living in Jerusalem. So today there are still Jebusite people living among the people of Judah in Jerusalem.

Land for Ephraim and Manasseh

16 This is the land that the family of Joseph got. This land started at the Jordan River near Jericho and continued to

Othniel told Acsah Or, “Acsah told Othniel.”

Give me a blessing Or, “Please welcome me.” Or, “Give me a stream of water.”

Negev The desert area south of Judah.

the waters of Jericho. (This was just east of Jericho.) The border went up from Jericho to the hill country of Bethel. ²Then the border continued from Bethel (Luz) to the Arkite border at Ataroth. ³Then the border went west to the border of the Japhletite people. The border continued to Lower Beth Horon. Then the border went to Gezer and continued to the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴So the people of Manasseh and Ephraim got their land. (Manasseh and Ephraim were sons of Joseph.)

⁵This is the land that was given to the people of Ephraim: Their eastern border started at Ataroth Addar near Upper Beth Horon. ⁶And the western border started at Micmethath. The border turned to the east to Taanath Shiloh and continued east to Janoah. ⁷Then the border went from Janoah down to Ataroth and to Naarah. The border continued until it touched Jericho and stopped at the Jordan River. ⁸The border went from Tappuah west to Kanah Ravine and ended at the sea. This is all the land that was given to the Ephraim people. Each family in that family group got a part of this land. ⁹Many of the border towns of Ephraim were actually in Manasseh's borders, but the people of Ephraim got those towns and the fields around them. ¹⁰But the Ephraimite people were not able to force the Canaanite people to leave the town of Gezer. So the Canaanite people still live among the Ephraimite people today. But the Canaanite people became slaves of the Ephraimite people.

17 Then land was given to the family group of Manasseh. Manasseh was Joseph's first son. Manasseh's first son was Makir, the father of Gilead.* Makir was a great soldier, so the areas of Gilead and Bashan were given to the Makir family. ²Land was also given to the other families in the family group of Manasseh. Those families were Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hopher, and Shemida. All these men were the other sons of Manasseh, the son of Joseph.

The families of these men got their share of the land.

³Zelophehad was the son of Hopher. Hopher was the son of Gilead. Gilead was the son of Makir, and Makir was the son of Manasseh. Zelophehad did not have any sons, but he had five daughters. The daughters were named Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴The daughters went to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and all the leaders. The daughters said, "The Lord told Moses to give us land the same as our male relatives." So he obeyed the Lord and gave the daughters some land. So these daughters got land the same as their uncles.

⁵So the family group of Manasseh had ten areas of land west of the Jordan River and two more areas of land, Gilead and Bashan, on the other side of the Jordan River. ⁶So these women from the family group of Manasseh got land the same as the men. The land of Gilead was given to the rest of the families of Manasseh.

⁷The lands of Manasseh were in the area between Asher and Micmethath. This is near Shechem. The border went south to the En Tappuah area. ⁸The land around Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town itself did not. The town of Tappuah was at the border of Manasseh's land and it belonged to the people of Ephraim. ⁹The border of Manasseh continued south to Kanah Ravine. This area belonged to Manasseh's family group, but the cities belonged to the people of Ephraim. Manasseh's border was on the north side of the river and it continued west to the Mediterranean Sea. ¹⁰The land to the south belonged to Ephraim. And the land to the north belonged to Manasseh. The Mediterranean Sea was the western border. The border touched Asher's land in the north and Issachar's land in the east.

¹¹The people of Manasseh also had towns in the area of Issachar and Asher. Beth Shean, Ibleam and the small towns around them belonged to the people of Manasseh. People of Manasseh also lived in Dor, Endor, Taanach, Megiddo, and the small towns around those cities. They also lived in the three towns of Napthoth. ¹²The people of

father of Gilead Or, "the leader of the area of Gilead."

Manasseh were not able to defeat those cities. So the Canaanite people continued to live there. ¹³But the people of Israel grew strong. When this happened, they forced the people of Canaan to work for them. But they did not force the Canaanite people to leave that land.

¹⁴The family group of Joseph spoke to Joshua and said, “You gave us only one area of land. But we are many people. Why did you only give us one part of all the land that the Lord gave his people?”

¹⁵Joshua answered them, “If you have too many people, then go up to wooded area in the hill country and clear that land and make it useable. That land now belongs to the Perizzite people and the Rephaite people. But if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, then go take that land.”

¹⁶The people of Joseph said, “It is true that the hill country of Ephraim is not large enough for us. But the Canaanite people living there have powerful weapons—they have iron chariots!* And those people control Jezreel Valley, Beth Shean and all the small towns in that area.”

¹⁷Then Joshua said to the people of Joseph, to Ephraim, and to Manasseh, “But there are many, many of you. And you are very powerful. You should get more than one share of the land. ¹⁸You will take the hill country. It is a forest, but you can cut down the trees and make it a good place to live. And you will own all of it. You will force the Canaanite people to leave that land. You will defeat them even if they are strong and have powerful weapons.”

Dividing the Rest of the Land

18All of the Israelite people gathered together at Shiloh. At that place they set up the Meeting Tent.* The people of Israel controlled that country. They had defeated all the enemies in that land. ²But at this time there were still seven family groups of Israel

that had not yet gotten the land God had promised them.

³So Joshua said to the people of Israel, “Why do you wait so long to take your land? The Lord, the God of your fathers, has given this land to you. ⁴So each of your family groups should choose three men. I will send those men out to study the land. They will describe that land, and then they will come back to me. ⁵They will divide the land into seven parts. The people of Judah will keep their land in the south. The people of Joseph will keep their land in the north. ⁶But you should describe the land and divide it into seven parts. Bring the map to me, and we will let the Lord our God decide which family group will get which land.* ⁷The Levite people do not get a share of the land. Their share is to serve the Lord as priests. Gad, Reuben, and half the family group of Manasseh have already received the land that was promised to them. They are on the east side of the Jordan River. Moses, the Lord’s servant, already gave them that land.”

⁸So the men that were chosen went to look at the land and write a description of it. Joshua told them, “Go all through the land and write a description of it. Then come back to me at Shiloh. Then I will throw lots* and let the Lord divide the land for you.”

⁹So the men went into the land. The men went all through the land and wrote a description of it for Joshua. They listed all the cities and divided the land into seven parts. Then they went back to Joshua at Shiloh. ¹⁰Joshua threw lots* for them in front of the Lord at Shiloh. In this way, Joshua divided the land and gave each family group its part of the land.

Land for Benjamin

¹¹The family group of Benjamin was given the land that was between the areas of Judah and Joseph. Each family in the family group of Benjamin got their land. This is the land

chariots Small wagons used in war. They were much faster and could carry more weapons than soldiers on foot.

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle) where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

we ... land Literally, “I will throw lots here before the Lord our God.

lots Sticks, stones, or pieces of bone used like dice for making decisions. See Proverbs 16:33.

that was chosen for Benjamin: ¹²The northern border started at the Jordan River. The border went along the northern edge of Jericho. Then the border went west into the hill country. The border continued until it was just east of Beth Aven. ¹³Then the border went south to Luz (Bethel). Then the border went down to Ataroth Addar. Ataroth Addar is on the hill south of Lower Beth Horon. ¹⁴At the hill south of Beth Horon, the border turned south and went along the west side of the hill. The border went to Kiriath Baal (also called Kiriath Jearim). This town belonged to the people of Judah. This was the western border.

¹⁵The southern border started near Kiriath Jearim and went to the River of Nephtoah. ¹⁶Then the border went down to the bottom of the hill near the valley of Ben Hinnom, north of Rephaim Valley. The border continued down Hinnom Valley just south of the Jebusite city. Then the border went on to En Rogel. ¹⁷There, the border turned north and went to En Shemesh. The border continued to Geliloth. (Geliloth is near the Adummim Pass in the mountains.) The border went down to the Great Stone that was named for Bohan, the son of Reuben. ¹⁸The border continued to the northern part of Beth Arabah. Then the border went down into the Jordan Valley. ¹⁹Then the border went to the northern part of Beth Hoglah and ended at the north shore of the Dead Sea. This is where the Jordan River flows into that sea. That was the southern border.

²⁰The Jordan River was the eastern border. So this was the land that was given to the family group of Benjamin. Those were the borders on all sides. ²¹Each family got its land. These are their cities: Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, ²²Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, ²³Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴Kephar Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba. There were twelve cities and their fields around them.

²⁵The family group of Benjamin also got Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, ²⁶Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, ²⁷Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸Zelah, Haeleph, the Jebusite city (*Jerusalem*), Gibeah, and Kiriath. There were 14 cities and the fields around them. The family group of Benjamin got all these areas.

Land for Simeon

19 Then Joshua gave all the families in the family group of Simeon their share of the land. The land they got was inside the area that belonged to Judah. ²This is what they got: Beersheba (also called Sheba), Moladah, ³Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, ⁶Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhem. There were 13 towns and all the fields around them.

⁷They also got the towns of Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. There were four towns and all the fields around them. ⁸They also got all the fields around the cities as far as Baalath Beer (Ramah in the Negev). So that was the area that was given to the family group of Simeon. Each family got its land. ⁹Simeon's share of land was within the area that Judah got. The people of Judah had more land than they needed, so the people of Simeon got part of their land.

Land for Zebulun

¹⁰The next family group that got their land was Zebulun. Each family in Zebulun got the land that was promised to them. The border of Zebulun went as far as Sarid. ¹¹Then the border went west to Maralah and just touched Dabbesheth. Then the border went along the ravine near Jokneam. ¹²Then the border turned to the east. It went from Sarid to Kisloth Tabor. Then the border went on to Daberath and to Japhia. ¹³Then the border continued to the east to Gath Hopher and Eth Kazin. The border ended at Rimmon. Then the border turned and went to Neah. ¹⁴At Neah the border turned again and went north to Hannathon and then continued to the Valley of Iphtah El. ¹⁵Inside this border were the cities of Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. In all, there were twelve towns and all the fields around them.

¹⁶So these are the towns and fields around them that were given to Zebulun. Each family in Zebulun got its part of the land.

Land for Issachar

¹⁷The fourth part of the land was given to the family group of Issachar. Each family in that family group got its part of the land. ¹⁸This

is the land that was given to that family group: Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pазzez.

²²The border of their land touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth Shemesh. The border stopped at the Jordan River. In all, there were 16 towns and the fields around them. ²³These cities and towns were part of the land that was given to the family group of Issachar. Each family got its part of the land.

Land for Asher

²⁴The fifth part of land was given to the family group of Asher. Each family in that family group got its part of the land. ²⁵This is the land that was given to that family group: Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph, ²⁶Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal.

The western border continued to Mount Carmel and Shihor Libnath. ²⁷Then the border turned to the east. The border went to Beth Dagon. The border touched Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah El. Then the border went north of Beth Emek and Neiel. The border passed north of Cabul. ²⁸Then the border went to Abdon,* Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah. The border continued to the Greater Sidon area. ²⁹Then the border went back south to Ramah. The border continued to the strong city of Tyre. Then the border turned and went to Hosah. The border ended at the sea, near Aczib, ³⁰Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob.

In all there were 22 towns and the fields around them. ³¹These cities and the fields around them were given to the family group of Asher. Each family in that family group got its share of the land.

Land for Naphtali

³²The sixth part of land was given to the family group of Naphtali. Each family in that family group got its share of the land. ³³The border of their land started at the large tree near Zaananim. This is near Heleph. Then the border went through Adami Nekeb and

Jabneel. The border continued to Lakkum and ended at the Jordan River. ³⁴Then the border went to the west through Aznoth Tabor. The border stopped at Hukkok. The southern border touched Zebulun and the western border touched Asher. The border went to Judah, at the Jordan River to the east. ³⁵There were some very strong cities inside these borders. Those cities were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, ³⁶Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, ³⁸Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. In all, there were 19 towns and all the fields around them.

³⁹These cities and the fields around them were given to the family group of Naphtali. Each family in that family group got its land.

Land for Dan

⁴⁰Then land was given to the family group of Dan. Each family in that family group got its land. ⁴¹This is the land that was given to them: Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, ⁴²Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, ⁴⁶Me Jarkon, Rakkon, and the area near Joppa.

⁴⁷But the people of Dan had trouble taking their land. There were strong enemies there and the people of Dan could not easily defeat them. So the people of Dan went to the northern part of Israel and fought against Laish* They defeated Laish and killed the people who lived there. So the people of Dan lived in the town of Laish. They changed the name to Dan because that was the name of the father of their family group. ⁴⁸All of these cities and fields around them were given to the family group of Dan. Each family got its share of the land.

Land for Joshua

⁴⁹So the leaders finished dividing the land and giving it to the different family groups. After they finished, all the people of Israel decided to give Joshua son of Nun some land too. This was land that was promised to him.

Abdon Or, "Ebron."

Laish Or, "Leshem."

⁵⁰The Lord had commanded that he get this land. So they gave Joshua the town of Timnath Serah* in the hill country of Ephraim. This was the town that Joshua told them he wanted. So Joshua built the town stronger and lived there.

⁵¹So all of these lands were given to the different family groups of Israel. Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of each family group met together at Shiloh to divide the land. They met before the Lord at the entrance of the Meeting Tent.* So they finished dividing the land.

Cities of Safety

20 Then the Lord said to Joshua: ²“I used Moses to give you a command. Moses told you to choose cities to be special cities of safety. ³If any person kills another person, but it is an accident and he did not mean to kill that person, then he can go to a city of safety to hide from the relatives who want to kill him.

⁴“This is what that person must do. When he runs away and goes to one of those cities, he must stop at the entrance of the city. He must stand at the gate and tell the leaders of the people what happened. Then the leaders can allow him to enter the city. They will give him a place to live among them. ⁵But the man who is chasing that person might follow him to that city. If this happens, the leaders of the city must not give him up. They must protect the person who came to them for safety because he killed a person by accident. He was not angry and did not plan to kill the person. It was something that just happened. ⁶That person should stay in the city until he has been judged by the court in that city. And he should stay in that city until the time that the high priest dies. Then he can go back to his own home in the town he ran away from.”

⁷So the people of Israel chose some cities to be called “Cities of Safety.” These cities were:

Timnath Serah Or, “Timnath Heres.”

Meeting Tent The Holy Tent (tabernacle) where the people of Israel went to meet with God.

Kedesh in Galilee, in the hill country of Naphtali;
Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim;
Kiriath Arba (Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.

- ⁸ Bezer, east of the Jordan River across from Jericho, in the desert area in the land of Reuben;
Ramoth in Gilead in the land of Gad;
Golan in Bashan in the land of Manasseh.

⁹Any Israelite or any foreigner living among them who killed someone accidentally was allowed to run away to one of those cities of safety. Then the person could be safe there and would not be killed by anyone who was chasing him. The person would be judged by the court in that city.

Towns for Priests and Levites

21 The family rulers of the Levite family group went to talk to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and the rulers of the other family groups of Israel. ²This happened at the town of Shiloh in the land of Canaan. The Levite rulers said to them, “The Lord gave Moses a command. He commanded that you give us towns to live in. And he commanded that you give us fields where our animals can eat.” ³So the people of Israel obeyed this command from the Lord. They gave the Levite people these towns and the land around them for their animals:

⁴The Kohath family were descendants of Aaron the priest from the family group of Levi. Part of the Kohath family was given 13 towns in the areas that belonged to Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

⁵The other Kohath families were given ten towns in the areas that belonged to Ephraim, Dan, and half of Manasseh.

⁶The people from the Gershon family were given 13 towns. These towns were in the areas that belonged to Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half of Manasseh that was in Bashan.

⁷The people from the Merari family were given twelve towns. These twelve towns came from the areas that belonged to Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

⁸So the people of Israel gave the Levite people these towns and the fields around them, just like the Lord had told Moses.

⁹These are the names of the towns that were in the areas that belonged to Judah and Simeon. ¹⁰The first choice of towns was given to Levites from the Kohath family. ¹¹They gave them Kiriath Arba (This is Hebron. It was named for a man named Arba. Arba was the father of Anak.) They also gave them some land near the town for their animals. ¹²But the fields and the small towns around the city of Kiriath Arba belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh. ¹³So they gave the city of Hebron to Aaron’s descendants. (Hebron was a city of safety.) They also gave Aaron’s descendants the towns of Libnah, ¹⁴Jattir, Eshtemoa, ¹⁵Holon, Debir, ¹⁶Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh. They also gave them some of the land near these towns for their animals. They gave nine towns to these two groups.

¹⁷They also gave Aaron’s descendants cities that belonged to the family group of Benjamin. These cities were Gibeon, Geba, ¹⁸Anathoth, and Almon. They gave them these four towns and some of the land near the towns for their animals. ¹⁹In all, they gave 13 towns to the priests. (All priests were descendants of Aaron.) They also gave them some land near each town for their animals.

²⁰The other people from the Kohathite family were given towns that were in the areas that belonged to the family group of Ephraim. They got these towns: ²¹The city of Shechem from the hill country of Ephraim. (Shechem was a city of safety.) They also got Gezer, ²²Kibzaim, and Beth Horon. In all, Ephraim gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

²³The family group of Dan gave them Eltekeh, Gibbethon, ²⁴Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon. In all, Dan gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

²⁵Half of the family group of Manasseh gave them Taanach and Gath Rimmon. In all, this half of Manasseh gave them two towns and some land around each town for their animals.

²⁶In all, the rest of the people from the Kohath family got ten towns and some land around each town for their animals.

²⁷The Gershon family was also from the family group of Levi. They got these towns:

Half of the family group of Manasseh gave them Golan in Bashan. (Golan was a city of safety.) Manasseh also gave them Be Eshtarah. In all, this half of Manasseh gave them two towns and some land around each town for their animals.

²⁸The family group of Issachar gave them Kishion, Daberath, ²⁹Jarmuth, and En Gannim. In all, Issachar gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³⁰The family group of Asher gave them Mishal, Abdon, ³¹Helkath, and Rehob. In all, Asher gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³²The family group of Naphtali gave them Kedesh in Galilee. (Kedesh was a city of safety.) Naphtali also gave them Hammoth Dor and Kartan. In all, Naphtali gave them three towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³³In all, the Gershon family got 13 towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³⁴The other Levite group was the Merari family. The Merari family got these towns:

The family group of Zebulun gave them Jokneam, Kartah, ³⁵Dimnah, and Nahalal. In all, Zebulun gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³⁶The family group of Reuben gave them Bezer, Jahaz, ³⁷Kedemoth, and Mephaath. In all, Reuben gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

³⁸The family group of Gad gave them Ramoth in Gilead. (Ramoth was a city of safety.) They also gave them Mahanaim, ³⁹Heshbon, and Jazer. In all, Gad gave them four towns and some land around each town for their animals.

⁴⁰In all, the last family of Levites, the Merari family, got twelve towns.

⁴¹So the Levites got a total of 48 towns and some land around each town for their animals. All these towns were in areas that belonged to the other family groups. ⁴²Each of these towns had some land in it for their animals. That was true for every town.

⁴³So the Lord kept the promise that he had made to the people of Israel. He gave the

people all the land that he had promised. The people took the land and lived there. ⁴⁴And the Lord allowed them to have peace on all sides of their land, just like he had promised their ancestors.* None of their enemies defeated them. The Lord allowed the people of Israel to defeat every enemy. ⁴⁵The Lord kept every promise that he made to the people of Israel. There were no promises that he failed to keep. Every promise came true.

Three Family Groups Go Home

22 Then Joshua called a meeting of all the people from the family groups of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. ²Joshua said to them, “Moses was the Lord’s servant. You obeyed all things that Moses told you to do. And also, you obeyed all of my commands. ³And all this time you have supported all the other people of Israel. You carefully obeyed all the commands that the Lord your God gave you. ⁴The Lord your God promised to give the people of Israel peace. And now, the Lord has kept his promise. So now you can go home. The Lord’s servant Moses gave you the land on the east side of the Jordan River. Now you can go home to that land. ⁵But remember—continue to obey the law that Moses gave you. You must love the Lord your God and obey his commands. You must continue to follow him and serve him the very best that you can.”

⁶Then Joshua said goodbye to them and they left. They went home. ⁷Moses had given the land of Bashan to half of the Manasseh family group. Joshua gave land on the west side of the Jordan River to the other half of the Manasseh family group. Joshua blessed them and sent them home. ⁸He said, “You have become very rich. You have many animals. You have gold and silver and expensive jewelry. You have many beautiful clothes. You have taken many things from your enemies. Go home and divide these things among yourselves.”

⁹So the people from the family groups of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh left the other

people of Israel. They were at Shiloh in Canaan. They left that place and went back to Gilead. They went home to their own land—the land that Moses gave them. The Lord had commanded Moses to give them this land.

¹⁰The people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh went to the place called Geliloth. This was near the Jordan River in the land of Canaan. At that place the people built a beautiful altar. ¹¹But the other people of Israel that were still at Shiloh heard about the altar that these three family groups built. They heard that the altar was at the border of Canaan at the place called Geliloth. It was near the Jordan River on Israel’s side. ¹²All the people of Israel became very angry at these three family groups. They met together and decided to fight against them.

¹³So the people of Israel sent some men to talk to the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. The leader of these men was Phinehas, son of Eleazar the priest. ¹⁴They also sent ten of the leaders of the family groups there. There was one man from each family group of Israel that was at Shiloh.

¹⁵So these eleven men went to Gilead. They went to talk to the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. The eleven men said to them, ¹⁶“All the people of Israel ask you: Why did you do this thing against the God of Israel? Why did you turn against the Lord? Why did you build an altar for yourselves? You know that this is against God’s teachings! ¹⁷Remember what happened at Peor? We are still suffering because of that sin. Because of that great sin, God caused many of the people of Israel to become very sick. And we are still suffering because of that sickness today. ¹⁸And now you are doing the same thing! You are turning against the Lord! Will you refuse to follow the Lord? If you don’t stop what you are doing, the Lord will be angry with every person in Israel.

¹⁹“If your land is not a good enough place to worship, then come over into our land. The Lord’s Tent is in our land. You can have some of our land and live there. But don’t turn against the Lord. Don’t build another altar. We already have the altar of the Lord our God at the Meeting Tent.

ancestors Literally, “fathers,” meaning a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

²⁰“Remember the man named Achan son of Zerah. He refused to obey the command about things that must be destroyed. That one man broke God’s law, but all the people of Israel were punished. Achan died because of his sin. But also many other people died.”

²¹The people from the family groups of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh answered the eleven men. They said, ²²“The Lord is our God! Again we say that the Lord is our God!* And God knows why we did this thing. We want you to know also. You can judge what we did. If you believe that we have done something wrong, then you can kill us. ²³If we broke God’s law, then we ask the Lord himself to punish us. ²⁴Do you think we built this altar for burnt offerings, grain offerings and fellowship offerings? No! We did not build it for that reason. Why did we build this altar? We were afraid that in the future your people would not accept us as part of your nation. Then your people would say that we can’t worship the Lord God of Israel. ²⁵God gave us land on the other side of the Jordan River. This means that the Jordan River separates us. We were afraid that when your children grew up and ruled your land, they would not remember that we were also your people. They would say to us, ‘You people of Reuben and Gad aren’t part of Israel!’ Then your children would make our children stop worshipping the Lord.

²⁶“So we decided to build this altar. But we did not plan to use it for burning offerings and sacrifices. ²⁷The real reason we wanted our altar was to show our people that we worship the same God as you. This altar will be the proof to you and to us and to all our future children that we worship the Lord. We give our sacrifices, grain offerings and fellowship offerings to the Lord. We wanted your children to grow up and know that we are also people of Israel like yourselves. ²⁸In the future, if it happens that your children say that we do not belong to Israel, then our children can say, ‘Look! Our fathers who lived before

us made an altar. That altar is exactly like the Lord’s altar [at the Holy Tent]. We do not use this altar for sacrifices—this altar is proof that we are part of Israel.’

²⁹“Truly, we do not want to be against the Lord. We don’t want to stop following him now. We know that the only true altar is the one that is in front of the Holy Tent. That altar belongs to the Lord our God.”

³⁰Phinehas the priest and the leaders with him heard these things the people from Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh said. They were satisfied that these people were telling the truth. ³¹So Phinehas the priest said, “Now we know that the Lord is with us. And we know that you did not turn against him. We are happy that the people of Israel will not be punished by the Lord.”

³²Then Phinehas and the leaders left that place and went home. They left the people of Reuben and Gad in the land of Gilead and went back to Canaan. They went back to the people of Israel and told them what happened. ³³The people of Israel were also satisfied. They were happy and thanked God. They decided not to go and fight against the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. They decided not to destroy the land where those people live.

³⁴The people of Reuben, and Gad gave the altar a name. They called it, “Proof That We Believe the Lord is God.”

Joshua Encourages the People

23 The Lord gave Israel peace from their enemies around them. The Lord made Israel safe. Many years passed, and Joshua became very old. ²At this time, Joshua called a meeting of all the older leaders, heads of families, judges, and officers of the people of Israel. Joshua said, “I have grown very old. ³You have seen the things that the Lord did to our enemies. He did this to help us. The Lord your God fought for you. ⁴Remember that I told you your people could have that land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. I promised to give you that land, but you don’t control it yet. ⁵But the Lord your God will force the people living there to leave. You will take that land. The Lord will force the people living

The Lord ... is our God Or, “YAHWEH is the true God! YAHWEH is the true God!” Literally, “EL ELOHIM YAHWEH! EL ELOHIM YAHWEH.”

there to leave! The Lord your God promised to do this for you.

⁶“You must be careful to obey all the things the Lord has commanded us. Obey everything that is written in the *Book of the Law* of Moses*. Don’t turn away from that law. ⁷There are still some people living among us that are not people of Israel. Those people worship their own gods. Don’t become friends with those people. Don’t serve or worship their gods. ⁸You must continue to follow the Lord your God. You have done this in the past, and you must continue to do it.

⁹“The Lord helped you to defeat many great and powerful nations. The Lord forced those people to leave. No nation has been able to defeat you. ¹⁰With the Lord’s help, one man from Israel could defeat 1,000 enemy soldiers. Why? Because the Lord your God fights for you. The Lord promised to do this. ¹¹So you must continue to love the Lord your God.

¹²“Don’t stop following the Lord. Don’t become friends with these other people that are not part of Israel. Don’t marry any of their people. But if you do become friends with these people, ¹³then the Lord your God will not help you to defeat your enemies. These people will become like a trap for you. They will cause you pain—like smoke and dust in your eyes. And you will be forced to leave this good land. The Lord your God gave you this land. But you can lose it if you don’t obey this command.

¹⁴“It is almost time for me to die. You know and truly believe that the Lord has done many great things for you. You know that he has not failed in any of his promises. The Lord has kept every promise that he has made to us. ¹⁵Every good promise that the Lord your God made to us has come true. But in the same way, the Lord will make his other promise come true. He promised that if you do wrong, then bad things will happen to you. He promised that he will force you to leave this good land that he gave you. ¹⁶This will happen if you refuse to keep your agreement with the Lord your God. You will lose this

land if you go and serve other gods. You must not worship those other gods. If you do, the Lord will become very angry at you. Then you will quickly be forced to leave this good land that he gave you.”

Joshua Says Goodbye

24 Joshua called all the family groups of Israel to meet together at Shechem. Then Joshua called the older leaders, the heads of the families, the judges, and the officers and the rulers and the judges of Israel. These men stood before God.

²Then Joshua spoke to all the people. He said, “I am telling you what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to you:

A long time ago, your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates River. I am talking about men like Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor. At that time, those men worshiped other gods.

³But I, the Lord, took your father Abraham out of the land on the other side of the River. I led him through the land of Canaan and gave him many, many children. I gave Abraham his son named Isaac. ⁴And I gave Isaac two sons named Jacob and Esau. To Esau, I gave the land around the mountains of Seir. Jacob and his sons did not live there. They went to live in the land of Egypt.

⁵Then I sent Moses and Aaron to Egypt. I wanted them to bring my people out of Egypt. I caused many terrible things to happen to the people of Egypt. Then I brought your people out of Egypt. ⁶So I brought your ancestors out of Egypt. They came to the Red Sea, and the men of Egypt were chasing them. There were chariots and men on horses. ⁷So the people asked me, the Lord, for help. And I caused great trouble to come to the men of Egypt. I, the Lord, caused the sea to cover them. You yourselves saw what I did to the army of Egypt.

After that, you lived in the desert for a long time. ⁸Then I brought you to the land of the Amorite people. This was east of the Jordan River. Those people fought against you, but I allowed you to

defeat them. I gave you the power to destroy those people. Then you took control of that land.

⁹Then Balak, the son of Zippor, the king of Moab, prepared to fight against the people of Israel. The king sent for Balaam the son of Beor. He asked Balaam to curse* you. ¹⁰But I, the Lord, refused to listen to Balaam. So Balaam asked for good things to happen to you! He blessed you many times. I saved you and brought you out of trouble.

¹¹Then you went across the Jordan River to the city of Jericho. The people in Jericho fought against you. Also, the Amorite people, the Perizzite people, the Canaanite people, the Hittite people, the Girgashite people, the Hivite people, and the Jebusite people fought against you. But I allowed you to defeat all of them. ¹²While your army traveled forward, I sent the Hornet* ahead of them. The hornet made the people leave. So you took the land* without using your swords and bows.

¹³I, the Lord, gave that land to you! You didn't work for that land—I gave it to you! You did not build those cities—I gave them to you! And now you live in that land and in those cities. You have gardens of grapevines and olive trees, but you did not have to plant those gardens.”

¹⁴Then Joshua said to the people, “Now you have heard the Lord's words. So you must respect the Lord and truly serve him. Throw away the false gods that your ancestors worshiped. That was something that happened a long time ago on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Now you must serve only the Lord.

¹⁵“But maybe you don't want to serve the Lord. You must choose for yourselves today. Today you must decide who you will serve. Will you serve the gods that your ancestors worshiped when they lived on the other side of

the Euphrates River? Or will you serve the gods of the Amorite people that lived in this land? You must choose for yourselves. But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord!”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “We will never stop following the Lord. We will never serve other gods! ¹⁷We know that it was the Lord God who brought our people out of Egypt. We were slaves in that land. But the Lord did great things for us there. He brought us out of that land and protected us while we traveled through other lands. ¹⁸The Lord helped us to defeat the people living in these lands. The Lord helped us to defeat the Amorite people who lived in this land where we are now. So we will continue to serve the Lord. Why? Because he is our God.”

¹⁹Then Joshua said, “That is not true. You will not be able to continue serving the Lord. The Lord God is holy. And God hates his people worshiping other gods. God will not forgive you if you turn against him like that. ²⁰But you will leave the Lord and serve other gods. And the Lord will cause terrible things to happen to you. The Lord will destroy you. The Lord God has been good to you, but if you turn against him he will destroy you.”

²¹But the people said to Joshua, “No! We will serve the Lord.”

²²Then Joshua said, “Look around at yourselves and the people with you here. Do you all know and agree that you have chosen to serve the Lord? Are you all witnesses to this?”

The people answered, “Yes, it is true! We all see that we have chosen to serve the Lord.”

²³Then Joshua said, “So throw away the false gods that you have among you. Love the Lord the God of Israel with all your heart.”

²⁴Then the people said to Joshua, “We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey him.”

²⁵So that day Joshua made an agreement for the people. Joshua made this agreement at the town called Shechem. It became a law for them to follow. ²⁶Joshua wrote these things in the *Book of the Law of God*. Then Joshua found a large stone. [This stone was proof of this agreement.] He put the stone under the oak tree near the Lord's Holy Tent.

²⁷Then Joshua said to all the people, “This stone will help you remember the things we

curse To ask for bad things to happen to someone.

Hornet A stinging insect, like a large wasp or bee. Here, it might mean God's angel or his great power.

land Hebrew adds, “of the two Amorite kings.”

said today. This stone was here when the Lord was speaking to us today. So this stone will be something that helps you remember what happened today. The stone will be a witness against you. It will stop you from turning against the Lord your God.”

²⁸Then Joshua told the people to go home. So every person went back to his own land.

Joshua Dies

²⁹After that Joshua son of Nun died. Joshua was 110 years old. ³⁰Joshua was buried on his own land at Timnath Serah. This was in the hill country of Ephraim north of Mount Gaash.

³¹The people of Israel had served the Lord during the time Joshua was living. And after Joshua died, the people continued to serve the Lord. The people continued to serve the Lord

while their leaders were alive. These were the leaders that had seen the things that the Lord had done for Israel.

Joseph Comes Home

³²When the people of Israel left Egypt, they carried the bones from the body of Joseph with them. So the people buried the bones of Joseph at Shechem. They buried the bones on the land that Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of the man named Shechem. Jacob had bought that land for 100 pieces of pure silver. This land belonged to Joseph’s children.

³³Aaron’s son, Eleazar, died and was buried at Gibeah in the hill country of Ephraim. Gibeah had been given to Eleazar’s son Phinehas.