



Joshua

A Verse-By-Verse Study

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JOSHUA 1:1-9 **(THE LORD YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU)**

I cut my left ring finger with a chainsaw pretty badly a couple days before typing this sermon. On Sunday, I got through church but had no energy left to even complete the day's tasks. I got done what was necessary, but nothing more. I then plopped into bed about 6pm.

If I had not set the clock, I wouldn't have gotten up when I always do, at around 3:30. But the clock went off and up I got, thinking, "How can I ever type a sermon today?"

My finger was swollen, the antibiotics had me woozy, the tiredness of the weekend was not removed, and a new book was about to be opened. I talked to the Lord before and during the typing, and the sermon did get done. The constant repetition of the words of this passage was certainly an encouragement to help me through it.

"I will be with you," "I will not leave you nor forsake you," "be strong and of good courage," "do not be afraid or dismayed," "the Lord your God is with you." They are words of comfort and strengthening. I sure am glad they were there to help me through.

Text Verse: *"The LORD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation." Psalm 118:14*

For the people of the Lord, the Bible is one continuous stream of good and uplifting news, comfort, hope, and anticipation. For those not in the Lord, well, not so much. There are promises for them too, but they are not the kind of promises any sane person would want to receive.

Better to trust in the Lord, put your hope in Him, and await the good and sure blessings that lie ahead. His word will not fail, and it will come to pass, just as He says. As I noted, in today's passage, Joshua is given instruction and encouragement. It was something he could remember and rely upon.

But we will see that pretty much everything said there anticipates a greater fulfillment in Christ Jesus. As this is so, and as He is the One who has accomplished everything necessary to deliver us from this present evil age and into an eternal inheritance, let us not despair.

We have entered the promise through faith. As this is so, then we will enter the promise – meaning the realization of it – without any chance of it not coming to pass. We are on the road to glory, so trust in what Jesus has done, trust in what God has said concerning it because of your faith in that, and don't be afraid or discouraged.

Great, great things lie ahead for the redeemed of the Lord. Hold fast to this. For now, here we go – heading into Joshua. It is a marvelous part of God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Book of Joshua; an Introduction

The book of Joshua is the sixth book of the Holy Bible, and it is the first book of the section sometimes called The Writings. It is also referred to as a portion of the Historical Books, also known as the Former Prophets. Jesus uses this last division in Luke 24 –

“These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the Prophets* and *the Psalms* concerning Me.” ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.” Luke 24:44, 45

Joshua follows immediately after the section known as the Law, the Pentateuch, or the Torah. Its Hebrew name is *Sefer Yehoshua*, literally, “Book of Joshua.” It is named after the key figure in the book, Joshua the son of Nun who assumed leadership of Israel after the death of Moses.

As far as the dating of Joshua, there is dispute as to when it was written. However, the conservative and traditional dating can be figured based on when Solomon's Temple was built. By tracing back from that day as stated in 1 Kings 6:1, which indicates 480 years from the Exodus, we can assert with relative confidence that the narrative begins in the year 1404 BC.

The Exodus occurred in the year 2514 Anno Mundi. It is now the beginning of the forty-first year since the Exodus, as can be deduced in several ways. One is based on the presence of the manna in relation to the crossing of the Jordan –

“And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.” Exodus 16:35
Next, entrance into the land as indicated in Joshua 4:19 –

“Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.”

And finally, the ending of the manna –

“Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. ¹² Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.” Joshua 5:10-12

The timing of Joshua begins several days earlier than the crossing of the Jordan as is seen in Joshua 1:10-11 –

“Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ ‘Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, “Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.”’”

A note of another three-day period is seen in Joshua 2:22 which will be analyzed when we get to that verse. Taking the dating from Joshua 1, the events of the book would begin right around (depending on when the Sabbath would have been observed) the first few days of the first month in the year 2555 Anno Mundi.

Obviously, critical scholars question the dating of the book, some claiming it was written even many hundreds of years later at the end of the period of the kings. However, Jewish tradition places the writing as coming from Joshua, with the exception of the final portion which details his funeral.

Though no author is given within the book, in the text itself Joshua personally commands things to be written down (18:8), or he is said to have written them down (24:26). Also, some manuscripts of Joshua 5:1 say “we.” If original, this would probably indicate personal authorship.

Other indications of an early compilation come through the author’s use of certain terms, such as “the Jebusite city” for Jerusalem. These and other early designations, and inclusions and exclusions of various names and titles, lend credence to an earlier dating.

On the other hand, references to the Book of Jasher in verse 10:13, as well as the frequently used term “until this day,” give the sense that the book may have been compiled at some point after Joshua’s death, maybe by Samuel or some other early chronicler.

As far as a historical context, the book is given to reveal the entry of Israel into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. After that, the conquest of the land is recorded, the land is divided according to tribal inheritance, assignment of cities of refuge, and so on. The book ends with a note concerning the unity of the tribes, a final exhortation by Joshua to the people, a renewal of the covenant, and the death and burial of Joshua.

Concerning a redemptive context, Joshua demonstrates the faithfulness of the Lord in meeting His promises to His people. A key thought in that is found in these words –

“So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ⁴⁴The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.” Joshua 21:43-45

Those things that did not go well for the people were due to their own failings, not those of the Lord. The Lord had warned them as such –

“But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. ⁵⁶Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.” Numbers 33:55, 56

This sentiment is restated by Joshua –

“Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. ¹²Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, ¹³know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.” Joshua 23:11-13

The thought then is that the Lord is faithful. He will always uphold His word and follow through on the promises He has made. It is through our disobedience alone that we fail in obtaining that which God freely offers to His people.”

Being the sixth book of the Bible, it is of value to consider the number as it is revealed in Scripture. Six is the number of man, especially fallen man. It is the final day of creation, after which man was to enter into His rest.

However, despite entering into the land of promise, and despite having been given rest “from all their enemies round about” (23:1), the author of Hebrews clearly indicates that Israel did not enter into its rest at this time –

“For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.”

-Hebrews 4:8-10

As such, Joshua is only typical of Christ, and the book is only a typological representation of entering into that which only comes through faith in Jesus Christ. Fallen man, apart from Christ, can never obtain the true rest that God offers.

There is much more that could be said about the book, and commentaries abound for you to consider. As for us, it is time to enter into this treasure of God’s word and begin our time of seeking out its secrets. May the Lord bless our time in the book of Joshua, and may you be blessed as we travel through it.

*Be strong and of good courage, I am with you
Fear not and be not dismayed
Others may depart, but I am faithful and true
It is I who have all your debts paid*

*I will bring you into the inheritance
And there I will place you forever
Of Me failing, there is not even a chance
Nothing can the bond between us sever
Be strong and of good courage, trust in Me
Fear not and be not dismayed, I am with you
The word I have spoken, so shall it be
I am the Lord your God, faithful and true*

II. Be Strong and of Good Courage (verses 1-9)

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass

The book actually begins as several of the books of the Old Testament begin, with a conjunction connected to a verb: *v'hi akhare moth Mosheh eved Yehovah* – “And, it came to pass, after death Moses, servant Yehovah.”

In beginning with the word “and,” it signifies that what is presented is merely a continuation of the same story we have been reading. God is revealing to us wonders, unfolding them in a logical sequence which – at times – may or may not be chronological, but they fit in a fashion as orderly as if they were chronological.

In this case, it is a chronological event, following directly after the record of the death and burial of Moses as Deuteronomy ended. This same “and” begins the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Esther, Ezekiel, and Jonah.

Beginning this way is certainly intended to show us the unraveling of a thought process that already began elsewhere. The note of Moses’ death was found towards the close of Deuteronomy –

“So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. ⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day. ⁷ Moses *was* one hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished. ⁸ And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. So the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses ended.”

-Deuteronomy 34:5-8

Immediately after that, it then said –

“Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.” Deuteronomy 34:9

Following that was a note of commendation concerning Moses and then the book closed out. It is with this remembered, that the words, “And it came to pass,” find their

meaning. It is now Joshua who assumes the main role in this ongoing narrative, and so it is...

^{1 (con't)} **that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun,**

Rather than “spoke,” it says, “said.” Though close in meaning, the idea here is that the Lord is conveying words to Joshua as if in a conversation: *va’yomer Yehovah el Yehoshua bin nun* – “And said Yehovah unto Joshua son of Nun.

In the ongoing narrative, Joshua pictures Christ. In fact, in the Greek, the names of Joshua and Jesus are the same. In the Hebrew, his name means “The Lord is Salvation.” Jesus is the Lord, and He is salvation.

The name of Joshua’s father anticipates Christ also. Nun is from the verb *nun*, to propagate, or increase. This is what Christ would do, increasing the family of God through His completed work. The Lord says to Joshua...

^{1 (con't)} **Moses’ assistant, saying:**

Though nobody translates it as such, it is a verb: *mesharet Moseh lemor* – “Ministerer of Moses, saying.” Rather than a servant, he was a personal attendant for Moses. It is what Samuel is said to have done when he ministered before the Lord.

Moses means, “He who draws out.” He represents the law as he has drawn out the will of the Lord through the law. A picture is developed here as Joshua is this one ministering to the law and completing and fulfilling the will of the Lord.

That is pictured in the death of Moses and also in the continuance of Joshua. Though the law dies, the One who ministered to it continues while also increasing the family of God through His efforts. With this typology hinted at, it next says...

² **“Moses My servant is dead.**

The Lord acknowledges that Moses was His servant. This same title, *avdi*, “My servant,” is used of the coming Messiah in Isaiah 52:13. Joshua will also be called the Lord’s servant in Joshua 24:29. The idea of being the Lord’s servant is the highest title by which a person can be referred to. With Moses dead, the Lord now instructs Joshua...

^{2 (con't)} **Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan,**

v'attah qum avor eth ha'yarden ha'zeh – “And you, arise, cross over the Jordan, the this.” The word Jordan is prefixed by an article. It is *ha'yarden*, or “the Jordan,” meaning, “the Descender.” It is never known as “the river,” “the brook,” or any other connecting word. Rather, it is simply “the Descender.”

Its waters originate in the area of Mount Hermon and flow south through the Sea of Galilee. It then continues south to the Salt Sea, meaning the Dead Sea. That is a distance of about sixty miles, but because of how it flows, zigzagging back and forth, its actual path is said to be about two hundred miles. It is this river that is to be crossed...

^{2 (con't)} **you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel.**

It is of note that the text itself mentioned Moses' death, and then the Lord specifically mentions it again. The law dies before entrance by either Joshua or the people. But with Moses dead, Joshua and all the people may enter. It is the land of promise, and it is incorrect to say that it is not typical of heaven, at least indirectly.

The reason for this is that those who enter have done so by crossing through what the Descender typifies, meaning Christ. The Jordan began in the area of Hermon (meaning Sacred). That is typical of heaven where Jesus came from.

He is the Descender who came down from heaven, lived out His life, and died, just as the Jordan came down from Hermon and ended at the Salt Sea, the Dead Sea.

The flow of the Jordan through Israel actually pictures His life. The Jordan travels through the Sea of Galilee, picturing the many years of His life and ministry being focused in that area.

The long zigzagging pattern of the river is emblematic of His time zigzagging throughout the entire length and breadth of the land. The entrance into the Salt Sea – the Dead Sea – pictures His death without corruption and then His ascending, just at the Dead Sea ascends in evaporation, not in continuing to the sea.

In passing through Him, one enters life. It is a spiritual state that Canaan anticipates, but heaven – meaning restored paradise – is a result of that state.

The two are often disconnected, which is too bad. Though believers in Christ are not yet in heaven, the guarantee that they will be is already obtained. The result, meaning glorification and eternal life in the heavenly inheritance, is already assured.

The Lord is giving the land to Israel. Israel is merely typical of what the Lord gives us when we, by faith, pass through Christ's death, burial and resurrection. There is a literal story, and there are typological anticipations given in that story. As for Joshua, now, the narrative continues...

³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you,

It is the fulfilling of the promise made just a short time before in Deuteronomy 11:24, which says, "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours." The word "foot" is in the singular construct, but the words "your" and "you" are plural. Israel is a single entity, even if made up of many people. One cannot help but see hints of what Jesus said in John 14 –

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also."
-John 14:2, 3

There is one place (singular) made up of many mansions (plural) that is being prepared for "you" (plural). There is one body (Jew/Gentile Church) that is made up of many parts. The Lord is giving the land (singular) to Israel as a type of His giving the inheritance (singular) to those who are in Christ.

³ (con't) as I said to Moses.

The Lord says, "as I said to Moses." And yet, that is not recorded anywhere except Deuteronomy 11 where Moses spoke in the first person, or he referred to the Lord in the third person. As such, one can clearly see the doctrine of divine inspiration where the Lord is seen to have spoken through Moses as he spoke out the word of the Lord. As for Canaan, the Lord next says...

⁴ From the wilderness

This refers to the wilderness on the southern border of Canaan as recorded in Numbers 34:3 –

“Your southern border shall be from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom; then your southern border shall extend eastward to the end of the Salt Sea;”

⁴ (con’t) **and this Lebanon**

The words are emphasized: *v’ha’levanon ha’zeh* – “and the Lebanon, the this.” It explains the northern border. It speaks of the Lebanon range that could actually be discerned from where Joshua was, even though it was a long way off.

⁴ (con’t) **as far as the great river, the River Euphrates,**

v’ad ha’nakhar ha’gadol nehar perat – “and unto the river, the great, River Euphrates.” This was to eventually be the eastern border of the land. This extended border was originally promised to Abraham in Genesis 15:18.

⁴ (con’t) **all the land of the Hittites,**

The name is first mentioned in Genesis 15. It means Terror. It isn’t sure why this group of the various nations living in Canaan is singled out here. Thus, there must be typology being conveyed.

It may be because they not only filled the land in general, but they extended to the east in the direction of the Euphrates. As such, it would signify that they represented the entire span of the land.

⁴ (con’t) **and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.**

The Great Sea, where the sun goes down, is the Mediterranean. This would be the western border. The word translated as “toward the going down” is *mabo*. It signifies an entrance, and it has only been seen in Deuteronomy 11:30. One can think of the sun entering into its daily obscurity.

It is the final note of the general borders of the land. The words “your territory” are given in the plural “the territory for all of you.” The words expand upon what is said in Deuteronomy 11:24 –

“from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory.”

At this time, I will bring you into the land of speculation, and try to interpret what has been said as it anticipates Christ. The southern border is the wilderness. It is a place of testing and of closeness with God.

The northern border is “this Lebanon.” Lebanon comes from a word signifying to be white. That comes from a word signifying a brick because bricks whiten as they are fired. As such, it is a picture of works – the making of bricks in the Tower of Babel, for example.

The eastern border is the River Euphrates, meaning Fruitfulness, or That Which Makes Fruitful. The land is the land of the Hittites, or Terror. The western border is the Great Sea where the sun goes down. Understanding these things, we can look for typology.

The first thing noted after the death of Moses is that they are to cross over the Jordan. As such, the thing to remember is the symbolism of the Jordan. In fulfillment of the typology, Jesus Himself expressly tells us that He is what the Jordan pictures –

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 6:38

Though modern New Testament Hebrew is different than biblical Hebrew, there are overlapping words. In the Sar Shalom Hebrew translation of Jesus’ words, the word *v’yaradti*, “and I have come down,” is used. The name Jordan is from the same word, *yarad*. Jesus is the Descender.

The land is emblematic of where He will accomplish His work. The southern border is emblematic of His time on earth, it was a time of testing and closeness with God while under the law – both reflected in the gospels.

The northern border with the emphatic “this Lebanon” is emblematic of His work in fulfillment of the law – this and none other. The eastern border is emblematic of the state of His work under the law, fulfilling it. It is “That Which Makes Fruitful.” The Hittites, Terror, are reflective of the state of those who dwelt in the land –

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14, 15

There is the fear of death for all because of the law which is eliminated because of the work of Christ. The western border is reflective of the scope of Christ's work under the law. The last use of *mabo*, or entrance of the sun, is seen in Malachi 1:11 –

“For from the rising of the sun, even to its **going down**,
My name *shall be* great among the Gentiles;
In every place incense *shall be* offered to My name,
And a pure offering;
For My name shall be great among the nations,”
Says the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 1:11

Hence, this may be figuratively showing that the law is merely a transitional part of the redemptive plan. The sun rises in the east, and it sets in the west with the greatness of the name of the Lord being proclaimed by the Gentiles throughout the entire extent of that happening.

This appears to be so based on the last use of *shemesh*, or “sun,” in the Old Testament, which is referring metaphorically to Christ the Lord –

“But to you who fear My name
The Sun of Righteousness shall arise.” Malachi 4:2

As the sun actually never sets, but simply disappears from view, the borders of Canaan, as being described to Joshua, appear to allude to the fact that Christ is the One to work out, fulfill, and embody the law, and that its scope is without ending or limit.

With that seeming reasonable explanation now understood, the citing of Deuteronomy 11 continues with the next words as well...

⁵ **No man shall *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life;**

lo yityasev ish l'phanekha kol yeme khayekha – “No shall stand man to your face all days your life.” Despite being similar to Deuteronomy 11, there are differences. There it says–

“No man shall be able to stand against you.” Deuteronomy 11:25

In Deuteronomy it says *lo yityatsev ish biphnekhem* – “no shall stand man in your face” (meaning, “in your presence”). Here in Joshua, it says, “to your face,” instead of “in your

face.” In Deuteronomy, the words are to all the people in the plural. But here in Joshua, the Lord is speaking only to Joshua.

One can see that Joshua, as the leader of the people, is representative of all the people. The communication to Joshua alone continues in the next words...

⁵ (con't) **as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.**

The words were said by Moses to all of Israel collectively (singular), and then they were repeated by Moses to Joshua –

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He *is* the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.’

⁷ Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. ⁸ And the LORD, He *is* the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.’” Deuteronomy 31:6-8

Here, the words are spoken to Joshua alone. As the leader, he represents all who are with him. It is reflective of Jesus who was not forsaken by the Lord, even in His suffering and death, and who now represents His people in the same manner –

“*Let your conduct be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ ⁶ So we may boldly say:

‘The LORD *is* my helper;

I will not fear.

What can man do to me?’” Hebrews 13:5, 6

And, again, more words from the same passage in Deuteronomy 31 that were spoken by Moses to the people, and then to Joshua, are repeated by the Lord to Joshua...

⁶ **Be strong and of good courage,**

It is the same words spoken to both Israel in Deuteronomy 31:6 and to Joshua in 31:8 and 31:23 –

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you.”

“Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it.”

“Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you.”

When we were in that chapter, it was noted how this pointed to the work of Christ – the Lord, the Man, and the relationship between them. The wording of these verses made that evident. Now, it is the Lord speaking to Joshua, typical of the Lord God directing Jesus the Man...

6 (con't) for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

The words here form a large section of the book of Joshua where he leads the division of the land among the tribes. That is subsequently divided among the people (as can be seen, for example, in Joshua 17:3). But what happens here is only typical of the greater work of the Lord. It is a certain reference to the work of Jesus as is outlined in Colossians 3 –

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23, 24

Joshua is to “divide as an inheritance the land” to the people. Jesus divides to the people (the “you” is plural) the inheritance. As for Joshua, as the leader of the people, he must “do” just as it was Jesus who “did.” That is seen in the next words...

⁷ Only be strong and very courageous,

The words are repeated with a note of encouragement and a superlative: *raq khazaq v'emats meod* – “Only! Be strong and be strengthened very.”

In thinking of Jesus, we can see Him needing this encouragement as He faced down one enemy after another, and then coming to the final enemy that He knew was just ahead as He prayed, even to the sweating of blood, in the Garden of Gethsemane.

⁷ (con't) **that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you;**

lishmor la'asoth – “to observe to do.” Joshua was given a charge to obediently observe the law in order to do the law which Moses commanded him. Jesus came to do likewise in order to fulfill this law. Not a word of the law was to be allowed to fail...

⁷ (con't) **do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.**

al tasur mimenu yamin u-semol l'maan taskil b'kol asher telek – “not do turn from right and left to end purpose you may prosper in all which you walk.” It is a note that in obedience (to observe to do), and without any deviation from the law set forth for him, he would prosper.

It is an exacting description of Jesus. Isaiah uses the same word, *sakal*, or prosper, to describe His work, culminating in the cross –

“See, my servant shall **prosper**, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.”

-Isaiah 52:13 (NAB)

And, again, the same thought is presented to Joshua...

⁸ **This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night,**

Here is the first new biblical word found in Joshua, *hagah*. It is translated as “meditate.” It means to murmur. By implication, it means to ponder, imagine, meditate, speak, study, and so on. When one meditates, he often murmurs to himself. A more literal translation would be, “Not shall depart Book the Law, this, from your mouth, and you shall murmur in it, daily and night.”

This is speaking of the book that was mentioned several times in Deuteronomy. For example –

“So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, ²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: ²⁶ ‘Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you; ²⁷ for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. *If* today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death?’” Deuteronomy 31:24-27

For all intents and purposes, the Book of the Law reflects the will of the Lord. It is Jesus who came to fulfill the will of the Lord. Joshua is being used as a type to point us to the Antitype –

“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.

⁶ In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin
You had no pleasure.

⁷ Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.’” Hebrews 10:5-7

The knowing of, and meditating on, the law allows for the will of the Lord to be done. That continues to be seen in the next words...

⁸ (con’t) **that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.**

l’maan tishmor la’asoth – “to end purpose you shall observe to do.” It is in knowing and meditating on the word that the end purpose of observing and doing what is written in it is accomplished. Only Christ, the embodiment of the law, was able to fully meet this expectation. As such...

⁸ (con’t) **For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**

The words “good success” are translated from the same word just used in the previous verse – *sakal*, or prosper. And the word “prosperous,” is from the word *tsalakh*. It comes from a root signifying “to push forward.” Hence, it also carries the sense of prospering. And it too is used when referring to the work of Christ, in Isaiah 53 –

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall **prosper** in His hand.” Isaiah 53:10

One cannot help but see the constant anticipations of Christ. Yes, the Lord is speaking to Joshua about his commitments, but it is Christ who more perfectly fulfills the types and pictures that are given.

⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage;

Notice the repetition –
My servant commanded you (7)
Have I not commanded you (9)

Be strong and of good courage (6)
Only be strong and very courageous (7)
Be strong and of good courage (9)

These repetitions form their own stress. And that leads to the final words of the day...

^{9 (fin)} do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Joshua was to face challenges; the Lord Jesus was to face challenges. Each was given His charge, and each was to carry it out according to the will of God. But each is given a promise that the Lord is also there in the process.

For Jesus, it was the presence of the Spirit that was with Him wherever He went until the mission set before Him was complete –

“Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen,
My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased!
I will put My Spirit upon Him,
And He will declare justice to the Gentiles.
He will not quarrel nor cry out,
Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.
²⁰ A bruised reed He will not break,

And smoking flax He will not quench,
Till He sends forth justice to victory;
²¹ And in His name Gentiles will trust.” Matthew 12:18-21

Joshua was given his charge to subdue the land and prepare the inheritance. Jesus was given a similar charge. He was to defeat the enemy and provide the inheritance. The Lord was with Joshua as he carried out his work faithfully, completing his part of the task. Jesus did likewise as the Spirit of the Lord rested upon Him.

The failure of anyone not obtaining the inheritance is not because of Joshua (for Israel) or Jesus (for us), but of our failure to follow them. It is we who have to choose to follow the leader set before us. In our case, Jesus has done all that is necessary to accomplish this.

All we need to do is to simply believe that He has done it. The inheritance has been secured for us. Let us be wise and accept what Christ has done for us. Then, we too can be strong and of good courage. We too can be without fear or trepidation. In Christ, the Lord is with us wherever we go.

This is the hope set before us, and great hints of it are to be found in this marvelous book called Joshua. It will be interesting to see how it unfolds before us as the weeks progress. I do hope you will stick it out as the chapters pass by. Joshua! The marvelous “next book” in the unfolding story of redemption. Stay tuned for more!

Closing Verse: *“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15*

Next Week: Joshua 1:10-18 *We will carry it out, our word is true...* (All That You Command Us We Will Do) (2nd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord Your God Is with You

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD
It came to pass that the LORD spoke, words He was relaying

To Joshua the son of Nun
Moses' assistant, saying:

"Moses My servant is dead
Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, so to you I tell
You and all this people, to the land
Which I am giving to them —the children of Israel

Every place that upon the sole of your foot will tread
I have given you, as to Moses I said

From the wilderness and this Lebanon
As far as the great river, the River Euphrates, so shall it be
All the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea
Toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory
No man shall *be able to* stand before you
All the days of your life; as I was with Moses, My word is true
So I will be with you
I will not leave you nor forsake you

Be strong and of good courage
For to this people, you shall divide
As an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers
To give them on Jordan's other side

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do
According to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you
Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left
That you may prosper wherever you go, and in all you do

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth
But you shall meditate in it day and night
That you may observe to do
According to all that is written in it here in My sight

For then you will make your way prosperous, so I address
And then you will have good success

Have I not commanded you?

Be strong and of good courage, it shall be so
Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed
For the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 1:10-18 **(ALL THAT YOU COMMAND US WE WILL DO)**

In the US, there are a lot of people that owe a lot of money on student loans. The person who is currently in the White House has been talking about erasing that debt. The day before typing this sermon, I saw an article that it may now be for only some people that he will decide upon.

By the time the sermon is given, who knows what will have happened. But it is morally wrong to simply wipe away someone's debt in the manner he is planning. This means that, like all government waste, someone else must pay their bills.

Regardless of how it happened, or what the terms were, these people signed the line and accepted the loan. They benefitted from it, and they are responsible for paying it back. But that doesn't matter to people like this guy. Power, control, and votes are all that speak to such people's otherwise unreasoning minds.

In today's passage, a group of people is addressed by Joshua. They made a promise to Moses that they would take certain actions in order to receive certain benefits. They spoke with their mouths, and they are obligated to perform.

As good citizens, they will agree to uphold what they had spoken. If we could only get people to do the same in today's world, things would go a lot better for all...

Text Verse: *"So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses." Joshua 22:9*

By the end of Joshua, the people who made that promise to Moses, and who will now reaffirm it to Joshua, will have fulfilled their part of the obligation.

It is inexcusable to borrow money – be it from an individual or an institution – and then not pay back what you owe. However, there are times when it is impossible to do so, and there are laws that govern such things. Along with those laws are certain negative aspects of the forgiveness that are heaped upon the person for a period of time.

What is more inexcusable is for the government, with the exception of executive pardon as allowed by the constitution, to arbitrarily and without consequence forgive someone

else's debt. It is the height of presumption, and it is damaging to all who are connected to the matter.

The government will only grow more callous toward its citizens, the one forgiven will never learn personal responsibility, and those who were owed that money – meaning the taxpaying citizens – are essentially robbed by those who are supposed to represent and protect them.

It is totally unlike what God has done in Christ. We are the debtors, and He is the One to whom the debt is owed. God didn't rob others to pay that debt for us. Rather, He paid it Himself through the incarnation. In the giving of His Son, harmony is restored, and a state of rest exists. God did the work, and we receive the benefits of it. Thank God for Jesus Christ.

We will talk about that for both the church and Israel before we finish today. Again, thank God for Jesus Christ. Great things such as entering God's rest are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Until the Lord Has Given Your Brethren Rest (verses 10-18)

¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

To open the passage today, Joshua is said to have commanded the "officers of the people." The word is *shoter*, coming from an unused root meaning "to write." It has been seen since Exodus 5 and was commonly used in Deuteronomy.

Though the identity of this position is not fully known, they are probably superintending magistrates who are likely responsible for the genealogical records. As such, they would identify who was eligible to fight. They would probably keep an account of who went to battle, who was due a furlough, who had died, and so on.

Whether they were fighters or not, and probably not, it is they who would be responsible for those who would keep all such accountings. It is this group that was given the charge to identify the warriors as is recorded in Deuteronomy 20 –

"Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying: 'What man *is there* who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶ Also what man *is there* who

has planted a vineyard and has not eaten of it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man eat of it. ⁷ And what man *is there* who is betrothed to a woman and has not married her? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man marry her.'

⁸ "The officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'What man *is there who is* fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.' ⁹ And so it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people." Deuteronomy 20:5-9

At this time, the duties of these *shoterim* are probably greater than just gathering the troops together for battle. This is because not only the soldiers will be entering Canaan, but the families of the people will as well. Hence, the officers were there to ensure that the breakdown and movement of the entire nation went smoothly.

With that understood, Joshua continues, saying...

¹¹ **"Pass through the camp and command the people, saying,**

The Hebrew more precisely reads, "Pass through in the midst of the camp." It is the responsibility of the *shoterim* to ensure that all people were carefully instructed to be ready for what lay ahead, going tribe by tribe and from tent to tent. All people were to be carefully instructed on what they needed to do. Which was...

¹¹ (con't) **'Prepare provisions for yourselves,**

The word signifies a supply of food. It is the word used at the Exodus to describe the situation –

"And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared **provisions** for themselves." Exodus 12:39

One might ask why they would need this if they were still receiving manna. That is found in Joshua 5 –

"Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and

parched grain, on the very same day. ¹² Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.” Joshua 5:10-12

But this passage in Joshua 5 explains why they would need provisions. They would no longer receive the manna. And even before that happened, the manna would only fall around the camp (Exodus 16:13). For those on expeditions, they would naturally need to have their own provisions. Joshua next notes that there was a set time to prepare...

¹¹ (con't) **for within three days you will cross over this Jordan,**

ki b'od sh'loshet yamim atem oberim eth ha'yarden ha'zeh – “For in until three days you will cross over the Jordan, the this.” The words are problematic for the reader based on the events that follow.

In Chapter 2, it refers to the spies being sent out, coming to the house of Rahab, leaving her house at night and, hiding three days before returning to Joshua. Hence, this cannot be three days as one would expect from a cursory read.

There are several possibilities. The first is that the term “within three days” is from the time of an appointed date. In other words, not necessarily “today” but “within three days of the order to go.” It is an innovative idea, but the Hebrew really appears to be speaking of a three-day period.

Another option is that the events now recorded are not necessarily chronological. In other words. This statement would then belong after Joshua 3:2 –

Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over. Joshua 3:1

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ “Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.’” Joshua 2:10, 11

So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp; ³ and they commanded the people, saying, “When you see the ark of the covenant of

the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. Joshua 3:2, 3

If this is correct, then the events of Joshua actually begin in Chapter 1:1-9 and then follow with those of Chapter 2. But to make the narrative understandable, verses 1:10, 11 are placed out of where they chronologically occur.

If so, verses 1:12, 13 are spoken at some point, without specificity as to when, for instruction to those who will inherit land west of the Jordan.

A third option is that the delay in the return of the spies caused a delay in the events originally scheduled for three days hence. The second option appears most likely. One would need to use the Hebrew in a seemingly unintended way for the first option. Joshua would seem unprepared for contingencies if it were the third option.

As such, I would assume that the events are not chronological but are rather chosen to illustrate their importance as they transpired. Therefore, this order to cross by Joshua would have come on the seventh day of the first month, and the spies would have been sent out several days earlier depending on when the Sabbath was.

The main point of this is that there is no need to say the text is in error. Such an obvious blunder would not be admitted, even if this wasn't the word of God.

Rather, there is a precise timing, and the events were both understandable to the author and they have a valid explanation, even if it must be thought through first. With this understood, Joshua's command continues, saying they will cross over...

^{11 (con't)} **to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.”**

The word *yarash*, which is used twice in this clause, signifies to possess as in an inheritance. In other words, it may be the possession of the inhabitants that live there now, but they will be disinherited, and Israel will receive the inheritance promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Paul, the author of Hebrews, Peter, and Jesus (in Acts and Revelation) each speak of obtaining the inheritance. Canaan is typical of the state of sanctification that comes through faith in Christ, but that state includes the promise of heaven and eternal life.

Therefore, Canaan – as a type – cannot be limited to being emblematic of being sanctified in Christ, but it must include everything that such a state of sanctification promises. In Ephesians 1 and 2, Paul clearly shows that our present state is inclusive of heaven itself.

Another note concerning this verse, which has been seen several times in Deuteronomy, is that the word translated as “will cross over” is *overim*. It is identical in spelling to the word *ivrim*, or Hebrew.

Thus, this gives a sense of the state of what it means to be a true Hebrew. It speaks of a person who has crossed over (through) Christ unto salvation, as pictured by crossing through the Jordan. For now, the passage continues with...

¹² And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,

Although perfectly understandable, the Hebrew is more specific, “And to the Reubenite, and to the Gadite, and to the half-tribe the Manasseh said Joshua to say.”

The words to be spoken here are based on the agreement reached in Numbers 32. These two- and one-half tribes desired to have their inheritance east of Jordan. As such, Joshua is now reminding them of their responsibility before they can finalize that claim...

¹³ “Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying,

The specific words of Moses are found in Numbers 32:29, 30 –

“And Moses said to them: ‘If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. ³⁰ But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.’”

The words “as a possession” imply what Joshua next says...

¹³ (con’t) ‘The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.’

The land is given, and in possession of it, rest is realized. As for the word *nuakh*, or “rest,” what is realized in Canaan is only typical of the true rest found in Christ. The theology behind that continues on throughout the Old Testament and is more clearly explained in the book of Hebrews.

As for the “rest,” meaning settling down in their possession east of Jordan, that is only potential at this point. The terms of the agreement to finalize this inheritance must first be met. That is stated as Joshua continues...

¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you

This is what was proposed by them in Numbers 32 –

“Then they came near to him and said: ‘We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, ¹⁷ but we ourselves will be armed, ready to go before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land.’”

-Numbers 32:16, 17

It is then what Moses accepted and restated to them –

“Then Moses said to them: ‘If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the LORD for the war, ²¹ and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, ²² and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you may return and be blameless before the LORD and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. ²³ But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out. ²⁴ Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what has proceeded out of your mouth.’”

-Numbers 32:20-24

Joshua next notes that those who remain will do so...

¹⁴ (con’t) **on this side of the Jordan.**

b’ever ha’yarden – “in side the Jordan.” It speaks of either side based upon the reference point given. In this case, it means “on this side (east) of the Jordan.” The

Jordan is the divider between these tribes, and the distinction is being carefully and meticulously delineated now by Joshua, just as it had been by Moses.

As for the agreement, those words of Moses continue to be repeated by Joshua...

¹⁴ (con't) **But you shall pass before your brethren armed,**

These men would certainly be armed, but the word used now, *khamushim*, is one that signifies harnessed, or in a battle array. It has the same root spelling as *khamesh*, or “five” and the identical spelling to “fifty.”

Therefore, it may mean “by fives,” and so a marching array of five per line, or maybe arrayed under five leaders into van, rear, right, left, and center divisions. Or it could mean “by fifties,” as if by a platoon. Whatever its exact meaning, it is surely a structured unit.

It was used when speaking of Israel as they left Egypt. They weren't merely a mob of people fleeing, but they were orderly and in ranks as they departed.

So would these men be when they crossed into Canaan. They would be in battle array and prepared to subdue the land for their brothers just as their brothers had participated in subduing those in the land of their inheritance. This is next said to be...

¹⁴ (con't) **all your mighty men of valor, and help them,**

Rather than “all” in the absolute sense, only a portion of the men will actually cross over, about forty thousand (Joshua 4:13) out of almost one hundred and eleven thousand (Numbers 26). Therefore, almost twice as many men would stay behind compared to those who would go.

Joshua's words have to be taken in the context of Numbers 32 where the words “every armed” were stated. Here, Joshua calls them mighty men of valor.

There would be those going to battle, those protecting the families and homesteads east of the Jordan, and certainly rotations of both. Some would go to battle and then be relieved by others. This state was to continue...

¹⁵ **until the LORD has given your brethren rest,**

ad asher yaniakh Yehovah la'akhekhem – “Until which has given rest, Yehovah, to your brothers. This is only speaking of rest from their enemies. It is not speaking of the final promised rest that Canaan anticipates. This is clearly seen in the next words...

^{15 (con't)} **as He gave you,**

ka'kem – “as you.” If this was the final fulfillment of the promise, then it would not include the idea of the “rest” being the same as those who dwelt outside of Canaan. Therefore, Canaan is only given as a type of the true rest that is yet ahead.

As I said before, Hebrews explains this, building upon what David says in the psalms, to validate this thought. For now, Joshua says...

^{15 (con't)} **and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them.**

This was the agreement. These tribes would participate in subduing Canaan until all the tribes had received their inheritance. The Lord had promised that the land would be given to them, and the men of Israel, including those of the tribes east of the Jordan, were to be the instrument of destruction for those who dwelt there.

^{15 (con't)} **Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it,**

The words are a paraphrase. It reads, “And you shall return to *the* land of your possession and possess it.” In other words, their possession is only potential at this point. The families may dwell there, and there may be houses and fields there, but they do not truly possess it until their task is complete. Only then will they possess the land...

^{15 (con't)} **which Moses the LORD's servant gave you**

Verse 13 said, “The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.” Now, it says that Moses gave it to them. This is perfectly in line with Numbers 32:31 which says, “As the Lord has said to your servants, so we will do.”

The Lord was never said to have been consulted in the text, but it signifies that either Moses first consulted Him, or Moses' decision was as if rendered by the Lord. Either way, the words of the lawgiver are considered as the words of the Lord. The grant is...

^{15 (con't)} **on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.”**

b'ever ha'yarden mizrakh ha'shemesh – “in side the Jordan rising the sun.” The specificity of wording is common, and it is given to avoid any confusion at all, both immediately and at all times hence. There could not be a later claim that “in side the Jordan” meant one side or another to meets one’s personal whims.

¹⁶ So they answered Joshua, saying, “All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.

From the words of this verse, it is now apparent, as it should be, that the command of Joshua now stands in place of the command of Moses. Moses has spoken; Joshua now speaks. The transfer of authority, as far as the narrative is laid out, is complete in these words.

The Lord had indicated as much in verses 1-9 from last week, but now that is shown to be fully accepted by the people. Although this may still be only representative of the tribes east of the Jordan, it is more probably inclusive of all the tribes, as was first expressed in verse 10 when referring to the entire camp.

Of this verse, the Pulpit Commentary gives an analysis that is far from what I would consider acceptable –

“Obedience is easy when all goes well with us, and when it makes no demand upon our faith. The Israelites murmured when the promise was as yet unfulfilled. They rebelled against God when obedience entailed serf sacrifice. But now all was hope and eagerness. So it is often with the young Christian at the outset of life's battle, before he has begun to realise the exertion and self denial that can alone ensure him victory.”

This fails to recognize that Israel was offered Canaan forty years earlier, the land was before them, and all they had to do was trust the Lord. The same groups of people who were in the land then are still there.

But more importantly, the intent of the words, “the exertion and self-denial that can alone ensure him the victory,” are not to be found in Scripture.”

John says, “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4). And that faith is in what Christ has done, not us. As Paul says, “But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Let us not remove ourselves too far from what is most important. Our faith in what God has done, not exertion and self-denial, will give us the victory. As for Joshua, this newly confirmed state of authority continues with...

¹⁷ Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you.

The words here could either be laughable, tragic, acceptable, or anticipatory depending on how far back the “Moses” reference goes. Israel almost never heeded Moses until the very recent past. The incident concerning Israel’s harlotry with the Midianite women and joining to Baal of Peor was a very short time earlier.

Thus, if they are referring to the entire congregation, it would be laughable. However, the miscreants were either slain by others or died in the plague. Thus, there was obedience in the killing of the offenders, but the circumstances were tragic.

If the people are referring to the time since then, which is only a short span, their words could be considered acceptable, but without a lot of history to support the state of their future conduct.

Or, the words could be considered anticipatory in that the people, despite failing Moses, almost constantly remained united under Moses. They would now, together, anticipate a better state of obedience under Joshua.

In type, at least, the obedience of faith, is realized in the words now. They are about to enter Canaan, passing through the Jordan. As this is so, they at least typologically anticipate the state of Israel when they finally yield themselves to Christ Jesus, who alone fulfilled the law.

^{17 (con’t)} Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses.

This is not to be taken as a condition of obedience. Instead, it is a basis for it and as if a prayer that it will always be so. It was understood that the Lord was with Moses, and it is now understood that he is with Joshua. To proclaim this obedience more directly, the next words are uttered...

¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death.

The same general words were used a few times in Deuteronomy when rebelling against the command of the Lord. Now, they point to the Lord's representative, thus acknowledging that what he says is to be held on par with the decision of the Lord. That is the reason for the comparable law given by Moses –

“Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. ¹³ And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously.” Deuteronomy 17:12, 13

Joshua, though never called a judge, served in the capacity of one. He led Israel and, as such, was the representative of the Lord for the people in all civil matters.

The typology of Christ is sobering. As He assumed to leadership of Israel after the Law of Moses was fulfilled and ended, it means that all who have failed to come to Him – and who continue to fail to do so to this day – are condemned. As for Joshua under the law, the continued words of the people close out the chapter...

¹⁸ (fin) **Only be strong and of good courage.**”

raq khazaq v'emats – “Only: be strong and be strengthened.” It is the same words, repeated several times in Deuteronomy, especially three times in Deuteronomy 31 – “be strong and be strengthened.” Moses said this to the people and then twice to Joshua. The Lord also said it to Joshua in verse 1:7. The people now pronounce these same words upon Joshua.

Whatever challenges lay ahead, the Lord was with him, and the people were behind him. The enemies would be defeated, and the land would be subdued.

*A place of rest for the people of God
A state that says, “All is well with my soul”
To God alone be the glory, and to Him alone we applaud
For one seeking rest, He has it all under control*

*Those who do believe have entered that rest
But it remains that some others must enter it too
A people that has not yet passed the test
But they will someday, this word is true*

*What is it that will bring them to this state?
How will they come to it? What will they do?
How will they enter through the gate?
Only by faith will they enter. Nothing else will do*

II. Having Rest and Entering the Rest

Because of the focus on being given rest in this passage, it is good to review exactly what that means. It has been said that Canaan is only typical of the rest that the Bible speaks of for believers in Christ. And that is true.

In the Greek translation of this passage, the verb *katapauó*, is used both times rest is mentioned. It is a word signifying to settle down or, literally, colonize. Figuratively, it means to desist, cease, and so on. It is used three times in Hebrews 4 when speaking of being given rest.

Along with that is the corresponding noun *katapausis*. That is used eight times in Hebrews 3 and 4. That gives the sense of a place of rest, such as an abode.

Moses, in Deuteronomy 12, spoke of the *menukhah*, meaning either “rest” or a place of rest. In speaking to them, he said that they had not yet obtained such a place, or state, of rest.

But Moses’ point was that the people had the law, and yet they had not been observing the law (think of Israel today). Despite this, they had been brought to the very doorstep of the inheritance promised by the Lord. As this is so, even now with Joshua leading, then it cannot be by the law that they will obtain their rest.

Now in Joshua, as it was when Moses spoke, the idea of rest is tied in with the elimination of the enemy. It means dwelling in safety. The idea of having obtained it is found later in Joshua –

“Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua was old, advanced in age.” Joshua 23:1

It is again seen concerning David and his kingdom in 2 Samuel 7 –

“Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ² that the king said to Nathan the

prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.'" 2 Samuel 7:1, 2

Because of David's efforts in defeating the enemies, it is used again by Solomon in 1 Kings 5 as the reason to build the house of the Lord. At that time Solomon acknowledges that the promised rest was obtained as he prayed the invocation prayer after the temple was complete –

"Blessed *be* the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses." 1 Kings 8:56

And yet, David, despite having subdued the enemies and provided this rest, indicates that the rest that both Joshua, and he, had obtained was not the promised rest Moses spoke of. He does this by using the word "Today" in the 95th Psalm –

"Today, if you will hear His voice:

⁸ "Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion,

As *in* the day of trial in the wilderness,

⁹ When your fathers tested Me;

They tried Me, though they saw My work.

¹⁰ For forty years I was grieved with *that* generation,

And said, 'It *is* a people who go astray in their hearts,

And they do not know My ways.'

¹¹ So I swore in My wrath,

'They shall not enter My rest.'" Psalm 95:7-11

Using this, the author of Hebrews unmistakably shows that obtaining the inheritance is not of the law. He does it first by citing the 95th Psalm, and then by saying this in Hebrews 3:16-19 –

"For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? ¹⁷ Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

With that said, he then notes that because David said Today hundreds of years after Joshua had received his rest, it means that the rest spoken of is not merely referring to

rest from the physical enemies of Israel. As he says in Hebrews 4:8, “For if Joshua had given them rest, then He [the Spirit through David] would not afterward have spoken of another day.”

Each of these times, he uses either the verb or noun form of the words we noted – *katapauó* and *katapausis* – the same form of the verb used in the Greek of Joshua 1. However, in Hebrews 4, another word is used, which is found only that one time in the New Testament, *sabbatismos*.

It is an emphatic verbal noun, and it is a derivation of the word *shabbaton*, or Sabbath day. Thus, it signifies (as some translations more appropriately say) a keeping of “Sabbath-rest.” James Strong defines it as “the repose of Christianity (as a type of heaven)” –

“There remains therefore a **rest** for the people of God.” Hebrews 4:9

In this verse, the word translated as “remains” was also used in Hebrews 4:6 –

“Since therefore it **remains** that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again He designates a certain day, saying in David, ‘Today,’ after such a long time, as it has been said: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.’” Hebrews 4:6, 7

After this, the author spoke of Joshua and then of the *sabbatismos* for the people of God –

“For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.”
-Hebrews 4:8, 9

The author of Hebrews clearly and concisely states what he had so methodically been building up to by saying, “There remains therefore.”

The author, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says unambiguously that the day, called Today, still allows for obtaining what was once denied, which is “a rest for the people of God.” Charles Ellicott says, “It is tacitly assumed that no subsequent fulfillment has altered the relation of the promise.”

What this means is that which was available in past times remains available. Because it is promised, and because the promise was not laid hold of, the promise remains unappropriated. And though unappropriated, it is also not retracted.

What blazes forth in what is being said is the use of the word *sabbatismos*. By using this, instead of the other word for “rest” that he had been using, it takes the thought all the way back to Genesis 2:2 where God is said to have “rested” on the seventh day.

There, the word is *shabath*, the verb from which the idea expressed in the noun “Sabbath” is derived. God rested, implying He had a rest. It is this rest that has remained unappropriated but not retracted.

But the question is, “To whom is this directed?” As noted, it is a Sabbatism “for the people of God.” The question then is, “Who is this referring to?” Many Christian scholars say that it is a type of heaven for the church, or the “true Israel.” That is somewhat in line with what James Strong said.

However, in Hebrews 4:3, it was already stated that those who believe have entered their rest. It is a place of rest that is granted by faith in Christ. No distinction can be made between Jew and Gentile. It simply says that those who believe have entered.

And yet, there is the unappropriated offer of entering into God’s rest for the people of God. The idea of “the people of God” is notably used in the New Testament, with certain exceptions when speaking of the Gentile-led church, to speak of Israel.

As this is so, it is not a “spiritual Israel” that has replaced the people of Israel, but it is actually referring to the people known as Israel. Speaking of the literal people of Israel, Paul uses the term “His people” in Romans 11:1 & 2. The author of Hebrews, speaking of the “house of Israel and the house of Judah,” uses the term in Hebrews 8:10. He also calls Israel “the people of God” in Hebrews 11:25. Peter informs his Jewish audience that they “once *were* not a people but are now the people of God.”

The implication is that they were rejected by God, but then after that rejection, they are, once again, to be called as His people. Even Paul, in Galatians 6:16, speaks of the “Israel of God.” That does not refer to Gentiles who have replaced Israel, but rather those Israelites who have come to Christ in contradistinction to those Jews who have not.

And finally, the audience of the book of Hebrews is the Hebrew people. The overwhelming evidence points to the subject of Hebrews 4:9 and the *sabbatismos* as being for the Jewish nation, Israel. It is they who are being referred to.

The rest which remains for them, that of the true rest found in Christ Jesus, remains open to them. With this understanding, this does not negate that Gentiles are included in this. Anyone who believes in Christ Jesus' finished work is granted entrance into God's rest.

But the context is that the "people of God" being referred to are the people of Israel. It is they who were with Joshua, and it is they to whom the psalmist wrote the words of the 95th Psalm.

So why is this important? It is because the past many chapters, since Numbers 14, have pointed to Israel's rejection of Christ and of their time of punishment and dispersion. Their entry into Canaan is a type of finally entering into the true state of Sabbath Rest that God has been working to bring the world back to.

Israel will come to believe in Christ. When they do, the seventh day, the millennium, will finally be realized. The Old Testament promises of this earthly restoration were made to Israel. Someday, they will enter into that and lead the nations – with Christ as their Head – for a thousand years.

But what is important for us to understand now, is that Hebrews clearly and unambiguously says that "we who have believed do enter that rest." God's rest for the weary soul is received through faith in Christ. This is open to both Jew and Gentile, and it is what we will finally realize in its fullness when we are glorified.

Let us keep the boxes straight. Faith in Christ for the individual brings us to our rest. Faith in Christ for national Israel will bring them to their seventh-day millennial rest. As complicated as it all is to grasp, the simplicity of the result is that all will be restored and that God will be glorified.

For now, may you accept the simple premise that God has made the offer and that entering into what He offers is available through faith alone. Just believe the gospel and receive the promised inheritance and the rest that comes with it.

Closing Verse: *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of*

promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:13, 14

Next Week: Joshua 2:1-11 *Her name rhymes with Taxicab and COVID Jab... (A Harlot Named Rahab) (3rd Joshua Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

All That You Command Us We Will Do

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying
These words to them he was relaying

“Pass through the camp and command the people, saying
‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days
-----so to you I address

You will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land
Which the LORD your God is giving you to possess

And to the Reubenites, the Gadites he was relaying
And half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying

“Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD
Commanded you, saying (please understand)

‘The LORD your God is giving you rest
And is giving you this land

Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock
Shall remain in the land which Moses gave you
On this side of the Jordan
But you shall pass before your brethren armed, so you shall do

All your mighty men of valor, and help them
Until the LORD has given your brethren rest
As He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession
Of the land which the LORD your God is giving them in this quest

Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it
Which Moses the LORD's servant gave you
On this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise
These things you shall do

So they answered Joshua, saying
"All that you command us we will do
And wherever you send us we will go
Just as we heeded Moses in all things, so we will heed you

Only the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses
Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed
Your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death
Only be strong and of good courage as you lead

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 2:1-11 (A HARLOT NAMED RAHAB)

Many years ago, I ran the wastewater plant that treated the water for all of the Gulf Gate area. The company provided all the water and wastewater services, including the big blue water tower just behind us, but I preferred the wastewater side of the job.

Running a plant is a lot like running your own body, just with a lot more volume. Stuff comes in, it has to be processed, and stuff goes out in a completely different condition. It is pretty much an all-natural process with the addition of several non-toxic chemicals.

When we eat, the minerals and vitamins contained in food are used by our bodies to make them work well. The treatment plants need iron and other things to be added in so that the “big stomach” doesn’t get upset. The plant needs air pumped through it to keep the microscopic bugs alive. The plant converts things from one form to another. It’s so much like how we function.

That includes when things get into the system that shouldn’t be in there as well. Things can upset our stomachs or even poison them. Well, this is true with the “big stomach” at the plant. One Saturday morning, I got a call from one of the operators, Jason, a really great guy.

He said, “Charlie, the plant is dead. We did 0.0% nitrification.” A dead plant is a bad thing for many reasons, but mostly because the untreated water still has to leave the plant. Those tanks have a very short time before they are full and flow downhill to where they finally rush out to Sarasota Bay. We had hours, at best, to fix things.

Text Verse: *“By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:31*

I got to the plant in a matter of minutes. We immediately turned one tank into a holding tank and started pumping every single drop of the “dead bug” out of the plant and into that holding tank. We then took a giant reserve of “live bug” from what is known as a digester and pumped that back into the plant.

Within probably one to two hours, the plant was running as if it had never had a problem. This not only saved Sarasota Bay from becoming polluted with an unknown but highly toxic chemical (saving all the fish and other aquatic life out there), but it saved the company hundreds of thousands, or more, in fines.

The “dead bug” that we pumped to the temporary storage tank had to be loaded onto trucks and hauled to a special treatment center out of state. It was an immensely expensive process, but it had to be done. After analysis of the contents, it was determined that someone had poured highly toxic chemicals used in photography into the sewer system. Out of sight, out of mind, or so they thought.

If it wasn't for the quick thinking of Jason who was working all alone on Saturday morning, Sarasota Bay would have received much of that toxicity, along with hundreds of thousands of gallons of untreated wastewater.

Today, we will meet a similarly quick-thinking lady. Life and death are on the line for her, and she knows it. But she wasn't a top executive of a major company somewhere. She was just a prostitute. Who would think that someone like that would end up in the genealogy of the Savior of the world!

Great, great things such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. I Did Not Know (Liar, Liar, etc.) (verses 1-7)

¹ Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men

As noted in the previous sermon, the words of verse 1:11 most likely follow chronologically after the account which is now given. There it said –

“Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.’” Joshua 1:11

As such, what is now to be detailed is an event that precedes the preparation of the people to enter Canaan, and the words “had sent,” instead of “sent” should be used. These two are sent out...

^{1 (con't)} from Acacia Grove to spy secretly,

min ha'shittim shnayim anashim merag'lim kheresh – “From the Acacia Groves two men reconnoiterers secretly.” The location is “the Shittim,” or translated, “the Acacia Groves.” Also, saying, “to spy secretly” is a redundancy.

The word is *ragal*, coming from *regel*, or foot. It is one who walks about, but it is to be taken in a specific way. In this case, it is to reconnoiter. But that is then defined with a new word to Scripture, *kheresh*, “secretly.” It is in this capacity that Joshua is...

^{1 (con’t)} **saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.”**

The word “especially” is not in the text, even if it is implied. It reads, “Go, see the land – and Jericho.” They were to do a general reconnoiter of the land, but also to ensure that they focused on Jericho. With that stated, it next says...

^{1 (con’t)} **So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.**

The Hebrew is more expressive: *v’yeleku v’yavou beit ishah zonah rakhav, v’yishkevu shamah* – “and they went, and they came to house woman – harlot – and named Rahab, and they lie down there.”

Here, the text identifies Rahab as a harlot, a word used consistently to speak of a whore or a prostitute. It is often used in Scripture to describe Israel in their whoring after false gods. However, the root of *zonah, znh*, is the same root used for a female who gives food and provisions; an innkeeper.

For this reason, rabbinic texts explain that this is what is being referred to. Even Josephus said that she kept an inn. And, thus, liberal teachers are quick to grab onto this and to identify her as having a noble background.

Unfortunately, if they would simply read the New Testament, they would not make such a blundering error. Our text verse today was from Hebrews 11:31. Both there and in James 2:25, she is identified as a harlot (a prostitute) using the Greek word *porné*. I assure you that *porné* does not mean an innkeeper. The same word is used to describe her as such in the Greek translation of the Old Testament as well.

Though the spelling of her name in Jesus’ genealogy in Matthew is different than that of Hebrews and James, it is certain that this is the same woman so clearly referenced in Joshua. It is the entire point of including her in the narrative and then in the genealogy.

This is a problem with consulting rabbinic literature. The rabbis didn’t like that a prostitute was in the genealogy of David, and thus in that of the coming Messiah, so they attempted to sugarcoat the obvious. This is not uncommon in their writings.

The apostles saw no such difficulty and understood that the very same fallen women, such as Rahab and Bathsheba, could be used as key participants in the unfolding narrative of redemption that would lead us to God's Christ.

It should be noted that even reputable scholars, with all fudginess possible, attempt to repair her reputation. Adam Clarke went down innumerable avenues to patch-up Rahab's image. In the end, he sums up his thoughts as to why he needed to do so –

“To all this may be added, that as our blessed Lord came through the line of this woman, it cannot be a matter of little consequence to know what moral character she sustained; as an inn-keeper she might be respectable, if not honorable; as a public prostitute she could be neither; and it is not very likely that the providence of God would have suffered a person of such a notoriously bad character to enter into the sacred line of his genealogy.”

Rather, it is expressly *because* she was a prostitute that the story is so glorious. A key point of this, at least from a moral perspective, is that God has accepted you. You may have been a prostitute, had an abortion, divorced your wife, secretly killed someone, been an alcoholic, or whatever. And yet, the beauty and even glory of God in Christ says, “Come. My grace is sufficient.”

Whatever your past was, in Christ, your future will never be the same. Come to Christ. This is the lesson of Rahab, and so far, we have only been introduced to her with a short description, “a woman – a prostitute.”

Her name, Rakhav, comes from the verb *rakhav* meaning to be or to grow wide or large. It is used in the Old Testament to indicate enlargement of an area, such as in a border, baldness on the head, the size of Sheol, and so on. It is also used to refer to enlarging the heart, opening the mouth, etc.

Thus, her name means Spacious or Enlarged. One must wonder what would prompt a name like this. As she is a prostitute, and as it appears her family was fully aware of this – as will be seen in the narrative – it may be that this was her lot all along, something not uncommon in many cultures.

As such, and solely as speculation by me, her name may have been given to her to reflect the work she would do, such as Isaiah prophesied concerning Israel when using this same root verb –

“Also behind the doors and their posts
You have set up your remembrance;
For you have uncovered yourself *to those other* than Me,
And have gone up to them;
You have **enlarged** [*rakhav*] your bed
And made *a covenant* with them;
You have loved their bed,
Where you saw *their* nudity.” Isaiah 57:8

Whatever the intent behind the name, and regardless of her profession, she will be a key figure in the history of Israel leading to the Messiah. For now...

² And it was told the king of Jericho, saying,

As Jericho is a walled city, it had a ruling elder, here called a king because of the authority that he would have had over the populace. It was probably sentinels that guarded the gates who told the king.

People would be free to come in and go out of such a city, but it would be negligent to not tell the leader of any unusual foreigners that came around. The spies would only be two strangers coming in, probably unarmed. This would not be a reason to keep them out, but being Hebrews, it would at least be worthy of raising the matter to the king...

^{2 (con't)} “Behold, men have come here tonight

This would explain how they wound up meeting Rahab. As a prostitute, she would be hanging around the gates of the city in the evening to entice any travelers to spend the night at her place. It fits naturally into the narrative. As for the men, they were...

^{2 (con't)} from the children of Israel

One can only surmise that the two men told them this. Their accents would be unusual, but so would the accents of other people from all over the area. Having never heard anyone from Israel before, it would be unlikely they could be identified as such unless they were simply told it was so. This probably goes for the next words...

^{2 (con't)} to search out the country.”

lakhpor eth ha'arets – “to search out the land.” One can imagine it, “Hey guys, where are you coming from?” “We’re Israelis just checking things out. We’ve never been here before.” “OK! Good to have you, c’mon in.” It would be a common and innocuous greeting between them, but still one worth reporting...

³ **So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying,**

He has already been identified as the king of Jericho. As such, it is implicit stress on the fact by saying, “the king of Jericho” rather than just “the king.” As such, the words are made more poignant, and thus the actions of Rahab, to whom the king’s words were directed, are brought forth as well. His words are...

³ (con’t) **“Bring out the men who have come to you,**

A verb is used in place of a noun: *khotsii ha’anashim ha’baim elayik* – “bring out the men, the comers unto you.” The king was apprised of the situation, he knew exactly who had come and who they had gone into. It is these two Israelis...

³ (con’t) **who have entered your house,**

asher bau l’betekh – “who have entered to your house.” Regardless of her type of business, to entertain a stranger meant the right to proper treatment and protection for those in the house.

Unless a refusal was made by Rahab, they would be bound by the honor found in Middle Eastern culture to ask her to deliver them rather than having the guards forcing themselves into her home. This is what provides her with the opportunity to take the action of hiding the Hebrew spies. In the meantime, those sent to her continue with...

³ (con’t) **for they have come to search out all the country.”**

The words expand upon the corresponding clause of verse 2 by adding in the word “all” to what is now said: *ki lakhpor et kal ha’arets bau* – “for to search out all the land they have come.”

As John Lange correctly states, “Notice the full circumstantiality of the king’s command.” The king has deduced that they are not merely tourists looking for a fun time, but they are men on a mission to determine the state of things for an invasion. One can see that

even as they are speaking at the door, she is pointing out where the men can go and how to hide...

⁴Then the woman took the two men and hid them.

The words curiously go from the plural to the singular: *va'tiqah ha'ishah eth shene ha'anashim va'titspeno* – “And took the woman two the men and hid him.” The Greek translation reads “them,” and without the later addition of the vowel points by the Masoretes, this could be read as them, but for some reason, the Masoretes carefully recorded it as “him.”

John Gill notes the Jew's ridiculous take on this, saying, “hence the Jews, who take these two spies to be Caleb and Phinehas, say, that only Caleb was hid, and Phinehas, though he was before them, was not seen, being an angel.”

Ewald sees this as “the free discourse in which one passes from the plural to the singular.” The Pulpit Commentary explains this as each man being hidden in a separate place. But these notions hardly explain this. It is as if one of them is being singled out.

Despite that, one can see her pointing to the two and saying in a hush, “Go up on the roof. I'll get rid of them.” They would have no choice but to trust her because the king's men were standing there. It would make no sense for her to try to hide them, just to say to the king's men, “They are on the roof.” Simply opening the door would have had exactly the same effect.

In reading the account, it makes one (meaning me) wonder if one of these two men didn't become her future husband. It is wholly speculation, but they are identified in verse 6:23 as “young men.”

They are old enough to be sent out on a mission, but probably unmarried and are most likely in their mid to late teens. This completely dispels the Jewish idea that these are Caleb and Phinehas, one of whom is almost eighty at this point.

Rahab's attitude and actions towards them, along with the curious change from plural to singular, reveal a quickly developed affinity that raises this idea in my mind.

^{4 (con't)} So she said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

This is her first lie. It is already known where they are from as will be seen in verse 9. Having arrived at the point where a lie has been introduced, it must be noted that the comments by scholars on this go on and on.

They bring in the nature of God and of the terrible thing she has done by lying, carefully noting that a lie is always a sin. From there, they then go into the notion of forgiveness and mercy because of her faith, and so on.

It is true that lying is sin, but what is it that brings this about? The law. She is not under law. But she has a conscience. And so, either her conscience is seared, and she is corrupt, or she has *weighed the matter out* and she is working under a law of faith. Charles Ellicott wisely evaluates the matter –

“The Divine standard of sin and holiness never varies; but the standard of man’s conscience, even when faith is a dominant principle in the character, may vary to a very considerable degree. In Jesus Christ ‘all that believe are justified from all things;’ but ‘by the deeds of the law no one.’ Here, as elsewhere, the application of the law only brings the discovery of sin.”

Rather than focusing on something contrary to the Divine standard, the narrative focuses on exaltation of it through her words and actions that are grounded in faith. This is not unlike those who hid Jews during WWII. Even though the Bible says we are to be subject to the governing authority, there is often a time that such obedience must be disobeyed for a higher purpose. With that understood, Rahab continues...

⁵ And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out.

The next lie. However, it is more than a simple lie, but also a fabrication. She is making stuff up on the fly to construct a convincing argument in order to hide the truth.

It is after dark, the gates are shut as the sun goes down, and they are only opened when those coming to it in either direction can be individually identified and authorized for passing through it. Thus, her words form a persuasive argument that is credible and would put her in jeopardy if it were not so. Hence, they have no reason to not believe it.

⁵ (con’t) **Where the men went I do not know;**

The third lie. She is fully aware of where they are, and the Bible doesn't hide either the fact that she does know or that she lied. It simply conveys the details of the story, allowing us to come to our own conclusions about the matter.

While at the same time that her words are contrary to the Divine nature, the reason behind them and the actions which are joined to them are not. Since this account was compiled, the same value judgments have been made continuously throughout human history. The number of people who took exactly the same path as Rahab during the holocaust alone is large. And those who did what they did are cited as heroes by people who would stand over Rahab and accuse her for being a little liar.

We live in a fallen world and there are times when judgments must be made that stand outside of the propriety of law. And yet, they will inevitably be the right choices when the larger situation is taken into consideration and when the person's faith is properly directed. The evaluation of Rahab in Hebrews 11 and James 2 bears this out.

⁵ (con't) **pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them."**

The words are well thought out. She has already convincingly stated that they are not with her, having no discernible reason to lie and every reason to tell the truth. Adding these words intensifies the urgency to get about finding the miscreants. Some may call her conniving, but others would see her as quick thinking and resourceful.

⁶ **(But she had brought them up to the roof**

v'hi heelatam ha'gagah – "And she had caused them to ascend to the roof." The meaning is that she told them to go up to the roof, and they went up. As noted earlier, this was probably as the king's messengers came to the door. At that time, she pointed for them to go up, and so they went up.

The roofs of such houses were flat and were easily accessible because many things were done on top of them, from dinners and small parties, to accomplishing various types of work, and even for bathing or sleeping. It is probably after the messengers left that the next words came about...

⁶ (con't) **and hidden them with the stalks of flax,**

The verb is imperfect: *va'titmenem b'pishte ha'ets* – "and hides them in flax, the wood." These are stalks of flax that are said to grow to about three or more feet in length. After

cutting, they would be set out in an array to dry, as seen in the next clause. This would be where the men could be easily hidden...

⁶ (con't) **which she had laid in order on the roof.)**

ha'arukoth lah al ha'gag – “the arrayed to her upon the roof.” In other words, they had been laid out in an array upon the roof for drying. In this manner, they could get sun from all around and uniformly dry as they stood in these particular arrangements.

The roof would be the area where that was done. Eventually, the stalks would be worked and made into linen. She would have hidden them in these arrayed stalks until it was certain that nobody would be coming back to inspect the place, and until they could make their escape.

⁷ **Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan,**

v'ha'anashim rad'phu akharehem derek ha'yarden – “And the men pursued after them way the Jordan.” This would be the logical route to take. It would have been known that Israel was on the other side of the Jordan, and so to get to the Jordan as quickly as possible would be the most obvious thing to do. As it says...

⁷ (con't) **to the fords.**

al ha'mab'roth – “upon the fords.” The word *ma'avar* signifies a passing through. It can be fords of a river or the passages through a mountain. As this is plural, it probably means that a group of soldiers went out and one or two of them stood upon each of the fords within reasonable distance of Jericho.

⁷ (con't) **And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate.**

Because of the way the words are laid out, a direct translation is difficult: “And the gate they shut after as which had gone out the pursuers after them.” It means just as the English translation says. Once those pursuing the men went out, the gates were shut.

Being nighttime, they were taking no chances of a sudden rush by the enemy, or anyone getting in or out that should not do so. Other than face masks and vaccines, the city had gone into lockdown.

**Who are you and where are you from?
And why is your accent so odd?
Come inside and explain to me some
What is your people, and who is your God?*

***We are Israel and just checking things out
You know, seeing what is up in this place
We're searching the land to see what it's all about
And it's so nice to see your smiling face*

**We have heard of you. Your life is in danger in this place
But I can hide you if anyone comes around
I want you to remember my face
I hope for mercy from you if it can be found*

*I will join with your people, please remember my face
After I have gotten you safely out of this place*

II. For We Have Heard (verses 8-11)

⁸ Now before they lay down,

There is a stress in the words: *v'hemah terem yishkavun* – “and they before they (certainly) lay down.” It shows the imperative nature of what will come next.

With the messengers gone and the soldiers sent out of the city, things would have calmed down enough for the two men to lie down and sleep. But before they could do this, she ascended to the roof to converse with them...

⁸ (con't) she came up to them on the roof,

v'hi aletah alehem al ha'gag – “and she ascended upon them, upon the roof.” Her words to come are filled with careful attention concerning the state of those in Canaan, the knowledge of the Lord and His care for Israel, and of her faith in the Lord's capabilities.

⁹ and said to the men: “I know that the LORD has given you the land,

Rahab explicitly speaks out the name Yehovah: *yadati ki nathan Yehovah lakem eth ha'arets* – “I know for has given Yehovah to you the land.” She is both aware of this name and she understands His purposes for Israel. Her faith in the capability of the Lord is demonstrated in the words, “has given Yehovah to you the land.”

It is a done deal even though the actions that will cause it to come about have not yet even begun. She knows this. And more, all of the people know it as well...

^{9 (con't)} **that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.**

Here she uses the word *mug*, or melt – “and that have melted all dwelling the land from your presence.” This was the purpose of the Lord’s dealings with Pharaoh. Going through the plagues gradually was intended to slowly harden Pharaoh’s heart.

If He had gone in and done something beyond their imagination right at the beginning, Pharaoh may have just said, “Let them go!” But that is not what happened. The Lord started with simple plagues that were reproducible by Pharaoh’s own magicians.

He then brought more plagues that one might think would logically follow one after another. If you turn water into blood, you will bring out frogs. If the frogs all die, the bugs that the frogs eat will increase exponentially, from there, pestilence on the livestock will result. And so forth.

The Lord followed a set path to slowly harden the heart of Pharaoh. He would have been well educated and attributed these things to what he could naturally observe. By the time the greater plagues came, he would be hardened to the point where more hardening would be the inevitable result.

And this is exactly what the Lord intended. By multiplying His judgment, He would magnify His name. And in doing that, the nations would then hear and fear –

“And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. ⁴ But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies *and* My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. ⁵ And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.” Exodus 7:3-5

The Egyptians would know all that happened, and the word from them as they traded with the nations would naturally carry right back to the homes of those who traded. By the time the greatest plague hit, the death of the firstborn of Egypt, Pharaoh would want them gone and even drive them out.

But because of the hardness of his heart, he would relent and attempt to retrieve them. In that, the great and miraculous event that would finally destroy Pharaoh's power would come...

¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt,

The story of the Red Sea crossing was forty years earlier, but it was well known and remembered by all who heard it. And the credit is given to Yehovah, and it is given on behalf of the people of Israel. The narrative was clearly and precisely remembered.

This was exactly the purpose of the Lord having multiplied His judgments upon Pharaoh. A swift, sudden, and decisive early judgment would have not led to the knowledge of the Lord by Rahab and all of the others throughout Canaan. But more, she says...

^{10 (con't)} and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

This was very recent history, and it would have resounded with the people, calling to mind the tales of the past and both reaffirming them and adding to the terror of the present. And, again, this is exactly what Moses said would occur, beginning with Sihon –

“Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess *it*, and engage him in battle. ²⁵ This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you.”

-Deuteronomy 2:24, 25

The conquest of Sihon was immediately followed up with the conquest upon Og. As such...

¹¹ And as soon as we heard *these things*, our hearts melted;

The words “as soon as” are not in the Hebrew. It is short and specific: “And we hear and melted our hearts.” The tales of the Red Sea would have been known but not considered for many years, but with the sudden coming of Israel upon the land east of the Jordan, and of the victories over the great inhabitants there, there would be utter panic at what lay ahead. As such...

¹¹ (con’t) **neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you,**

v’lo qamah od ruakh b’ish mip’nekem – “And no stood again spirit in man from before you.” The idea is that every man became completely dispirited and he could not get himself to regain his courage again. They simply remained terrified. Hence, we saw the reaction of the king of Jericho. Rahab next makes a sure statement of faith in what she now perfectly knows...

¹¹ (con’t) **for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.**

Rahab’s words are emphatic: *ki Yehovah elohekem hu Elohim ba’sh’mayim mi maal v’al ha’arets mi’takhat* – “For Yehovah your God HE God in the heavens from above and upon the land from beneath.” They are practically the words of Moses, but most especially in these words from Deuteronomy 4:39 –

“Therefore know this day, and consider *it* in your heart, that the LORD Himself *is* God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; *there is* no other.”

Verses 9-11 can be summed up in the words of the Song of Moses from Exodus 15 –

“Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed;
The mighty men of Moab,
Trembling will take hold of them;
All the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away.
¹⁶ Fear and dread will fall on them;
By the greatness of Your arm
They will be *as* still as a stone,
Till Your people pass over, O LORD,
Till the people pass over
Whom You have purchased.” Exodus 15:15, 16

This is a logical point to end the words for today. Rahab has demonstrated faith in the capabilities of the Lord, even to the point that what she does aligns with what she

believes. This brings in the obvious difficulty that is evidenced between the writings of Paul and those of James, something that we will look at in a moment...

*With what will you come before the Lord?
What will you present for the sin of your soul?
What will bring you the great reward?
On what thing will you, your sins roll?*

*Shall you accomplish a great and noble deed?
Claiming it is worthy of His praise?
Shall giving up a wicked life or one of greed
Bring you honor, blessing, and eternal days?*

*Rather, come to your God in faith because of His grace
Come to Him with hands empty of any pride
By grace through faith alone will you see His smiling face
And through that alone will you in heaven reside*

III. A Lesson in Faith

Paul says in Romans 3, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:28). He then goes on to say –

“What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God.” Romans 4:1, 2

A few verses later, he says, “But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness” (Romans 4:5).

Paul says this elsewhere as well, both directly and indirectly. And yet, James says, “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (James 2:24).

This is a problem, because preachers, teachers, and scholars then come up with impossible-to-reconcile solutions, such as, “Good works stem naturally from saving faith.” That is nonsense, and it is not ever taught in Scripture.

First, tell that to the guy on the cross next to Jesus. Secondly, the obvious question is, “What works?” Who decides what is sufficient work to say, “Yes, he is saved, and he is not.”? And thirdly, isn’t lying evidence of not doing what is right?

So, if a person does some good things and some things that aren’t good, like Rahab, then who decides that her works are acceptable for saving or not? It completely misses the intent of what Paul is saying, and it dismisses what James is saying.

In James 2, he gives only two examples of what works justify a person. The first was, astonishingly, that of Abraham, the exact same person that Paul says was justified by faith alone –

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?” James 2:21, 22

His second example is, equally incredibly, Rahab –

“Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?” James 2:25

Is James saying that these two people were not justified by faith? If so, then he didn’t read the epistle to Hebrews. Because both of them are used as examples there for being people of faith. And more, both of them have exactly the same “works” cited as “works of faith” –

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ ¹⁹ concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”

-Hebrews 11:17-19

“By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:31 (our text verse)

So how can it be that works justified them? If their faith was behind the works, then it was faith that justified them. Their works were simply *works of faith*. It is true that their works were products of the faith, but that is not what justified them, their faith did.

So, the question remains, “What works?” What is it that will save the human and bring him before God justified and acceptable to Him? Jesus gave us the answer –

“Then they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?’
29 Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.’” John 6:28, 29

The “works” which justify are the works of Jesus Christ. Faith in Him may or may not lead to our own works, but it is He who did the works. It is He who fulfilled the law. It is He who died in fulfillment of the law, and it is He who rose again. And it is we – here it is, here are our works – who are to believe in Him.

It is entirely false that “good works stem naturally from saving faith,” because no “good works” are defined for us to do except for those things that are found for us to do that are recorded in Scripture. But if a person hears the gospel, accepts it, and is saved, unless he has the Bible – something almost unheard of in much of history and still for many of the people of the world – they cannot “do” what is expected of them from the word.

In the end, everything comes back to one thought for our justification: faith. And it is faith plus nothing. If you want to be pleasing to God, have faith. If you want to add to that, learn His word and apply its precepts to your life. And when you do good things, if they are done because of your faith in Christ, you will receive your reward. Have faith in that.

Closing Verse: *“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’” Galatians 3:11*

Next Week: Joshua 2:12-24 *To the spies, Rahab these words does submit...* (According to Your Words, So Be It) (4th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

A Harlot Named Rahab

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove To spy secretly, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho

So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab
And lodged there, thinking no one would know

And it was told the king of Jericho, saying
“Behold, men have come here tonight
From the children of Israel to search out the country
For sure, this just ain’t right

So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying
“Bring out the men who have come to you
Who have entered your house
For they have come to search out all the country
-----such they came to do
Then the woman took the two men and hid them
So she said, “Yes, the men came to me
But I did not know where they were from
So I tell you plainly

“And it happened as the gate was being shut
When it was dark, that the men went out; their escape
-----they did make
Where the men went, I do not know
Pursue them quickly, for them you may overtake”

(But she had brought them up to the roof
And hidden them with the stalks of flax
Which she had laid in order on the roof
She carefully covered their tracks

Then the men pursued them by the road
To the Jordan, to the fords heading straight
And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out
They shut the gate

Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof
And said to the men: “I know that the LORD has
-----given you the land. Yes, I know it’s true
That the terror of you has fallen on us
And that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted

-----because of you

For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water
Of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, such
-----great wonders He has employed
And what you did to the two kings of the Amorites
Who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og
-----whom you utterly destroyed

And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted
Neither did there remain any more courage in anyone
Because of you, for the LORD your God
He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath
-----He is the only One!
Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 2:12-24
(ACCORDING TO YOUR WORDS, SO BE IT)

When we were in Deuteronomy, we saw that the Lord told the people they were to exterminate every person in Canaan, letting no one survive. That was recorded in Deuteronomy 20 –

“But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, ¹⁷ but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, ¹⁸ lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God.”
-Deuteronomy 20:16-18

But even before that, this was recorded in Deuteronomy 7 –

“...you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.” Deuteronomy 7:2, 3

Without connecting the two, Adam Clarke says the following –

“She [Rahab] had learned, either from the spies or otherwise, that all the inhabitants of the land were doomed to destruction, and therefore she obliges them to enter into a covenant with her for the preservation of herself and her household.” Adam Clarke

He is right; that is exactly what will come about in the verses today. Even before Israel officially enters the land, this word of the Lord is going to be violated. Rahab, after all, is an inhabitant of the land, and an oath is made between the two men of Israel and her.

Despite this, Rahab’s life, faith, and actions are used to teach us truths in typology and pictures about the work of God in Christ. In the end, our disobedience and failings can be used by God to bring much glory to Himself.

This doesn’t mean we should actively be disobedient in order for good to come about. Paul warns about such a perverse notion, but it does show the greatness of God that

such things can – and often do – occur. Just look at what He did with Joseph’s brothers selling him off to Egypt!

Text Verse: *“I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. ¹¹ For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. ¹² Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.”*
-Romans 7:9-12

The law is good; it is we who are not. The law highlights that for us. What we need, and what Rahab will find out about – even before Israel does – is grace. And that comes when we demonstrate faith. Rahab did and she is remembered for that almost 3500 years later.

Good stuff from God’s precious word. Something else came out of the text, a definite chiasmic structure. It’s a little hard to see in the English translation, but it comes out clearly in the Hebrew. However, you will get the gist of it.

Joshua 2:15-21 – Conditions or penalties.

A lesson concerning faith (5/16/2022)

- a Then she let them down by a rope through the window
- b And she said to them, “Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way
- c So the men said to her: “We *will be* blameless (naqiy) of this oath (shevuah) of yours which you have made us swear (shava)
- d unless, *when* we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down (condition for safety)
- e unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household to your own home (Condition for safety)
- e So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* guiltless (penalty for violation)
- d And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him (penalty for violation)
- c And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free (naqiy) from your oath (shevuah) which you made us swear (shava)
- b And she sent them away, and they departed
- a And she bound the scarlet cord in the window

It's pretty wonderful to find these for several reasons. One is that it helps you to figure out what a difficult passage is telling you. Another is that it lets you know there is more than just a narrative being told, but there is a purposeful narrative, with a set intent that is being conveyed.

Also, things like this help solidify your faith in the fact that this really is God's word and that He really is relaying special and important information for us to consider.

Great things like salvation by grace through faith and chiasms are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Expectation, the Scarlet (verses 12-24)

¹² Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD,

Rahab has shown kindness to the spies in hiding them from arrest. But more, she had actually endangered her own life in the process. As such, she will ask for a return favor in both regards, saying: *v'atah hishaveu na li b'Yehovah* – “And now swear, I pray, to me in Yehovah.”

Most translations say, “swear to me by the Lord.” The ISV is closer, saying, “in the name of the Lord.” This is the intent of saying “in Yehovah.” His name stands for who He is. To swear in His name is to wholly identify with the name. For now, she says...

^{12 (con't)} since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house,

This is the anticipated exchange. She had helped them and spared their lives while risking her own, and so she is asking now that they will respond in kind. In saying “my father's house,” it implies everyone associated with it. All who stem from her father are to be included in the agreement. In hopes of this, she says...

^{12 (con't)} and give me a true token,

u-netatem li oth emet – “and give to me sign true.” The word translated as “token” is *oth*. It signifies a sign, coming from the verb *uth*, meaning to consent or agree. It is something that stands for something else.

If one swears a vow such as this, that stands for performance of the vow. Thus, the sign does not necessarily have to be something physical, as we would think of a token today. There is an agreement to be sworn in the name of Yehovah which will stand as a sign between them. The substance of that oath is...

¹³ and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.”

As noted, all that stems directly from her father is included in the request. The request is not unreasonable. As she saved two men of Israel, she essentially saved two households of Israel. Everything associated with them as the heads of a household, even if only future to them now, is to be considered as having been delivered.

Therefore, for her to ask for the household of her father is a just and reasonable request. The fulfillment of this will be seen in Joshua 6 –

“But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, ‘Go into the harlot’s house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her.’ ²³ And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.” Joshua 6:22, 23

Due to the reasonable nature of what has happened, they agree to the conditions. As noted in the analysis of Deuteronomy 20, and which I referred to in the sermon introduction, this is not at all in accord with the clear and explicit command to destroy every person.

Nothing is said about agreeing to help someone who first helped an Israelite. The command is given without exception and was to be performed. Understanding this, and despite the good that resulted from the events that take place, one can see that even before Israel has entered the land, a violation of the law has taken place.

This truly shows the nature of the law. It is a law of death. It was given to bring to an end those that were in Canaan. That is the Lord’s prerogative, and it is to be obeyed. However, a violation of it means that the life promised for obedience cannot be obtained. In other words, it takes us back to Leviticus 18:5 –

“You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.”

The good intentions of these two men in making this agreement means that they have violated the precept. In violation of the precept, Paul's words of our text verse become clear, "And the commandment, which *was* to *bring* life, I found to *bring* death" (Romans 7:10).

One can see how desperately Jesus is needed in our lives to remove from us the guilt of the law. Adam died in violation of the law, and all who followed after him died in Adam. The Law of Moses only heaped up more sin upon the people. But this was given to hopefully lead them as a tutor would, directly to the saving grace of Christ Jesus. As for the narrative now...

14 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours,

naphshenu takhtekem la'mut – "our soul under yours (pl.) – to die." The meaning of "under" is that which replaces. Something rises from under and replaces that which is above. They have agreed that if the soul of any of them is taken, that their own soul is forfeit. They will take the place of the one lost, as long as...

14 (con't) if none of you tell this business of ours.

im lo tagidu eth devarenu zeh – "if no you (pl.) disclose our word this." By saying this in the plural, the onus is on Rahab to ensure that none of the family says a word. If the matter is disclosed by any, it negates the agreement for all, including her.

The agreement is not for her to keep quiet that they are spying out the land. That is already known. The agreement is that this applies only to Rahab and her father's house. To share with others the sign of her protection, which will be mentioned in verse 18, would negate the oath. The agreement does not extend to any others.

Further, the agreement will not apply to any of the family who are not brought into her house, as will be noted as well.

14 (con't) And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land,

The words confirm that they are completely certain of the outcome: *v'hayah b'tet Yehovah lanu eth ha'arets* – "And it shall be in giving Yehovah to us the land." They are as certain it will happen as Rahab is. Rahab had heard and believed. The spies see and know. The only thing left was for time to catch up with the certain outcome. Once it does, the agreement is...

14 (con't) that we will deal kindly and truly with you."

The words are nouns, not adverbs and the addressee is singular. "that we have done with you (sg.) kindness and truth." What is promised will be formalized with a state, not just actions, that will match the promises that have been made. The fulfillment of this is also recorded in Joshua 6 –

"And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." Joshua 6:25

15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window,

Well, she was no Rapunzel. Instead, it says: *va'toridem ba'khevel b'ad ha'khalon* – "And she caused them to descend in the cord through the window." She could do this...

15 (con't) for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall.

The Hebrew reads, "for her house in side the wall and in the wall she dwelt." The meaning is probably that her house butted up to the wall with the back wall of the house being the city wall.

From there, the top of the house would have extended above the wall where there was a window, or that there was a window directly in the wall that could be blocked up during a siege. Either way, it would allow those inside to look out over the surrounding country. Being against the wall, it would make the climb down very easy for the men.

This is similar to what happened to Paul in Acts 9, and which he refers to in 2 Corinthians 11 –

"Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. ²⁴ But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. ²⁵ Then the disciples took him by night and let *him* down through the wall in a large basket." Acts 9:23-25

"In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; ³³ but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands."

-2 Corinthians 11:32, 33

¹⁶ And she said to them, “Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you.

These words are not unimportant, and they are specifically included in what James finds noteworthy concerning her actions –

“Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?” James 2:25

Up until this point, she could have done all of this to simply not get killed by the spies, but these words completely destroy any notion of this. If she had feared for her life and wanted them to get caught, she would have sent them in the same direction as those sent to find them.

It is true that she could still report them, saying they were hiding in the mountain. However, they would have the advantage of seeing pursuers coming from their elevated position, and so that is not an acceptable notion.

But more, anyone familiar with the area can tell you that there are innumerable caves in the mountains. A resourceful person could hide there for months while remaining undetected. Without going into all of the detail that he would have been aware of, James is careful to note both her receiving of them and of her sending them out in another way.

Her actions are based on her faith, and her words to the men are words of faith in the promises and integrity of the men as well as in the capabilities of the Lord.

^{16 (con’t)} Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way.”

Here is a new word, *khavah*, to hide or conceal. It is from *khavav*, meaning to love. The connection is that just as one hides his love in the heart, or secrets away his love, so a person will hide himself or another for protection.

As for hiding three days, this might mean traveling at night to the mountains, staying for two days or so, and then leaving on the third night to avoid anyone seeing them. Jericho is not a full-day walk to the Jordan, but going to it, searching the fords in the immediate area, and then returning from it would take a good two days or so. Therefore, this would explain her recommendation.

17 So the men said to her: “We *will be* blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear,

The Hebrew seems incomplete: *neqiyim anakhnu mishevuatekh ha’zeh asher hishbatanu* – “Blameless we from oath yours, the this, which you made us swear.” As it is written, it appears that they are claiming they are acquitted of any guilt that arises. As such, translators add the word “unless” into the next verse.

The Geneva Bible says, “We will be released from our oath if you perform this condition that follows for so shall you and yours be delivered.” But it doesn’t say that. It simply says, “We [are] blameless from this oath of yours, which you made us swear.”

My guess is that they are indicating that to them, as if it is a done deal. They will perform and be blameless. The conditions are up to Rahab and her family to meet, but as for them, they will fulfill what they agreed to...

18 unless, *when* we come into the land,

hineh anakhnu baim ba’arets – “Behold, we come in the land.” It is not a conditional “unless.” Rather it is a statement of fact. They are avowing that it will come to pass. As this is the case...

18 (con’t) you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down,

This is the first condition of safety. It is not the same cord by which they scaled down the wall: *eth tiqvah khut ha’shani hazeh tiqsheri ba’khalon asher horadtenu bo* – “expectation, thread the scarlet, the this, you bind in the window which you caused us to descend.”

There is a new noun here, *tiqvah*, translated by almost everyone as “line” or “cord.” It signifies expectancy, hope, or a thing longed for, coming from the verb *qavah*, to wait for. The Septuagint, and two Catholic Bibles translate the clause using the word “sign.” That is probably closer to the intent than “cord.”

The idea is that the expectancy is to see it – “the expectation.” If it isn’t in the window, there is nothing to identify them. Hence, there is no protection to be given to them. Also...

¹⁸ (con't) **and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home.**

The second condition for safety. Again, the word “unless” is not in these words. The directions simply continue on – “and you ... bring into your home.” Just as if there is no scarlet thread to identify the house, there is no way to identify anyone who should be in the house but who is not.

¹⁹ **So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him.**

The instructions here are so similar to the Passover that it is hard not to call that to remembrance –

“Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.” Exodus 12:13

“And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that *is* in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. ²³ For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike *you*.” Exodus 12:22, 23

Those inside where the blood has been applied are under protection. Those who are not inside are not protected. Whether the blood of the Passover, or the crimson-colored thread now, either is that which identifies the “where” and “for whom it is so.”

²⁰ **And if you tell this business of ours,**

It is the third condition for safety: *v'im tagidi eth devarenu zeh* – “And if you (sg.) disclose our word this.” Just as if there is no scarlet thread to identify the house, and just as if anyone is not safely in the house, so Rahab is not to tell the matter to anyone else.

Notice the difference between the words of verse 14 and the words of this verse –

14. *im lo tagidu eth devarenu zeh* – “if no you (pl.) disclose our word this.”

20. *v'im tagidi eth devarenu zeh* – “And if you (sg.) disclose our word this.”

Verse 14 was dealing with the lives of these two men in relation to the lives of those who don't disclose the situation. Now, verse 20 is dealing with the oath which Rahab made. In both instances, it is up to Rahab to ensure that either her father's family remains silent, or that she personally remains silent. If she doesn't...

²⁰ (con't) **then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear.”**

v'hayinu neqiyim mishvuatekh asher hishbatanu – “And we become blameless from oath yours which you made us swear.” Three conditions set forth must be met. If they are not, then the two men will be blameless in regard to the oath she made them swear.

Again, see the difference between this verse and verse 17 –

17. *neqiyim anakhnu mishevuatekh ha'zeh asher hishbatanu* – “Blameless we from oath yours, the this, which you made us swear.”

20. *v'hayinu neqiyim mishevuatek asher hishbatanu* – “And we become blameless from oath yours which you made us swear.”

They say that they are blameless before the oath she made them swear. They will uphold their part of the bargain. But that is conditional upon her complying with her part of the bargain. If she performs, they will be blameless before the oath she made them swear.

In other words, “Be like us and perform what you are to do. We are blameless, and if you don't do what you are to do, we will be blameless.” Jericho will be destroyed either way, and her betrayal of the spies would not stop that.

However, her betrayal of them might destroy them, but it would also remove any chance of protection for her. Doing what they have put forth is her only chance of salvation. As such, she chooses wisely...

²¹ **Then she said, “According to your words, so be it.”**

Her words bear emphasis: *va'tomer k'divrekem ken hu* – “And she said, “According to your words, so IT.” Exactly as they have said, so shall it be. Her life depends on what has been said, and she will follow through accordingly.

²¹ (con't) **And she sent them away, and they departed.**

It is the final act of what has already been stated. She directed them to the mountain to stay for three days. As we saw, that is what James said was an act of justifying work. It, being an act of faith, can be reckoned as such. Next, in an act of hope it says...

²¹ (con't) **And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.**

va'tiqsor eth tiqvah ha'shani ba'khalon – “And she bound the expectation, the scarlet in the window.” This could have happened at any time, from immediately even to right up until the last moment before Israel arrived to begin their short siege.

One would think that she did it right then as the two men were watching. They would see she complied, they would remember the location and how it was displayed, and it would be a reminder to her to stay the course because deliverance was on the way.

²² **They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought *them* all along the way, but did not find *them*.**

They put faith in Rahab's words and followed through with what she had said. While the pursuers were chasing the wind, these two were safely in the mountains, probably in a nice cool cave. They obviously had provision to accomplish their task and it would have been a quiet time.

And more, the term three days can signify any part of three days being considered as a three-day period. Regardless of the exact hours they spent there, they avoided the pursuers and then headed back to make their report.

²³ **So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over;**

Without giving any specifics, any time of day, or which day it is, a good guess is that this occurred in the early morning. It would be cooler, they could get by Jericho without notice, and they could then ford the river in some manner. By the time they did, it would be light enough to do so without any danger. From there, they headed directly to the boss...

²³ (con't) **and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them.**

The word is *saphar*. It means “to recount.” They went through all of the details of their expedition, recounting each thing that was of note. That is especially so with the main point...

²⁴ And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands,

This goes back to the words of Rahab from verse 9 –

“I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.”

-Joshua 2:9

It was perfectly evident that if a prostitute that lived on the wall of a city knew this, it was common knowledge to all the people. The fact that pursuers were sent out after them only confirmed this. They would not bother with passing strangers unless there was a great reason to do so. With that understood...

²⁴ (fin) for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us.”

v’gam namogu kal yosheve ha’arets mipanenu – “And also, have melted all dwelling the land from our presence.” It is practically a repeat of the words of Rahab in verse 9. The God who had executed great judgments upon Egypt and who had parted the Red Sea was now just across the Jordan with His people.

And it is the same people who had crushed both Sihon and Og in the land which they were now located. It was perfectly understood that there was no hope if the Lord determined to disinherit them from the land. It was sure to come to pass.

*If you are told there is something that you need to do
Do you take that as meaning, “This is a work”?
Or is it just a condition to find out about you?
Is what I am asking only a linguistic quirk?*

*Yes, there are things we must do to be saved
But that doesn’t mean our salvation is earned
Rather, the Lord sets the conditions for the path He has paved
The difference is something that must be learned*

Faith is not a work. It is obedience to the call

*We are to believe the gospel we have heard
It is the path to salvation for one and all
God sets the parameters, so believe on His word*

II. Pictures of Christ

I would suggest that Joshua 2 anticipates the work of Christ. It is a typological and anticipatory look into how His work will accomplish salvation for Israel and how His word details that. The chapter begins with these words –

“Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.”

As we already know, Joshua means “The Lord is Salvation.” He anticipates Jesus who is the Lord and who is salvation. Joshua’s father’s name being included anticipates Christ also. Nun is from the verb *nun*, to propagate, or increase. This is what Christ would do, increasing the family of God through His completed work.

The number two in Scripture signifies that there is a difference. As such, it signifies division or difference. I would suggest these two then represent the two testaments in Scripture. In them, there is a contrast, and yet they confirm the whole of the word of God.

Israel has not yet entered the promise, and they cannot without faith in Christ. They picture the people of Israel who have not yet received Him in our world today.

The place the men depart from is the Shittim, or the Acacia Grove. That is derived from *shotet*, a scourge. That word is used only once in the Bible. In Joshua 23:13, it says –

“...know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the Lord your God has given you.” Joshua 23:13

As such, this place is a place of scourges. This was certainly seen in Numbers 25 where this place was first mentioned –

“Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. ²They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods,

and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³ So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.” Numbers 25:1, 2

It is also true that the law itself can be equated to scourges, simply because “by the law *is* the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). In Joshua 23, the people of Canaan are equated to scourges who would afflict Israel. Thus, the scourges are that which draw the people away from faith in the Lord and to that which is false. However, that can be avoided or overcome.

The two men are to go into Canaan, typical of the spiritual state found in Christ. The goal is Jericho, the Place of Fragrance, typical of heaven, or a return to that which was lost at the fall.

Immediately, still in verse 1, Rahab is introduced. Her name means Spacious. She is given to demonstrate salvation in Christ. He is the narrow path that leads to the broad places of heaven. She has invited the two to lodge, but then she is told to bring them out.

She has the key to understanding the Lord in both Testaments of the word. When she is told to bring them out, thus giving them up, if you remember it curiously said in the singular, “And took the woman two the men and hid him.”

Being in the singular, it would indicate one word, even if two testaments. She has secreted the whole counsel of God away. While the enemy is out chasing after these two, and not finding anything, she is safely keeping them.

And not only that, it says that she caused them to ascend to the *gag*, or roof. That comes from *gaah*, exalted or majestic. She has placed the word, the two testaments, in the exalted place in her home among the stalks of flax that she had there.

Flax is the basis of linen, a covering that depicts righteousness. This speaks of her tending to the word of God, exalting it, in order to seek and find righteousness.

Meanwhile, the enemy pursues these two all the way to the Jordan, upon the fords. The Jordan, the Descender, pictures Christ Jesus. But without the word, they will find nothing. Mankind can only come to Christ through His word which tells of Him. There is no crossing over except through the One Christ and through His one gospel.

While they are out pursuing, the two men are on the roof. Rahab ascended to them and showed her faith in the Lord, saying that she knows that He is God in heaven above and

on the earth beneath. With that, she asks for kindness to be shown to her father's house by sparing it.

The two men agree. If she is faithful to the conditions according to their word, they offer their lives in exchange. The token, the sign, is their word that it will be so. The word of God is sure. It is a sign of the truth of God. It testifies to His faithfulness.

With that, she lets them down by a cord. The word signifies to bind tightly, coming from a word meaning to pledge. She has accepted their word as a pledge of truthfulness. After that, the two state that they are blameless of the oath which she made them swear.

The word of God cannot fail. It is blameless. What it proclaims is absolutely certain. Their word to her is "expectation, thread the scarlet, the this, you bind in the window which you caused us to descend." It is the crimson thread that runs throughout Scripture and that which testifies to Christ.

It is a typological picture that salvation comes through His blood. Any who are willing to hide themselves with this protective mark will be saved, just as was the case with the Passover. Destruction is inevitable, but salvation can be obtained for those who accept the conditions.

This is exactly how it is for salvation in Christ. The proposition is set forth, certain conditions must be met, and when they are, salvation is obtained. As we saw in the previous sermon, the conditions are stated by Jesus –

"Then they said to Him, 'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?'
²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'" John 6:28, 29

The scarlet thread is given in typology of that faith in Christ. The two testaments testify to this, and nothing else will do. If you think about it, Israel has not yet crossed through the Jordan (Christ), and thus they are not yet saved. However, Rahab is, even if it has not yet come about.

She put the cord up and awaited in hope of the deliverance that was promised to her. She was a Gentile sinner, and yet she obtained the promise before the people who were given the promise in the first place. Her name reflects her state. She obtained the broad places of heaven through her acts of faith.

Her statement to them was, *va'tomer k'divrekem ken hu* – “And she said, “According to your words, so IT.” That is what God expects of us. His word is written. It is laid out in two testaments, and they together form a unified whole that testifies to the workings of God in Christ. When we accept the conditions and apply faith as instructed, salvation is realized.

In her life profession while in Jericho, she was not morally inferior to those around her. Rather, it is just the opposite. She was willing to humble her heart before the Lord, she exalted those who came to her, and she was obedient to their word.

This is not unlike those of Israel who were considered the dregs of society, but who Jesus said would enter the kingdom of God before those who were supposedly righteous. They accepted the message of John, they looked for the Messiah of whom he spoke, and they accepted Him for who He is.

Israel is given an example of this in their own history, even before they enter through the Jordan. In fact, it is the last main message given to them before Joshua musters them and gets them ready to enter Canaan. Israel of today must learn this. It is only by faith in Christ that the inheritance can be obtained.

Moses, the law, died outside of Canaan. A harlot who simply trusted in the word of the Lord will be exalted within the borders of Canaan – even to becoming an ancestor of the Savior whom the actions of her life anticipate. What an amazing thing to consider.

Closing Verse: *“Jesus said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.’” Matthew 21:31, 32*

Next Week: Joshua 3:1-13 *To do it, they won't need a Land Rover, but it would be fun...* (And the People Crossed Over, Part I) (5th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

According to Your Words, So Be It

Now therefore, I beg you

Swear to me by the LORD, so your vow you cannot douse
Since I have shown you kindness
That you also will show kindness to my father's house

And give me a true token
And spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters too
And all that they have
And deliver our lives from death, this I beg of you

So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours
If none of you tell this business of ours, so you shall not do
And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land
That we will deal kindly and truly with you

Then she let them down
By a rope through the window
For her house was on the city wall
She dwelt on the wall, so out the window they did go

And she said to them
"Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you, so she did say
Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned
Afterward you may go your way

So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours
Which you have made us swear
Unless, when we come into the land
You bind this line of scarlet cord in the window
-----and we find it there

The window through which you let us down
And unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers too
And all your father's household to your own home
This is what we require of you

So it shall be that whoever goes
Outside the doors of your house into the street
His blood shall be on his own head
And we will be guiltless, when his death he does meet

And whoever is with you in the house
His blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him there
And if you tell this business of ours
Then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear

Then she said, "According to your words, so be it
And she sent them away, and they departed
And she bound the scarlet cord in the window
She was no longer fearful or fainthearted

They departed and went to the mountain
And stayed there three days until their pursuers returned
They sought them all along the way
But did not find them and the matter was adjourned

So the two men returned
Descended from the mountain, and crossed over as well
And they came to Joshua the son of Nun
And told him all that had to them befell

And they said to Joshua
"Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands
-----triple A and plus, plus, plus
For indeed all the inhabitants of the country
Are fainthearted because of us

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 3:1-13 (AND THE PEOPLE CROSSED OVER)

The structure of Joshua can be puzzling, and there are as many opinions on it as there are buttons on an elevator in a tall building. I have presented, and will continue to present, what I think is a reasonable explanation for what is going on.

In the first four chapters, it seems evident when looking at the big picture. There is a command/obedience to the command structure which can be seen in the following verses:

The command to begin:

“After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, saying: ² ‘Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel.’” Joshua 1:1, 2

Joshua’s obedience:

“Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ ‘Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, “Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.”’” Joshua 1:10, 11

Insert the story of the spies and Rahab which occurs prior to these events, and which sets the narrative in motion, followed by a continuance of the narrative with, “Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over.”
Joshua 3:1

The command to part the waters and cross:

“And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. ⁸ You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, “When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.”’” Joshua 3:7, 8

Joshua's obedience:

"So Joshua said to the children of Israel, 'Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God.'" Joshua 3:9

The command to set up a memorial:

"And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying: ² 'Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, ³ and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.'"" Joshua 4:1-3

Joshua's obedience:

"Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; ⁵ and Joshua said to them: 'Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel.'" Joshua 4:4, 5

The command to come up from the Jordan:

"Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, ¹⁶ 'Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.'" Joshua 4:15, 16

Joshua's obedience:

"Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, 'Come up from the Jordan.'" -Joshua 4:17

Text Verse: *"The entrance of Your words gives light;*

It gives understanding to the simple.

¹³¹ *I opened my mouth and panted,*

For I longed for Your commandments." Psalm 119:130, 131

In the verses we looked at, along with the command being given and Joshua obediently repeating it to the people, there is also a fulfillment of each command by the people.

And so, in each instance, there is the word of the Lord, then the word of the Lord is repeated by the leader, and then there are the steps taken in obedience to the directive.

The point of this is to demonstrate that everything stated finds its fulfillment in the passage. There is intent in what is to be done, and there is the accomplishment of that intent. Mixed within what is said are several repetitions which get confusing unless the basic structure mentioned above is remembered. As long as it is, then no contradictions are seen.

And so, what is happening is an account is given, its completion is recorded, and then details are provided or re-provided to fill in blanks in the original account.

This was seen in Genesis, such as when the overall narrative of creation was given in Chapter 1, and then the details were filled in concerning the creation of man in Chapter 2. It is seen in the book of Ruth which belongs within the chronology of the book that precedes it, Judges.

In Joshua, there is a chronology being given, but there is also a backing up and a filling in of that chronology. Remember this pattern when you read the Bible and when you see the bigger view followed by the more detailed view, it sure will help you to not feel like things are out of whack. They aren't.

We see movie directors do this all the time. They will show something at the beginning of the film, and then the rest of the film will build up to that event, which is actually the completion of the movie, or very close to the completion of it.

We think this is an inventive way to tell a story to keep us anticipating what will happen. Well, the Lord did the same thing for us thousands of years ago. In the end, the promise of a Deliverer at the beginning will eventually be fully revealed. The details along the way help us to more fully understand that early promise.

Great things such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Way by Which You Must Go (verses 1-6)

¹ Then Joshua rose early in the morning;

If you remember from Chapter 1, the timeline is rather difficult to pin down and be dogmatic about. But these words now appear to fit into the timeline of verses 1:10, 11 –

“Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ ‘Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, “Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.””

In other words, the spies were sent out first, they gathered their intel, and then they returned. From there, scholars argue as to whether the three-day period is from the movement to the Jordan or if it is after arrival at the Jordan.

It is hard to be dogmatic either way, but assuming that it is from the movement to the Jordan, it would then be put at the time the spies gave their information. Then Joshua gets up and tells the people, “Ok! It’s time to go to the Jordan.” After the completion of that move, they are at the Jordan, and now the three-day interval has expired.

The words, “within three days,” (literally “in until three days”) simply mean “any part of three days.” Joshua told the people to get up and move to the Jordan. In their move, they prepare provisions, move, and cross. This is all seen in the next words...

^{1 (con’t)} **and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan,**

If this is from the movement of the people, then this would read, “and they had set out...” It would be describing the movement of the three days. If the encampment is at the Jordan for three days, then “and they set out” would be correct. Again, I am assuming it is from the beginning of the movement.

Either way though, the people were noted as being at “the Shittim,” or “the Acacia Grove” in Numbers 25:1. It is also the last stop in the wanderings of Israel recorded in the exodus from Egypt in Numbers 33 –

“They camped by the Jordan, from Beth Jesimoth as far as the Abel Acacia Grove in the plains of Moab.” Numbers 33:49

It is at this location that they have remained, and where the law was completed as given through Moses. The name of this place was again stated in Joshua 2:1. It is from here that they will pick up and head to *ha’yarden*, or the Jordan, meaning “the Descender.”

From the Acacia Grove to the Jordan is seen the last movement and stop of the exodus from Egypt. This movement is inclusive of...

¹ (con't) **he and all the children of Israel,**

The entire congregation of Israel is included. This means Joshua, the men of war, the women, children, etc. The only ones to not cross over would be those who had already received their inheritance east of Jordan and who would stay to start their lives there, but the men of war from those tribes are included in this crossing over now. With this recorded, it next says...

¹ (con't) **and lodged there before they crossed over.**

The word lodged, *lun*, signifies “to pass the night,” “dwell,” “abide,” and so on. Hence, it is why I would assume the three days is inclusive of the move, and not three days lodging at the shore of the Jordan. Others disagree as the word can mean a longer time of lodging. It is hard to be dogmatic. Either way...

² **So it was, after three days,**

It doesn't say “after three days,” but rather: *v'hi miqseh sh'loshet yamim* – “And from end three days.” Therefore, this would be the third day. It is at this time...

² (con't) **that the officers went through the camp;**

The people, encamped at the Jordan, are now to be instructed by the officers on the protocol to be followed as they cross through the Jordan. The instructions from the officers here are not the same as those given previously. As such, this is not at the beginning of the march from the Acacia Grove, but at the encampment near the river. The specific instructions for moving from here are seen next...

³ **and they commanded the people, saying, “When you see**

Rather than “When you see,” it more precisely reads *kirothkem* – “According to your seeing.” It's not when they see the ark that they get up and start following it. Rather, it is “according to” their seeing it. The details of that are still ahead, but they have limitations set upon them about exactly when they can respond.

³ (con't) **the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God,**

aron b'rith Yehovah elohekem – “ark covenant Yehovah your God.” The word “ark” signifies a hollow box. It is used to describe Joseph’s coffin in Genesis 50:26. The symbolism is that of Christ being the embodiment and fulfillment of the law. That has already been seen quite clearly in the instructions for, and construction of, it in Exodus.

It is known by various names – the ark, the ark of the witness, the ark of the covenant, the ark of the Lord, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, the ark of God, and so on.

In this case, the term used gives us a clear insight into the work of Christ. If we define it as a coffin, that can be seen – “ark (coffin) covenant of Yehovah your God.” Along with the ark, there are those who bear it. As it says...

^{3 (con't)} **and the priests, the Levites, bearing it,**

The term “the priests, the Levites” is another way of saying, “the priests who are also of the tribe of Levi.” The priests, who are of Levi, were to bear the ark as is stated in Deuteronomy 31:9. It is according to the people’s seeing the ark being borne by the Levitical priests that...

^{3 (con't)} **then you shall set out from your place and go after it.**

The ark is to go first, the people will see the ark at a set distance, and only then were they to arise from the place they lodged and go after it. That set distance is next explained...

⁴ **Yet there shall be a space between you and it,**

akh rakhoq yihyeh benekem u-beno – “Surely distance there shall be interval you (pl.) and interval it.” There is to remain a marked separation between the ark and the people. This is to be...

^{4 (con't)} **about two thousand cubits by measure.**

The wording is more precise: *k'alpayim amah ba'midah* – “according to two thousand cubits in the measure.” This is about three thousand feet, or about three-quarters of a mile. It is what is known as a Sabbath Day’s journey in Acts 1:12, which is based on this passage now. That is the distance a person could walk on the Sabbath without it being considered a violation of that day.

There are various suggestions as to the reason for this. The first is explicitly stated in the next words...

⁴ (con't) **Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go,**

al tiqrevu elav l'maan asher tedeu eth ha'derek asher teleku bah – “No do come near it to end purpose which you may know the way which you go in.” The main reason is that in seeing the ark, the people would know where they could pass through the river. The people would need to know when the ark arrived at the Jordan.

By being distanced from the ark, it would be more visible to all people. If the distance were less, it would be crowded out of sight. The ark is both showing the way and making the way at the same time. As such, the people would want to cross down river from the ark. The ark is first, where the waters first ceased. The people follow after that on dry ground while the waters had continued on down to the Salt Sea.

As such, the unguarded ark would be considered the van, or Leader, for all others, protecting them. In seeing where the ark was located, the people could look and know they will be safe from the waters. As long as the ark remained there, the multitudes could continue to pass through the Jordan, and they would know the way, not being on the wrong side of it. These were needed...

⁴ (con't) **for you have not passed *this* way before.”**

The Hebrew bears an idiom: *ki lo abartem ba'derek mit'mol shilshom* – “for no you have passed in the way from yesterday, day before yesterday.” It is a way of saying, “This is not something you have done before.”

The intent of the words is, “There is one way. As you have never taken it before, you are given this opportunity without fear of getting lost.”

⁵ **And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.”**

The meaning here cannot be the same as in Exodus 19 where the people were to sanctify themselves for three days, wash their clothes, and refrain from going near their wives. None of that is stated, and there would not have been time for such external purifications.

Rather, what this appears to mean is that the people were to prepare themselves mentally, turn their hearts to the Lord, demonstrate faith in His promises, and the like. Without a right heart and attitude, the external rites that came at the giving of the law were ineffective in changing the people. Joshua is instructing them to sanctify themselves in a manner that will be effective.

⁶Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, “Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people.”

Joshua is typical of Christ, the Leader of the people. The Ark is typical of Christ, the embodiment of the law. The priests are typical of Christ as the One who fulfilled the sacrificial and priestly functions of the law which the priests performed. Each aspect of what is occurring finds its ultimate fulfillment in Him.

As instructed by Joshua, so the priests comply...

^{6 (con't)} So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people.

Christ is the One who goes before His people, pictured by their going before them now. With this understood, we now come to the next section where the Lord speaks to Joshua...

*Sanctify yourselves before the Lord
Prepare your heart and He will receive you
Believe what is recorded in His word
Accept the gospel is what you must do*

*Christ led the way so that we could then pass through
In going first, He accomplished all things for us
And now God asks us to simply believe this is true
Yes, God has done it all in the giving of Jesus*

*And so, let us fix our eyes on Jesus our Lord
And let us follow Him, the One who has paved the way
He is the only path back to God according to His word
Let us follow Him in faith, not waiting another day*

II. The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord (verses 7-13)

⁷ And the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel,

The words now are given to provide Joshua with the assurance that he will, in fact, be considered the acceptable leader of the people. That has already been acknowledged, but it will be confirmed in their sight (literally: their eyes) now.

The promise now is explicitly stated as realized in Chapter 4 –

“On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.” Joshua 4:14

This is the purpose. The Lord is exalting Joshua, the leader of His people...

⁷ (con’t) that they may know

The words bear a strong emphasis: *asher yedeun* – “that they may (certainly) know.” There will be no doubt in the minds of the people...

⁷ (con’t) that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

Just as certain as they had become that the Lord was with Moses, so they would be assured that He was also with Joshua. There would be no need for them to second guess the matter, and there would be no attempts to usurp his authority as they had, at first, tried with Moses.

The words of John come to mind here –

“Then they reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses; *as for this fellow*, we do not know where He is from.”” John 9:28, 29

Israel rejected Jesus, and this continues today. Someday, they will see in Joshua, the type of which Christ is the Antitype. It is He who alone can lead them into the inheritance. They will be as certain about Him as they are that Moses was their lawgiver. But Moses and the law could not bring them in. Only in the death of the law, typified by Moses’ death, can this come about.

Charles Ellicott correctly notes –

“It is here stated that the passage of Jordan was to be to Joshua what the giving of the law at Sinai was to Moses, “that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever” (Exodus 19:9). But the power which establishes Joshua is the work of the written instead of the spoken word.” Charles Ellicott

In both spoken word and in written word, it is the word of the Lord that was given to convince Israel. It is the ending of the law through Christ’s work, accompanied by the introduction of the New Covenant, that establishes Jesus as the true Leader of Israel.

But that is now only to be found in the written word. The law itself testifies to the Person and work of Christ (John 5:39 & 45), and it will take Israel accepting this fact for them to accept Christ as their Leader. Until the blinders are taken off and they look to the New Testament to understand the Old, this will not take place.

For now, the typology is quite clear for those who accept that these types are fulfilled in Jesus.

⁸You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying,

The words are emphatic: *v’atah t’saveh eth ha’kohanim* – “And you, you shall command the priests.” The Lord is affirming Joshua’s responsibility to command the priests.

Assuming that the narrative is chronological here, the priests are already bearing the ark. Now that this is the case, and now that they are prepared to move forward, he will command them in the hearing of the people for the priests to do as they are now instructed.

As such, it is the Lord who will accomplish the miracle, it is Joshua who has been given the authority to direct that it will occur, and it is the priests who are to be obedient to the authority of Joshua to accomplish the task by performing the given order.

The priests bearing the ark are the *material* cause. Their entry into the Jordan is what makes the thing (like wood in a table) to be. The *formal* cause, the design, is the parting of the Jordan. The *efficient* cause, what brings it about, is the Lord’s presence working on behalf of Joshua. And the *final* cause, the *purpose*, is the exaltation of Joshua in the eyes of the people.

This continues to be seen in the next words...

⁸ (con't) **‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.’”**

The words are very precise: *k’boakem ad qetseh me ha’yarden ba’yarden taamodu* – “according to your coming even to *the* extremity waters the Jordan – in the Jordan, you shall stand.” Verse 15 will clarify what this means. There it says that the Jordan overflows all its banks at this time.

And so, the meaning is, that where the water is overflowing the Jordan, they are to step into that water and the water will cease. What happens from that point is debated based on the words “in the midst” found in verse 17. How one explains those words will define how other verses are to be interpreted and translated.

For now, the Lord is behind the command. He is simply conveying the words to Joshua who is to then follow through with giving the command to the priests. It isn’t possible to not see the words of Jesus when the connection is made –

“For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” John 12:49, 50

If one understands the nature of God working through Christ Jesus, it becomes clear what is going on. The goal is Canaan, typical of restoration with God. Joshua receives the command to then speak out what he has been told to say.

Likewise, Jesus gives the command, and the people are to hear and honor the Son. In so doing, they honor the Father. This is seen, quite clearly in the next verses...

⁹ **So Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God.”**

The address is certainly to the leaders of the tribes who then represent all of the people. It is unlikely that this is a general calling for any and all to gather around him due to the immense size of the population. Assuming it is to the leaders, which appears even more likely based on verse 12, they would then pass the words on to all of the people.

Until this point, they had no idea how they were to cross through the Jordan. But hearing the Lord’s command through him to the priests, and knowing that it is the Lord

who will accomplish this miracle, Joshua can also convey to them more of what to expect.

Without being apprised of the stopping of the waters in advance, his coming words would be motivational, but maybe not fully accepted. But by knowing that the Lord directed the first thing, they will know – without any doubt – that He will perform His words in what is next conveyed...

¹⁰ And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God *is* among you,

Joshua confirms that it is the act of the ark going before them, and the waters being stopped up, by which the people will know that *el khai*, a Living God, is among them. The term is similar to Deuteronomy 5:26 which says *elohim khayim*. Which is more rightly translated as “*the Living God.*”

The Lord’s presence did not leave them when Moses died. He remains even though the succession of authority now continues on with Joshua. They are to be confident of that. And because of this fact, the next words will surely come to pass...

¹⁰ (con’t) and *that* He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites:

The names are all in the singular – “the Canaanite, and the Hittite...” and so on. Each group is being contrasted to Israel. Each has gods that are dead, Israel has *el khai*, a Living God, among them. Understanding the symbolism of the ark representing Christ, it is a clear and unambiguous reference to His deity.

The stopping of the Jordan is how the people were to know that a Living God is among them and that His words concerning the enemies would be performed. With this said, Joshua continues...

¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan.

hineh aron ha’b’rit adon kal ha’arets over liph’nekem ba’yarden – “Behold, ark the covenant Lord all the earth crosses over before you in the Jordan.” Joshua is tying the Lord of all the earth to the presence of the ark as if they are one united entity.

This is seen more clearly in the punctuation of the word “covenant” in the Masoretic text. In it, there is a distinguishing accent that calls for the translation to say either, “the ark of the covenant, even the Lord of all the earth,” or “the ark of the covenant, *the ark* of the Lord of all the earth.”

Because of this, it is saying that His presence is in the ark. It then provides a marvelous picture of the dual nature of Christ, the God/Man.

In what Joshua is saying, he is noting that this Lord is the Lord not just where He is at as if He is the Lord of Israel while on this side of the Jordan and He will be the Lord of Israel while on the other side, but that He is the Lord of all the earth at all times.

Just because His presence is there with the ark, it doesn’t mean He isn’t also in control of all things. On the contrary, He is. This is well reflected in the words of Hebrews where the author ties Jesus in with His preeminence over all creation –

“But to the Son *He* says:

...

And:

‘You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

¹¹ They will perish, but You remain;

And they will all grow old like a garment;

¹² Like a cloak You will fold them up,

And they will be changed.

But You are the same,

And Your years will not fail.” Hebrews 1:8 & 10-12

For now, Joshua has particular instructions to convey to these leaders of the people...

¹² **Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel,**

Twelve men were to be selected from the tribes of Israel for a special task. However, more specificity is next given...

¹² (con’t) **one man from every tribe.**

ish ekhad ish ekhad la'shavet – “man one man one, to the tribe.” Each tribe was to be represented in what will be instructed, thus they are representative of all Israel. Their assignment will be detailed in Chapter 4. For now...

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests

The clauses are much differently aligned in the Hebrew, but we'll work through it. For now: *v'hayah k'noakh kapoth ragle ha'kohanim* – “And it has happened, according to the resting soles feet the priests.”

In other words, there is no need for the priests to fear they may be swept into the river and taken downstream. Literally, as soon as the soles of their feet rest, the event will commence. It is the priests...

13 (con't) who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth,

Two different words for “lord” are used. It says, “who bear *the* ark of Yehovah, Lord (Adon) *of* all the earth.” It is an expansion of what was said in verse 11, “ark the covenant [even] Lord all the earth.”

One can see that Joshua is tying the ark of the covenant in with Yehovah while at the same time he is saying that Yehovah is the Lord of all the earth. It is an anticipation of the incarnation, where the physical is merged with the spiritual.

Next, the first words belonged to the earlier clause where the soles of the feet of the priests...

13 (con't) shall rest in the waters of the Jordan,

b'me ha'yarden – “in waters, the Jordan.” Water symbolizes life. The Jordan is the Descender. When the soles of the feet of the priests rest in the waters of the Jordan...

13 (con't) that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off,

Again, as in verse 7, there is a heavy stress in the words: *me ha'yarden yikaretun* – “waters the Jordan shall (certainly) be cut off.” The word translated as “cut off,” *karath*, is one often used in the cutting of a covenant.

When the soles of the feet of the priests rest in the waters of the Descender, the waters will be cut off. They are...

^{13 (con't)} **the waters that come down from upstream,**

A verb is being used in the place of a noun here: *ha'mayim ha'yor'dim milmaelah* – “the waters, the descenders, from to above.”

It is very precise in what is being conveyed – the waters, the descenders, from above will be cut off the moment that the soles of the feet of the priests rest in the waters of the Descender. They will no longer flow as they previously did...

^{13 (fin)} **and they shall stand as a heap.”**

v'yaamdu ned ekhad – “and they shall stand, heap one.” Joshua is conveying that this will happen before it occurs. Because of this, it is what is intended to magnify Joshua in the eyes of the people.

He conveys the word of the Lord, the word of the Lord from him is confirmed when it comes to pass, and thus Joshua is exalted in the eyes of the people.

Here, we must finish as there is too much in the Chapter to go through for one sermon. The final four verses will come with an explanation of what the chapter is conveying to us.

For now, we can remember the beginning of the sermon and feel confident that what is being conveyed is both reasonable and noncontradictory. There is much repetition and overlap in what is said, but that is how the early historical writings were given.

And, even without evaluating the verses today in detail as far as typology is concerned, we have seen enough to know that everything here is conveying information about Jesus. That is certain.

As this is so, it is telling us another part of the ongoing redemptive narrative, all of which is intended to convey to us what God is doing in Christ. If you don't remember another thing about our words today, just remember this. Jesus. It is all about Jesus.

And so, before we close, let me tell you how you can have a close and personal relationship with God because of what Jesus has done, much of what is actually typologically seen in today's verses...

Closing Verse: *"The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.
For He has founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the waters."* Psalm 24:1

Next Week: Joshua 3:14-17 *They will not have to paddle like Fido or Rover, but get across they will do...* (And the People Crossed Over, Part II) (6th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

And the People Crossed Over, Part I

Then Joshua rose early in the morning, the sun like a flame
And they set out from Acacia Grove and to the Jordan they came

He and all the children of Israel
And before they crossed over, they lodged there
So it was, after three days
That the officers went through the camp with news to share

And they commanded the people, saying
"When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God
-----so to you, we submit
And the priests, the Levites, bearing it
Then you shall set out from your place and go after it

Yet there shall be a space between you and it
About two thousand cubits by measure, now you know the score
Do not come near it, that you may know the way
-----by which you must go
For you have not passed this way before

And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves

-----this is what you are to do
For tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you

Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying
“Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over
-----before the people, so I instruct you
So they took up the ark of the covenant
And went before the people, as instructed to

And the LORD said to Joshua
“This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel
That they may know that, as I was with Moses
So I will be with you. Yes, so to you I tell

You shall command the priests
Who bear the ark of the covenant, saying
‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan
You shall stand in the Jordan, so to you I am relaying

So Joshua said to the children of Israel with a commanding nod
“Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God

And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God
-----is among you
And that He will without fail drive out from before you
The Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites
And the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites too

Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth
Is crossing over before you into the Jordan, He of infinite worth

Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men, as I describe
From the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe

And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet
Of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD
-----the Lord of all the earth, so I say
Shall rest in the waters of the Jordan
That the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, it shall be that way

The waters that come down from upstream, so I convey
And they shall stand as a heap, it shall surely be this way

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 3:14-17 **(AND THE PEOPLE CROSSED OVER PART II)**

In Numbers 14, the people failed to believe the Lord. They complained against Him, and they rejected Him. The typology clearly pictured Israel's rejection of Jesus. Because of their faithlessness, they were sentenced to turn into the wilderness where none of that generation, save Joshua and Caleb, would enter into the inheritance.

The next day, they decided, "Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised, for we have sinned!" But the Lord had already spoken, and the sentence had been pronounced. Instead of trusting the Lord and having Him lead them, they decided it was by their effort and works that they would take the inheritance.

This is what Israel has now done for the past two thousand years. They rejected Christ, and they decided to make up their own plan of salvation through works. After the people were turned to the desert to wander, God gave them a provision for salvation when they had been bitten by snakes in the wilderness, looking to a bronze snake on a cross (picturing Jesus).

That was given to show any Jew since the coming of Christ that he could be saved if he looked to Jesus. But it is only an individual salvation. The nation, all of them who have not come to Christ, have perished and will someday be cast into the Lake of Fire.

But there is a time when the nation as a whole will enter the inheritance. That day has been anticipated in all of our sermons since Numbers 14. With Moses (the law) dead, they will enter. They will now have what was lacking in their attempt to enter after their sentence –

Text Verse: *"But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp." Numbers 14:44*

The ark was not with them, nor was Moses. In Christ, Israel has both. He is the ark, and He is the embodiment of the Law of Moses. With Him at their head, pictured by Joshua, they will enter. It is Jesus Christ, and He alone, by which man can enter into the inheritance. And it is by Him alone that all Israel will someday be saved.

The typing of this sermon actually got started some years ago, probably around the Numbers 14 sermon. I was looking at this passage from Joshua and noticed a pattern

that will be revealed in today's sermon. I sent it to Sergio and Rhoda, and Sergio – responding for both of them – said this about what I sent –

Cut off !! Wooow! And then Josh 3:16 says it was cut off by Adam by the Dead Sea!!! And the words used there are “cut off” and “finished” (Tam) - Just like Christ had said - it is finished!!

And the word for “dipped” in Josh 3:15 says the priests “nitbeli” - same word for Baptism!

THIS IS INCREDIBLE!!!!!

Never underestimate Sergio and Rhoda's zeal for the word of God. I have held onto those comments since then and have anxiously awaited putting all of this together. I certainly hope you will enjoy what God has placed in His word.

Before going on, it is true that modern Hebrew is not the same as biblical Hebrew, but there is overlap, and there must be a common understanding of biblical concepts in translations. Hence, what is presented here does not violate the typology at all, it is clearly supportive of it.

These are words of surety for Israel, and thus, they are words of surety for us. If you are struggling with the idea of eternal salvation, you shouldn't. What God is doing is not about your faithfulness – you unfaithful soul. It is about His.

Cast off the arrogance concerning your (or another's) inability to remain saved. It is not about you. God has made the promise. God has done the work. God has given the pledge. If it were about you, and it isn't, you would lose your salvation. Don't poke at the Lord's covenant looking for holes in it. There are none.

Great things such as eternal salvation are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. On Dry Ground (verses 14-17)

¹⁴ So it was, when the people set out from their camp

The symbolism being conveyed is lost. It says tents, not camp: *v'hi bin'soa ha'am meaholehem* – “And it was, in setting out the people from their tents.” The word translated as “set out” means to pull up and relocate, especially the pulling up of tent pegs.

It is what occurred when the people left Mount Sinai in Numbers 10 and began their journey to Canaan. It is the final pulling up and heading out on that long, arduous trek (a self-inflicted wound) that began forty years earlier. Although getting ahead in the narrative, we are told the exact day that this occurs in Joshua 4:19 –

“Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.”

This is an important day. First, it is exactly forty years, to the day, from the event recorded in Exodus 12 –

“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.’” Exodus 12:3-6

The first year was spent at Sinai, and then the people departed, disobeyed, and were sentenced to exile. It is forty years to the day from when the lamb was selected as the Passover until the people are to pass through the Jordan.

Further, this is exactly a period of fourteen thousand days, to the day, after the people set out from Mount Sinai as is recorded in Numbers 10. That will be reviewed when we get to Joshua 4. For now, the purpose of this pulling up and setting out is...

¹⁴ (con’t) **to cross over the Jordan,**

la'avor eth ha'Yarden – “to pass through the Jordan.” The word *avar* signifies to pass over or through, but it is certainly to be rendered “through” in this case. There is no

bridge. Rather, the waters will cease, and the people will pass through to the other side of the Descender. The people will go through...

14 (con't) with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people,

As we have seen, the priests symbolize Christ in the performance of His duties. The ark symbolizes Christ in His Person and what that specifically speaks of is concerning the law and His death in fulfillment of it. To more fully appreciate this and grasp what is being conveyed, reviewing the Exodus sermons concerning its construction are necessary. As for these things...

15 and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan,

u-k'bo nos'e ha'aron ad ha'Yarden – “And according to coming those bearing the ark unto the Jordan.” This means that as they bore the ark, according to the moment they arrived at the Jordan – at just this moment – but which is next further explained...

15 (con't) and the feet of the priests who bore the ark

v'rage ha'kohanim nos'e ha'aron – “and feet the priests those bearing the ark.” As soon as the bearers of the ark arrived at that spot and...

15 (con't) dipped in the edge of the water

nitbelu biqtseh ha'mayim – “had immersed in extremity the waters.” The word is *taval*, normally translated as “dipped.” It means “immersed.” When one dips, the thing dipped is immersed. Hence, it is the same word used in the Hebrew New Testament when translating the word “baptize.” Likewise, the word “baptize” comes from the Greek word *baptizo* which signifies immersion, not sprinkling or pouring.

15 (con't) (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest),

v'ha'Yarden male al kal g'dotav kol y'me qatsiy – “and the Jordan full upon all his banks all days harvest.” Here is a new word, *gadah*. It comes from an unused root signifying to cut off. Hence, it speaks of the bank or border of the river as it is cut into the stream.

The water is full “upon” all its banks, meaning it is overflowing. This is because of the rainy season now mixing with the melting of the snow on Mt. Hermon. All of this water is flowing into the Jordan which descends through this single gorge all the way to the

Salt (Dead) Sea. The harvest being referred to now is the barley, not the wheat, as seen in Exodus 9 –

“Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley *was* in the head and the flax *was* in bud. ³² But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they *are* late crops.” Exodus 9:31

That the flax was in harvest at this time has already been seen in Joshua 2:6 where it was noted that Rahab had stalks of flax arranged on her roof. This would have been for drying them after harvesting them. In other words, the account is precise and there is no doubt that it was as is now described.

This doesn't mean, however, that the waters were not overflowing through the wheat harvest as well, and it can be inferred that they do. Today, this is not the case. So much water is drawn off from the Jordan for agriculture that it is no longer that way, but there is no reason to assume that the overflowing didn't last much longer in the past.

Because of this immense flow of water, rushing to its termination in the Salt Sea, the miracle which will now be described is all the more pronounced. At the very moment the feet of the priests were immersed, it came about...

¹⁶ **that the waters which came down from upstream stood *still*,**

A verb is being used as a noun here: *vayaamdu ha'mayim ha'yor'dim milmalah* – “And stood the waters, the descenders from above.” What this means is that the waters ceased flowing where the priests are. However, this does not initially occur at the spot where they stand, making the event even more miraculous. The waters stood...

¹⁶ (con't) **and rose in a heap very far away at Adam,**

qamu ned ekhad harkheq meod ba'Adam – “risen heap one far very in the Adam.” What this means is that the waters actually stopped earlier in time than when the priests stepped into the water.

In other words, the water is backed up at a location very far upriver. If the waters backed up a long distance away, then the water that was cut off continued to recede from that point as a full flowing river for a certain amount of time so that when the priests stepped into the flow and the waters stopped for them, it was when the receding water from above finally reached them and passed by.

As such, the miracle is all that much more pronounced. The Lord knew exactly when the feet of the priests were going to step into the water. Planning for that event, in advance, He stopped the waters upriver to accommodate its occurrence.

It is irrelevant how He did this, but it is still not inappropriate to speculate. Maybe He caused a logjam. Maybe a tremor caused a slope of rock and gravel to produce a dam, and so on. Even if a natural explanation like at the parting of the Red Sea exists, where an east wind is said to have caused it, the miracle is that it occurred at exactly the moment specified by His word.

The name Adam is the exact same in Hebrew as Adam, the first man. That, in turn, is the same as the word *adam* signifying “man” and “mankind.” Next, the words “in the Adam” are explained as...

¹⁶ (con’t) **the city that is beside Zaretan.**

ha’ir aher mitsad tsar’tan – “the city which from side Zaretan.” The name *Tsar’tan* comes from a root signifying adversary or oppression. The “n” at the end is believed to indicate “place of.” Hence, the name means “Place of Oppression,” or “Place of *the* Adversary.”

¹⁶ (con’t) **So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea,**

v’ha’yor’dim al yam ha’aravah yam ha’melakh – “and the descenders upon sea the Arabah, Sea the Salt.” The word *aravah*, comes from the word *arav*, meaning to become evening or grow dark. This is identical to *arav*, meaning to take or give on pledge. Hence, this can be typologically paraphrased as, “and the descenders upon the Sea of *the* Pledge.”

The narrative goes on and explains what the “Sea of the Arabah” means by saying, “Sea the Salt.” The words are being precise to definitively show us that it is the Salt Sea that is being referred to. The fact that two names are used is also a very clear indication that typology is being provided for us to consider. The waters...

¹⁶ (con’t) **failed, and were cut off;**

tamu nikratu – “finished, cut off.” This is speaking of the waters (the descenders) that are coming from above and flowing to where the Dead Sea is located. The words are

extremely precise concerning what is happening, even before Israel's eyes. With this complete, it next says...

16 (con't) and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

v'ha'am av'ru neged yerikho – “and the people crossed through in front of Jericho.” They are directly facing Jericho as they pass through the Jordan. The word *neged* comes from *nagad*, signifying to be conspicuous. As such, it means “the part opposite,” and thus a counterpart or mate. Because of this, it is used to describe a helper for Adam –

“And the LORD God said, ‘*It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper **comparable** to him.*’¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name.²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper **comparable** to him.” Genesis 2:18-20

As such, that translation can mean exactly what is here in Joshua. There is the historical event – “and the people crossed through in front of Jericho.” But there is also what is typological – “and the people crossed through comparable (meaning suitable) Jericho.”

17 Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground

v'yaamdu ha'kohanim nos'e ha'aron b'rith Yehovah b'kharavah – “And stood the priests bearers the ark covenant Yehovah in dry.” It is the same word used in Exodus 14 concerning the parting of the Red Sea –

“Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into **dry land**, and the waters were divided.” Exodus 14:21

This standing in dry ground is explained with the next words...

17 (con't) in the midst of the Jordan;

b'tok ha'Yarden haken – “in midst the Jordan – established.” What is debated is whether the priests remained standing in the spot on the banks of the river where they had first

stepped, or did they enter into the riverbed after the waters stopped once the descending water was gone? This is actually important to at least consider. Many translations say, “in the middle of the Jordan.” A couple paraphrase it saying, “in the middle of the riverbed.” This may give a false impression.

If the priests stood where they first touched the water on the overflowing banks of the river, the “in the midst of the Jordan” may not mean “in the physical middle of where the river flows,” but “in the middle of where the river had flowed.”

In other words, “midst” may be referring to “between the cut-off waters.” Half was cut off upriver, and half continued downriver. Hence, the physical separation of the waters is what is being described, not the middle of what is a normal flowing river.

No matter what, this was a sign of safety and security to the people that the waters would not suddenly break loose above and drown them. The Lord, represented by the ark of the covenant of Yehovah, stood in the crossing to ensure that the people were, in fact, safe to cross. For the sake of clarity, the word *kun* (*haken*), or established was placed in the previous clause by the NKJV, translating it as “firm.”

However, it is standing alone in the Hebrew, thus providing emphasis. It is a common word that signifies, “to be firm” or “establish.” Despite it being common, it is an important one to consider when we are done with the verses.

17 (con’t) and all Israel crossed over on dry ground,

v’kal Yisrael ov’rim b’kharavah – “And all Israel crosses through in dry.” The meaning is obvious, as literally millions of people cross through below the ark, they were all able to do so in a spot that was dry. It is the same word just translated as “dry” in the first clause of the verse.

Further, as has been seen before, the word translated as “crosses through” is a verb that is identical in spelling to the word *ivrim*, or Hebrew. Thus, this can – and should – be taken as a pun indicating just that. All the people that cross are Hebrews. The crossing through continued...

17 (fin) until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

The word “people” is not appropriate. That word, *ha’am*, the people, was used in verses 3, 5, 6, 14, and 16. This is a different word. Translating it as “people” completely destroys

the typology: *ad asher tamu kal ha'goy la'avov eth ha'yarden* – “until which finished the nation to cross through the Jordan.”

The entire nation of people who are there safely cross through while the priests stood and bore the ark in the midst of the Jordan. The miracle is complete, and the record of it stands as a witness to the world of the miraculous workings of the Lord on behalf of the nation of Israel.

*This is the day! We are headed into the promised land
Christ has done it all for us
Look at the waters, taken away! See how they stand
Look at the marvelous work of our Lord Jesus*

*We shall enter in and receive the promise today
After so long, our eyes are opened to our Christ
He came and did it all! And we now behold the way
It is Jesus alone who for our sins was priced*

*Glory be to God who has done such things for us!
Glory to our Lord who has opened to us the way
Praise be to our God! Yes, our Lord Jesus!
We shall enter in. Yes! Today is the day!*

II. Pictures of Christ

How does one present the future in a way that will explain exactly what will happen but also in a way that can easily remain hidden from those who are not yet ready to see it? The answer, as we have seen, time and again in the first five books of the Bible, is “through typology.”

Israel was given the law, Israel failed to enter into the inheritance, and Israel was punished and sent into exile, remaining under the law. Moses could not enter the inheritance because he typifies the law. And it is clear in understanding New Testament theology that no one under the law can obtain the inheritance without what is offered in Christ.

As such, Moses had to die outside of the inheritance. But Israel under their Messiah, typified by Joshua who is the leader of his people, will enter the inheritance now that

the law is dead. That is the marvelous story that is seen in Chapter 3. The years of punishment and exile are over.

This chapter is pointing to Israel of today, set to enter in. They are not yet ready, but these words of Joshua show us that it will come to pass. There was a period of three days from the time of the command until the time of entrance. As we saw, in verse 1, it literally reads “in until three days.” This is what Hosea prophesied concerning Israel’s time of punishment –

“Come, and let us return to the LORD;
For He has torn, but He will heal us;
He has stricken, but He will bind us up.

² After two days He will revive us;
On the third day He will raise us up,
That we may live in His sight.

³ Let us know,
Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD.
His going forth is established as the morning;
He will come to us like the rain,
Like the latter *and* former rain to the earth.” Hosea 6:1-3

There is a time when Israel will be healed. It will be “after two days,” meaning after two thousand years (see Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8), and “on the third day,” meaning in the third period of a thousand years – the millennium.

What needs to be understood is that Moses’ death signifies the ending of the law. That happened at Jesus’ time. Hence, the three-day period now given explains that. As such the typology of Numbers 14, where they rejected entrance into Canaan and went into exile, even until the time of Moses’ death, is typologically included in this three-day period.

But more, during that time, individual Jews could be saved by faith by looking to the bronze serpent. Thus, it is the same gospel as that proclaimed to the Gentiles. So much for hyperdispensationalism.

All of that time between Numbers 14 and this event now is like an insert story that is seen again and again elsewhere in the Bible. It is at the end of this two-thousand-year period that the promises to Israel will finally be realized. So much for the church

replacing Israel. I'm sorry for replacement theologians, but this is exactly what is being pictured.

The people are moving from Acacia Grove (*ha'shittim*) to the Jordan. As we have seen in previous sermons, including Joshua 2, the word Shittim is derived from *shotet*, a scourge. That word is used only once in the Bible. In Joshua 23:13, it says –

“...know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the Lord your God has given you.” Joshua 23:13

It is also true that the law itself can be equated to scourges, simply because “by the law *is* the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20). In Joshua 23, the people of Canaan are equated to scourges who would afflict Israel. Thus, the scourges are that which draw the people away from faith in the Lord and to that which is false.

The law is what caused Christ to be scourged for His people, and it is what Israel has been under. With Moses dead, they are now leaving the law – something that is going to happen when they call on Christ. From the law, they are going to *ha'yarden* – the Jordan, meaning “the Descender.” It is a picture of Christ.

The Descender starts at Mount Hermon, meaning “Sacred.” It is capped in snow all year, signifying purity. It is emblematic of heaven, the Sacred place. The water then descends to and passes through the area of Dan, or Judge. Christ descended from heaven to the world to be the Judge of sin and to have sin judged in Him.

The waters flow south into the Galilee where they linger. Christ's life and ministry were centered on this area where He lingered, spending most of His recorded time there. The Jordan then travels in a very long zigzagging path along the border of Canaan. Christ, the Descender, went through all Israel, traveling and preaching.

The Jordan terminates in the Salt Sea, the Sea of the Arabah. It is the Dead Sea. Christ, the Descender, went to His death. But there was no corruption found in Him, typified by the salt of the Salt Sea – a picture of incorruption. In His death, the pledge, typified by the “Sea of the Pledge,” is given. It refers to the Spirit, the pledge (*arrabon* – from the Hebrew *eravon*) of Ephesians 1:13, 14 –

“In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the **guarantee** [*arrabon*] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”

-Ephesians 1:13, 14

From this sea, the waters do not continue on. Rather, they evaporate – a picture of the resurrection and ascension. As for the fulfillment of the typology, Jesus Himself expressly tells us that He is the fulfillment of what the Jordan pictures –

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 6:38

Though modern New Testament Hebrew is different than biblical Hebrew, there are overlapping words. In the Sar Shalom Hebrew translation of Jesus’ words, *v’yaradti*, “and I have come down,” is used. The name Jordan is from the same word, *yarad*. Jesus is the Descender.

Next, the ark was introduced in verse 3:3. As was explained, that pictures Christ, the embodiment of the law. The priests who bear it picture Christ in His work, bearing the sacrificial and priestly requirements of the law. The people are told that when they see it, they are to get ready to move after it.

There is to be a space of two thousand cubits between the ark and the people. Some say the distance signifies the two-thousand-year interval already mentioned, but that has already been dealt with. Though ultimately the same, there is more in what it is pointing to.

Rather, this is a Sabbath day’s walk, and it anticipates following Christ into His rest as is indicated in Hebrews 4:3 where it says, “For we who have believed do enter that rest.” That is explained by the idiom that was used, *ki lo avartem ba’derek mit’mol shilshom* – “for no you have passed through in the way from yesterday, day before yesterday.”

This more perfectly explains the time from Christ until Israel enters. It is a way of saying, “This is not something you have done before.” But typologically it is the two days (the two thousand years) they, as a nation, failed to follow Christ.

The people sanctifying themselves in verse 5 signify their preparing themselves mentally, turning their hearts to the Lord and away from the law. The external rites that

came at the giving of the law were ineffective in changing the people. Instead, they must have hearts properly directed to Christ's fulfillment of it.

In verse 7, it was said that Joshua would be exalted in the eyes of the people. This is pointing to that time when Jesus, of whom Joshua is the type, will be exalted in the eyes of Israel. That verse contained a strong emphasis, "that they may (certainly) know." There will be no doubt when Israel at last comes to their Messiah. He will finally take the place of Moses in their eyes.

In verse 10, it referred to the waters being stopped up as a means of telling that *el khai* – a Living God – is among them. This is exactly the purpose of Christ's incarnation and work: to prove that He is the living God and that He is among His people.

He is not like the dead gods of the nations, but He is the Lord of all the earth. It is He, Jesus, the embodiment of the law who was going before the people as the Descender, God in Christ. The deity of Jesus Christ, when the typology is understood, is inescapable.

In verse 13, this was again clearly seen in the words, "ark the covenant [even] Lord all the earth." The ark of the covenant, meaning Jesus, the embodiment of the law, is Yehovah – God incarnate – the Lord of all the earth. It clearly anticipated the incarnation, where the physical is merged with the spiritual.

In verse 14, it referred to the people setting out from their tents. This is a picture of Israel leaving the tent of the law, the *ohel moed*, the tent (tabernacle) of meeting, to come to Christ who is the true Tent (Tabernacle) that the law only prefigured –

"And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth."

-John 1:14 (YLT)

Though it is actually found in Chapter 4, we saw earlier, that this is said to be taking place on the same day that the Passover lambs were selected. They were lambs that were accepted only after they were deemed to be without blemish. It is reflective of "Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19).

Israel will come to realize that Christ is the One who these pictures anticipate, and they will come to Him. This is what is being pictured. It is exactly forty years, to the day, from that original selection of the lambs.

Forty “points to the action of grace (5), leading to and ending in revival and renewal (8)” (Bullinger). Israel was given grace by not being destroyed. They are now arriving at a time of revival and renewal.

In verse 15, the priests (Jesus in His work) with the ark (Jesus the embodiment of the law) came to the Jordan (Christ, the Descender) and their feet dipped (were baptized) into the edge of the water.

In Scripture, the placement of the foot signifies possession. Where the foot stands, that place is the person’s possession (see Deuteronomy 11:24, 28:35 & 65, and Joshua 1:3). The priests symbolize Jesus in His duties. When His duties are complete and his sole rests, the waters (life) are cut off.

The significance of the feet being “baptized” is that they then represent the possession of the waters into which they stepped. Hence, even though the people will pass through on dry ground, it is as if they are being baptized in their passage through. This concept is seen, explicitly, concerning the passing through of the Red Sea in 1 Corinthians 10 –

“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ²all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2

Likewise, in the death of Christ, being pictured now, believers are baptized into Him –

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” Romans 6:3

Hence, these people typologically anticipate Israel of the future being baptized into Christ as they pass through the Descender (Jesus) and into the promised inheritance.

Further, this was when the river was overflowing during the whole time of the harvest. As it says in verse 3:15, it overflows all “His” banks during this time. The harvest is the time of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as Jesus said –

“Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. ³⁵Do you not say, “There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest”? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!’” John 4:34, 35

It is at this time, and when the priests' feet are baptized into the Descender (Jesus' work under the law filled with the Spirit of God), that the waters (the descenders) stood and rose in one heap very far away, "in the Adam."

Water symbolizes life. The life of the Descender, God in Christ, is standing all the way back in a heap to Adam, the man, and thus all who are in Adam. It is the fulfillment of the promise to man even from the time of the fall. It is why Adam named his wife Khavah, Life. He anticipated the life that was lost, but which would come again to quicken the dead of humanity.

When Christ was baptized into His death, that life was gathered all the way back to our first father, and all the faithful since then –

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!" Luke 12:50

Christ performed His work under the law (the priests/priestly role), He embodied that law (the ark), and in His death, the waters of the Descender (God in Christ) stopped and reverted all the way back to Adam for fallen man in order to allow any who have believed or who will believe in Him to pass through.

As for the location, Adam, that is said to be beside Zaretan (*Tsar'than*) the Place of Oppression or the Place of the Adversary. Whichever is closest, the meaning is obvious. Spiritually dead man has been vexed and oppressed since the fall when Adam was expelled from Eden, where Satan, the Adversary, did his work. The waters backed up to revive those in Adam who come through the work of Jesus Christ.

With that, the waters downstream of the priests standing with the ark went all the way down to the Sea of the Pledge, the Salt Sea. It is a picture of Christ, after His being cut off in death. He remained incorruptible in His death (see Acts 2:27), and it is through His death that the pledge – the Holy Spirit – is received.

It is in the death of Jesus, the cutting off of the waters (symbolizing life) that these things came about. As it said, the waters *tamu nikratu* – "finished, cut off." One cannot help but see Jesus' fulfillment of the law in this.

There are several words that signify "finished" in Hebrew, such as *shalam*, *kalah*, and *tamam*. Each is close in meaning. The word used here, *tamam*, is in accord with the idea

used in John 19 where Jesus says, "It is finished." This word is used to indicate the end of the words of the Song of Moses and the end of the words of Job in his discourse.

It was also used when speaking of finishing the work of the pillars in the temple, and so on. It signifies finished, come to an end, complete, etc. The next word *karath*, or cut off, is used when speaking of death, in this case, it is death in the cutting of a covenant. Here are the verses needed to understand this –

The promise of the New Covenant –

"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will **make** a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Jeremiah 31:31 (*karath/cut* – see fulfillment in Hebrews 8:8).

The cutting off of Christ –

"And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah **shall be cut off**, but not for Himself; (*karath/cut off*)
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it *shall be* with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined." Daniel 9:26

The fulfillment of the law by Christ –

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be **fulfilled**, said, 'I thirst!'" John 19:28 (*tamam/fulfilled*)

"It is **finished!**" John 19:30 (*tamam/finished*)

The cutting of a New Covenant in the blood of Christ –

"Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. ²¹ But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. ²² And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!'" Luke 22:20-22 (*karath/cut* – see Jeremiah 31:31 above)

In Israel's realization that Christ died in fulfillment (*tamam*) of the law and then cut (*karath*) a New Covenant in His blood, they will then – finally then – cross through His death and into the promise.

That was seen in verse 16 with the words “and the people crossed through suitable Jericho.” They are now suitable as a people, because of passing through the Descender – which is because of the cutting off of Christ in fulfillment of the law – that they will be a people suitable for the place of fragrance – restored perfection.

The priests (Christ's work) with the ark of the covenant of Yehovah (Christ the embodiment of the covenant of Yehovah and the fulfillment of the law) standing “in dry” (a picture of the death of Christ) is what allows the people to pass through.

Of them, it said, *b'tok ha'Yarden haken* – “in midst the Jordan – established.” As I said, the word *haken* (*kun*), meaning “to be firm, or establish,” is an important one.

Christ's work, being established, is what then allows Israel to be established. This is seen in Isaiah 54, and it refers to the future, when Israel will come to Christ. There the word *kun* is used –

[All your children *shall be* taught by the LORD,
And great *shall be* the peace of your children.
¹⁴ In righteousness **you shall be established**; [*kun*]
You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear;
And from terror, for it shall not come near you.” Isaiah 54:13, 14

This is based on what is said in Isaiah 54:1 –

“Sing, O barren,
You *who* have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud,
You *who* have not labored with child!
For more *are* the children of the desolate
Than the children of the married woman,’ says the LORD.” Isaiah 54:1

Paul cites this in Galatians 4 explaining that this is a metaphor for Sarah and Hagar representing the two covenants. Those of the Old Covenant are in bondage (not established). Those who are of the New Covenant, are free (established). They are a part of “the Jerusalem above” (Galatians 4:26).

This is just what is being seen. Israel is being established in Christ by passing through His death. This is seen elsewhere as well, such as in Jeremiah 30:20 where the same word is again used.

With this understood, verse 17 said that all Israel crossed through on dry ground. It contained the pun on the word *ov'rim* (crossers through) which is the same as *ivrim* (Hebrews). Those who had rejected Christ are not true Hebrews, but someday, they will be those who cross through Christ, and it will be "all Israel."

The anticipation of Israel's redemption is that the nation as a whole will come to Christ. Paul speaks of that day which is yet ahead in Romans 11 –

"And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
'The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷ For this *is* My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.'" Romans 11:26, 27

Paul is not saying that "all Israel of all time" will be saved. Rather, he is saying that Israel the nation, all of them, will be saved when they – as a nation – call out to God through Christ Jesus. This is what is being seen in verse 17 with the final words of the chapter, *ad asher tamu kal ha'goy la'avov eth ha'yarden* – "until which finished **the nation** to cross through the Jordan."

Every person and the entire nation will be saved. This is the culmination of what has been anticipated for the people since they turned away from believing the Lord in Numbers 14, and it will be the culmination of what has been needed since they turned away from the Lord's Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He came.

During the first sermon, I explained the four causes of what was being seen. In typology, however, this is what is seen: The priests bearing the ark (Jesus' work under the law) is the *material* cause. Their entry into the Jordan (the people's entry into Christ) is what makes the thing (like wood in a table) to be. The *formal* cause, the design, is the parting of the Jordan (the death of Christ in fulfillment of the law). The *efficient* cause, what brings it about, is the Lord's presence working in and through Jesus. And the *final* cause, the *purpose*, is the exaltation of the Lord Jesus in the eyes of the people.

This is the marvel of what God is doing in Christ. It is not two gospels, one for the Jews and one for the Gentiles, as some heretically claim. It is one thing for all people: faith in

Messiah going all the way back to Adam. But along with individual salvation, there is also the promised national salvation of Israel.

Anyone, Jew or Gentile, can be saved today through the finished work of Christ – very clearly depicted in today’s passage. However, national Israel will also be saved – meaning every one of them – when the nation calls out to Him.

This is a promise to no other nation, and it is given to demonstrate the covenant-keeping faithfulness of the Lord to those He swore to keep as a people forever. But this also shows us the nature of His covenant keeping for all.

Just as He has kept, and He will continue to keep Israel, despite their unfaithfulness to the covenant, so He will keep us in Christ. The surety of our salvation is tied up in the surety of Israel’s national salvation. If He will violate the agreement made with them, then our salvation is just as dubious.

But the story in Joshua 3 tells us that Israel will be saved and come into the New Covenant. Paul tells us this as well. And the apostles go on to show us that this is the same faithfulness that we can expect in Christ.

If you are a Christian who believes you can lose what God has promised you, your theology is lacking, and your faith is not properly directed to God in Christ. Rather, your faith is tied up in your own supposed righteousness. As such, you should probably question your salvation. Don’t lose out on the reward, but trust in Christ, rest in Christ, and be confident in Christ.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” John 10:17, 18*

Next Week: Joshua 4:1-14 *It is Christ’s blood that atones, and it is done...* (Twelve Stones, Part I) (7th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

And the People Crossed Over, Part II

So it was, when the people set out
From their camp to cross over the Jordan
-----every Tom, Dan, and Gordan
With the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people
And as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan

And the feet of the priests who bore the ark
Dipped in the edge of the water that did the Jordan fill
(for the Jordan overflows all its banks
-----during the whole time of harvest)
That the waters which came down from upstream stood still

And rose in a heap very far away at Adam
The city that is beside Zaretan as you surely know
So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah
-----the Salt Sea, failed
And were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho

Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD
Stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan
-----By the waters they were not tossed
And all Israel crossed over on dry ground
Until all the people had over the Jordan completely crossed

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 4:1-14 (TWELVE STONES, PART I)

As you know, the Lord works through various literary devices in order to reveal Himself and His intentions for us. We constantly see typology concerning something anticipating Christ, the law, and so on. There are metaphors where one thing is equated to another, such as the tongue being a fire, a world of iniquity.

Various things like water, a stone, or an olive tree will symbolize other things. When seen, they are very consistent in their representation. Numbers are like this. In today's passage, we will see twelve men of Israel select twelve stones that are to be set up later. Stones have their own meaning as do the number of them.

After they set up these stones, Joshua will set up another twelve stones in order to make another picture. These will have their own meaning as well. But there is also the truth that twelve and twelve equal twenty-four. And so, it is an obvious number to consider –

“Twenty four being a multiple of twelve, expresses in a higher form the same signification. It is the number associated with the heavenly government and worship, of which the earthly form in Israel was only a copy. We are told that both Moses and David ordered all things connected with the Tabernacle and Temple worship by direct revelation from God, and as a copy of things in the heavens, [Hebrews 8:5; 1 Chronicles 28:12, 19]. And the sevenfold phrase (in Exo 40) ‘as the LORD commanded Moses’ witnesses to the Divine ordering of all. It was so with the twenty-four courses of priests in the earthly Temple; these were formed on the ‘pattern of things in the heavens.’” EW Bullinger

Text Verse: *“And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God.” Revelation 11:16*

Bullinger says more about the number twenty-four, but you get the point. It signifies heavenly government and heavenly worship. Here we have two sets of twelve stones. How would that fit into what is being said? That is, if it does at all.

We won't answer that today, but it is a good thought to consider. For now, we have a sermon full of information to look over. It will be a sermon that will necessarily be followed by another in order to understand the entire chapter and what it is telling us.

This means that if you are hearing this sermon now, unless the Lord comes for you by death or rapture, you'll need to be here for part two next week. Yes, the rapture would be far preferable if one of the two happens, but there is no guarantee of that.

As such, it is always best to be prepared to meet your Maker on friendly terms, and always be prepared for whatever lies ahead. Death, rapture, another sermon. It is all in God's hands, but where you will go, if it is death, is in yours. Jesus has made the offer. Be sure to respond appropriately.

And one thing is for sure: what He did in order to make that offer possible continues to be pictured in today's verses. I hope you will enjoy what we see today and will consider it while waiting for next week's sermon.

Great stuff is to be found in God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Waters of the Jordan Were Cut Off (verses 1-9)

¹ And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan,

Rather than "people," it more appropriately refers to the entire nation: *vayhi ka'asher tammu kal ha'goy la'avov eth ha'yarden* – "And it was, according to which finished all the nation to cross through the Jordan."

As noted in Joshua 3, the word "over" is better translated as "through." This is to fit the typology repeatedly used of faith in Christ in the New Testament –

"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through [*dia*] faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." Romans 3:21-22

As for the narrative, it continues exactly from the previous chapter with words that detail the fulfillment of what was just recorded as Chapter 3 ended –

"...and all Israel crossed through on dry ground, until all the people [nation] had crossed completely through the Jordan."

"...when all the people [nation] had completely crossed through the Jordan."

The focus is not on individuals, but the entire nation. But more, it is a term, *ha'goy*, used at times when speaking of the nations of Gentiles and the nation of Israel when they are in a state of disobedience. As such, it is as if it is saying, this “uncircumcised nation had crossed through.”

It is what was seen in the previous sermon: the salvation of Israel that Paul wrote about when he says that someday “all Israel will be saved.” It is not saying that every Israelite will be saved, but as a nation, those who are a part of it when it calls on Christ will be saved. It next records...

¹ (con't) **that the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying:**

Rather, it reads: *va'yomer Yehovah el Yehoshua lemor* – “and said Yehovah unto Joshua to say.” The difference between said and spoke is small, but it carries the general sense of working together rather than simply speaking forth a command. Joshua is told to...

² **“Take for yourselves twelve men from the people,**

Even though the Lord is speaking to Joshua, the words are in the plural, “take for yourselves.” The order will be transmitted by Joshua to the tribes because each tribe was to select a person. Also, it now rightly says, “the people.” Of the people who have crossed, and in fulfillment of verse 3:12, this action is to be taken –

“Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe.”

Verse 3:12 said “from the tribes” but here it says, “from the people,” but that is then explained by...

² (con't) **one man from every tribe,**

ish ekhad ish ekhad mi'shavet – “man one man one from tribe.” Again, it is a little different from 3:12. There it said, “from the tribes (pl).” Here it is “from tribe (sg).” But the meaning is the same for both. One man is to be taken from each tribe of the people...

³ **and command them, saying,**

The plural continues here, “and command you (pl) them, saying...” The Lord is speaking to Joshua in the manner in which Joshua is to speak to the people. This pictures Jesus in John 12:50 where it says, “Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” And he is to say...

³ (con't) **Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan,**

seu lakhem mizeh mitokh ha'yarden – “lift to you from this from midst the Jordan.” This takes us back to verse 3:17. What does “the midst of the Jordan” mean? Is it referring to “between the cut off waters?” Half was cut off upriver, and half continued downriver. Or is it from the middle of what is a normal flowing river? At this point, it would appear to be the same thing, but the next words must be considered...

³ (con't) **from the place where the priests' feet stood firm.**

mi'matsav ragle ha'kohanim ha'kiyn – “from post feet the priests' established.” There is a new word here, *matstsav*. It is a standing place or a fixed spot. Figuratively, a garrison, and that is how it is most often used. The priests had posted themselves firmly, as if a military garrison, remaining unmoved until the task was complete.

As such, the waters had separated, and the bed of the river was dry. Hence, referring to the post where the priests' feet are would be the area of the actual separation of the waters. All of the people maintained a two-thousand cubit separation from where the priests were, but these men went to that exact location and obtained their stones from there. Once obtained...

³ (con't) **You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.”**

“And have carried them through with you and have rested them in the lodging place which you remain in the night.” The word *yanakh* signifies to place, set, lay down, and so on. It is derived from the same as *nuakh*, to rest. In this case, using “rested” gives a better typological hint as to what is happening.

It is the responsibility of the chosen men to each select one stone from where the priests posted themselves, to carry it with them from that spot to the place where the people would encamp and rest it there. That will be identified in verse 19 as Gilgal.

⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe;

This is now the fulfillment of the Lord's words from the previous verses. It is also a repetition of what was said in verse 3:12 –

“Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe.” Joshua 3:12

There is no contradiction here. The Lord's words would have come first, and Joshua's words of Chapter 3 follow after, even though they are recorded first in the narrative. With this in mind, and in fulfillment of the word, Joshua calls unto these twelve men whom he had prepared, one from each of the tribes...

⁵and Joshua said to them: “Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan,

ivru liphne aron Yehovah elohekem el tok ha'yarden – “Cross through to face (meaning ‘in the presence of’) ark Yehovah your God into midst the Jordan.” This is the direction that Joshua was told by the Lord to convey to these men.

^{5 (con't)} and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder,

v'harimu lakhem ish even akhat al shikhmo – “and raise up to you man stone one upon his shoulder.” It is a different word than in verse 4:3. There it was *nasa* – to lift or carry. This is *rum* – to raise up or exalt. The stone is to not only be carried, but to be raised up and placed upon the shoulder.

The shoulder signifies the place of bearing a burden, as in a yoke. As such, it emblematically signifies authority and/or responsibility. For example, it says of the Messiah in Isaiah 9 that “the government will be upon His shoulder.” The burden of the government, and thus the responsibility for it, will be His.

The stone signifies establishment, as in setting up a pillar. It signifies permanence; that which is established is set to stand firm. It signifies resiliency and strength, as in that which is fixed and unyielding. These twelve stones were selected...

^{5 (con't)} according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel,

Although the meaning is understood, rather than “according to” (*k’*) it simply says “to” (*l’*): *l’mispar shivte bene Yisrael* – “to number tribes Israel.” There are twelve tribes, and there are twelve corresponding stones. These are selected in order...

⁶that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come,

There is an emphasis in the words. It is not just that the children might ask, but they will certainly ask: *l’maan tiyeh zoth oth b’qirb’kem ki yishalun benekem makhar* – “To end purpose shall be this sign in your midst for (certainly) asking your children tomorrow.” The word “tomorrow” signifies in the time to come.

A sign isn’t a thing in itself. Rather, it is something that points to something else. As such, when the children see it, the question is to then receive a response as to why they were set up in the first place. Bearing the emphasis in the words, any time after the day the stones are set up, it is certain that those who see them will ask...

⁶ (con’t) **saying, ‘What do these stones *mean* to you?’**

l’mor mah ha’avanim ha’eleh lakhem – “to say, ‘What the stones the these to you (pl)?’” It is a general question to any and all who are aware of their purpose. The question is on the same lines as that which accompanied the Passover where the children were bound to ask, “What do you mean by this service?”

There is an intended meaning beyond the thing itself, pointing to its ultimate purpose. In the case of these stones...

⁷Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD;

With some differences, it is similar to the words of verse 5, “that were cut off water the Jordan from face (meaning ‘in the presence of’) ark covenant Yehovah.” Here, the words “were cut off waters” brings in a change in the terminology concerning the ark –

5. ark Yehovah your God.

7. were cut off waters ... ark covenant Yehovah.

The ark is the place where the Lord is present. In using the words “cut off waters,” the covenant is remembered. As was noted in chapter 3, the word *karath*, or cut off, is what is used when a covenant is made, or literally, “cut.”

Remembering the symbolism already seen, the waters (the life) of the Descender (Christ) is cut off in an act of cutting a New Covenant. Thus, it explains the difference between “ark Yehovah your God” (Jesus, the embodiment of the law), and “ark covenant Yehovah” (the sacrifice of Christ).

^{7 (con't)} **when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.**

The repetition of “the Jordan” more perfectly helps to give us the appropriate mental image: *b'av'ro ba'yarden nikr'tu me ha'yarden* – “in His crossing through the Jordan were cut off waters the Jordan.” The ark is where the presence of the Lord is. As such, translating it “His” is not inappropriate. It is a masculine singular word.

But more, it much more clearly helps us make the connection to Jesus who is the embodiment of the law, and whose life was cut off in His descending from heaven to fulfill the law. Understanding this, we can now translate it in the form of typology: “in His crossing through the Descender, were cut off life the Descender.” Think of Jesus. This is the sign of the stones. As such...

^{7 (con't)} **And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever.”**

v'hayah ha'avanim ha'eleh l'zikaron livne Yisrael ad olam – “And it shall be, the stones the these, to memorial to sons Israel unto futurity.” This is what the sign of the stones is to be. It is to point to that which God has done in the cutting off of the Jordan, but that is given in typology of Christ.

As the stones eventually were moved or lost to history, one might say that this is a failed sign, but that is incorrect. The sign is recorded in the word, and the word continues to this day. It has always been with Israel. And so, in the reading of the words, the sign still exists, even if the stones are gone. That is an important point to remember and that will be expanded upon later.

⁸ **And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded,**

ka'asher tsivah Yehoshua – “according to which commanded Joshua.” Here, it shows compliance to the words of Joshua, the leader. Remembering that he anticipates Jesus the Man who is the Messiah and Israel’s true Leader, the wording will more clearly reveal what is intended. The children of Israel did so...

^{8 (con't)} **and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan,**

The stones came out of the place where the priests stood in the midst of the Jordan, meaning where the waters were cut off. This was accomplished...

8 (con't) as the LORD had spoken to Joshua,

ka'asher dibber Yehovah el Yehoshua – “According to which spoke Yehovah unto Joshua.” The words of John 12:50 cited above are clearly indicated in what is stated here – “Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

The people did as Joshua (the Lord Jesus) spoke, and Jesus the Man did as the divine Lord spoke to Him. The communication within the Godhead is clearly revealed in this, from Father to Son – the God/Man which reveals God’s intent from the divine to the human.

This is the anticipation of the future when Israel will finally heed the words of Jesus as He conveyed them from His Father, and it is seen in typology after the death of Moses (the law) when Israel finally realizes what they have missed for so long. For now, it is...

8 (con't) according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel,

l'mispar shivte bene Yisrael – “to number tribes sons Israel.” The number of stones, as before, is twelve. As there are twelve sons of Israel, descending from them come the twelve tribes of Israel, meaning all of Israel. Next, it says...

8 (con't) and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

va'yaabirum imam el ha'malon va'yanikhum sham – “And crossed through them, with them, unto the place and rested them there.” The designated representatives for the tribes crossed through the Jordan with the stones. As they are designated to represent each tribe, it is as if all of Israel accomplished this. Hence –

“And the children of Israel did so...and took up twelve stones...and carried them through with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.”

The action of the twelve men is reckoned as the action of the entire congregation. The twelve stones are reckoned as the action of the twelve men. What happens to them happens to the congregation. The stones were rested at the designated place. After that...

⁹ Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan,

u-shetem esreh abanim heqim Yehoshua b'tok ha'yarden – “and two ten stones raised up Joshua in midst the Jordan.” There is a ton of speculation concerning this. Some believe that this should read *mi'tok*, or “from midst.” This is how the Aramaic Bible reads.

Because of this, and because of the seemingly pointless nature of setting up stones that will be covered with water, some translations run with this, such as the NIV –

“Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood. And they are there to this day.” Joshua 4:9 (NIV)

This then would make it in agreement with the pile to be erected in verse 20, which says, “And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua raised up in Gilgal.” However, this is not what the Hebrew says. It says, “In (*b*) the midst,” not “from (*m*) the midst.” All Hebrew texts say this, the Greek and the Latin, both translated out of the Hebrew, also say this.

But more, both of those qualify the words by saying “other twelve stones” (*ἄλλους δώδεκα λίθους* / *alios quoque duodecim lapides*) to ensure that it is understood that these were not the same stones. These “other” twelve stones were *heqim* or “raised up...”

^{9 (con't)} in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood;

takhat matsav ragle ha'kohanim nos'e aron ha'berit – “under post feet the priests bearing ark the covenant.” By saying “under” it signifies “in place of.” In other words, it wasn't just in the general area, but in the exact spot where the ark of the covenant had been borne by the priests.

Therefore, it is a memorial in itself to the covenant that is derived from what occurred, and the covenant is set forth as twelve [other] stones. Twelve means “the perfection of government, or of governmental perfection” (Bullinger). With these noted, it says...

^{9 (con't)} and they are there to this day.

va'yihyu sham ad ha'yom hazeh – “and they are there to the day, the this.” Where the priests stood is of less importance than the fact that they stood in the overflowing waters.

In other words, if they stepped into the waters on the bank, and the descending waters ceased, and they continued to stay right there on the bank of the Jordan, it is no different at all than if they proceeded into the middle of the empty basin and stood there.

The point is that the waters were descending, they were cut off, and the priests with the ark stood where the waters had been. The rocks may have simply sat on the banks of the river in full sight. When the Jordan overflowed, the rocks would be bathed in water.

Or it could be that the priests moved to the middle of the Jordan and the rocks were covered over (which seems unlikely based on the fact that people could still see them, as it says, “to this day.”)

Or it could be that the rocks set up in the middle of the Jordan could have been whopping in size, even big enough to not get washed down the river, and large enough to rise above the flowing waters.

Or the priests could have walked into the Jordan and ascended a large boulder so that everyone could see them. When Joshua set up the rocks, it was exactly on that boulder where they stood and when the Jordan flooded again, the rocks were there in full sight. It isn't worth fighting over what cannot be known. However, I would go with them being set up on the riverbank, right where the priests stood.

What matters is that Joshua raised them up, both here and in verse 19 to come, that they represented the waters that were cut off, and that they stood as a witness to what occurred. As noted, even if the stones are no longer there, the sign is recorded in the word, and the word continues to this day. Therefore, the sign still exists.

What are these stones for? Why are they there?

Are they just something someone raised up for fun?

What are they for? Should I care?

Who can I ask about what has been done?

Surely, these rocks were raised up with purpose and intent

They are a witness to what the Lord has done

*They were taken from the Descender when the waters were spent
Like when the life ceased in God's own Son*

*They have been raised up for all people to see
And those who understand will glory at what God has done
When the waters of the Descender were cut off completely
When the life left the Man from heaven, God's own Son*

II. The Lord Exalted Joshua (verses 10-14)

This section begins with a marvelous set of words...

¹⁰ So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan

v'ha'kohanim nos'e ha'aron om'dim betok ha'yarden – “And the priests bearing the ark, standers in midst the Jordan.” With the immense number of people crossing through, this process could have taken awhile. However, the priests never stopped their standing and bearing the ark...

^{10 (con't)} until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people,

ad tom kal ha'davar asher tsivah Yehovah eth Yehoshua l'daber el ha'am – “until finished all the word which commanded Yehovah Joshua to speak unto the people.” Again, as in verses 3:16 and 3:17, the word *tamam*, or “finished” is used.

In 3:16, it was referring to the waters being finished. In 3:17, it referred to the nation finishing its crossing through the Jordan. Now, it is referring to the word that the Lord had commanded Joshua to speak to the people. But that is next stated as...

^{10 (con't)} according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua;

k'kol asher tsivah Mosheh eth Yehoshua – “according to all which commanded Moses Joshua.” Suddenly, and with seemingly no obvious reason, Moses is reintroduced into the narrative. It is the Lord who has been commanding Joshua, and Joshua has either done what the Lord said directly, or he passed on the command to the people.

There is nothing recorded concerning instructions from Moses in regard to this operation that has taken place, and yet, the people's entrance is based upon “all the

word that the Lord commanded to Joshua,” and that is based on “all that Moses had commanded Joshua.”

It is as if the words of Moses, the law, continue on until Israel has fully passed through the Jordan...

¹⁰ (con't) **and the people hurried and crossed over.**

vay'maharu ha'am va'yaaboru – “And hastened the people, and crossed through.” There is a sense of urgency, but it would not be one of either weak faith or fear.

The people understand that the waters above are being held back, and that the priests bearing the ark would not move until all was complete. With what was surely a sense of appreciation for the priests' effort, and with the anticipation of entering into the promise, the people rushed across in joy and confidence. With this complete...

¹¹ **Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over,**

Though the intent is the same, it more closely reads, “And it came to pass according to which all the people completed to cross through.” The precision of the wording tells us that every person had crossed through, and only then was it...

¹¹ (con't) **that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people.**

Here, the most basic term is used, *aron Yehovah*, “ark Yehovah.” It speaks of the ark (Jesus, the embodiment of the law), and Yehovah. It is clearly a reference to Him as the God/Man. Further, the priests are mentioned after the ark.

The priests signify the priestly role of Christ. Thus, it is Christ in His duties being named after Christ in His Person. Together they now cross through *liphne ha'am* – “to face (meaning in the presence of) the people.” With that noted, necessary words of compliance are stated...

¹² **And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them.**

This is in fulfillment of what was said in Joshua 1, and which had been previously commanded by Moses to these men –

“Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.’ ¹⁴Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, ¹⁵until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD’s servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.” Joshua 1:13-15

The words “before the children of Israel” do not necessarily mean “in front of them.” Rather, it says “to face,” meaning “in their presence.” It is a necessary inclusion to be recorded at this time. Of them, there were...

¹³ About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho.

The Hebrew is more precise and doesn’t say “about.” It says, “According to forty thousand drawn off for battle.” In other words, at the very recent census, there were more than seventy thousand men of age to fight. However, these were drawn off from that total to begin the campaign with the other tribes.

After that, others could be rotated in and out while a contingent stayed with the families and farms east of the Jordan. These men, however, came along *liphne Yehovah la’milkhamah el arvoth yerikho* – “to face (meaning in the presence of) Yehovah to the battle unto plains Jericho.”

¹⁴ On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel;

This was what was promised in the previous chapter –

“And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.’”

-Joshua 3:7

It then takes us back to what was said there concerning Joshua and everything that was to occur, and which has now been recorded as having occurred –

The priests bearing the ark are the *material* cause. Their entry into the Jordan is what makes the thing (like wood in a table) to be. The *formal* cause, the design, is the parting of the Jordan. The *efficient* cause, what brings it about, is the Lord's presence working on behalf of Joshua. And the *final* cause, the *purpose*, is the exaltation of Joshua in the eyes of the people.

And this is exactly what happened...

^{14 (fin)} **and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life.**

The final clause is speaking of Joshua, not the Lord. To make it clearer, it can be rephrased, "and they feared him all the days of his life, as they had feared Moses." The highlight is upon Joshua, noting that during his entire life, from that point on, Israel feared him because he had been exalted by the Lord in the eyes of all Israel.

With that stated, our verses for today are done. Like Chapter 3, the final verses have to be completed before we can fully understand the typology that is being seen here. Enough of it has been explained for you to possibly have a pretty good idea of what is going on, though.

In the end, all of this is given in typology to point us from the type, Joshua, the priests, the ark, and so on, and to lead us to the Antitype – Jesus. He is the fulfillment of all of these things. And yet, to this day, Israel has not clued into this.

However, the account is given to show us that they will, someday, get it. They will pass through Christ and into the true promise and rest that is only prefigured in the passage. But it is certain that not just Israel is included in the story.

God sent Christ Jesus into the world to redeem man, all men from all nations, who will come to Him through faith in what Jesus has accomplished. This is as obvious as the nose on one's face when looking at the greater picture.

Israel, to this day, thinks that everything in Scripture is about them and that God's Messiah will come to them alone and place them, above all people. In some ways, this is true. It is what has been prophesied in Scripture. But the promise of a Messiah goes all the way back to Genesis 3.

Israel only came about as God's covenant people in mid-Exodus, even if the line became clearer in many ways at the time of Abraham. In other words, Jesus is the Christ of all nations who descend from Adam.

The select line in Scripture is narrowed down for the purpose of bringing Him into the world so that He could then accomplish the necessary redemptive requirements for it to be so. Once that is complete, the offer is made to any and to all who will come to Him.

Ironically, the very people who think they are His chosen people are currently not God's people because of their failure to recognize this. That will be corrected, but for now, the offer is open to anyone who will receive it – Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. The call is made. Come to Jesus! May you do so today.

Closing Verse: *“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” Matthew 3:16, 17*

Next Week: Joshua 4:15-24 *Those others aren't to be left alones, it is true...* (Twelve Stones, Part II) (8th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Twelve Stones, Part I

And it came to pass
When all the people, as the words are so relaying
Had completely crossed over the Jordan
That the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying:

“Take for yourselves twelve men
From the people as I am now conveying
One man from every tribe
And command them, saying

‘Take for yourselves twelve stones from here
Out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the

-----priests' feet stood firm – from that very site
You shall carry them over with you
And leave them in the lodging place where you rest tonight

Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed
From the children of Israel
One man from every tribe
And Joshua said to them, so he did tell:

“Cross over before the ark of the LORD your God
Into the midst of the Jordan as to you I tell
And each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder
According to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel

That this may be a sign among you
When your children ask in time to come, saying
‘What do these stones mean to you?’
What I say, that is what you shall then be relaying

Then you shall answer them
That the waters of the Jordan were cut off
----- their momentum was lost
Before the ark of the covenant of the LORD
When it over the Jordan crossed

The waters of the Jordan were cut off
And these stones shall be
For a memorial to the children of Israel forever
This is how it is as directed by Me

And the children of Israel did so
Just as Joshua commanded
And took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan
As the LORD had spoken to Joshua, as the divine word demanded

According to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel
And carried them over with them, just one each – not a pair
To the place where they lodged
And laid them down there

Then Joshua set up twelve stones
In the midst of the Jordan, putting them on display
In the place where the feet of the priests who bore
-----the ark of the covenant stood
And they are there to this day

So the priests who bore the ark
Stood in the midst of the Jordan, their knees not getting weak
Until everything was finished
That the LORD had commanded Joshua to the people to speak

According to all that Moses had Joshua commanded
And the people hurried and crossed over
-----as the situation demanded

Then it came to pass
When all the people had crossed over completely
That the ark of the LORD and the priests
Crossed over in the presence of the people, they all could see

And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad
And half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over without haw or hem
Armed before the children of Israel
As Moses had spoken to them

About forty thousand prepared for war
Crossed over before the LORD for battle
To the plains of Jericho
The clash of their swords and spears surely made quite a rattle

On that day the LORD exalted Joshua
In the sight of all Israel
And they feared him, as they had feared Moses
All the days of his life, so the word does tell

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 4:15-24 **(TWELVE STONES – PART II)**

We have seen how the Jordan pictures the incarnation of Jesus. It reflects His life, coming from heaven, spending much time in Galilee, zigzagging throughout all of Israel, dying, resurrecting, and ascending again.

The passage today marvelously uses the Jordan, its cutting off, the actions of the priests with the ark, the leadership of Joshua, the stones from the river, and so much more to detail exactly what God is doing in Christ for the people of the world. We will go through the final verses of Chapter 4 and then analyze the entire chapter.

And all of this has a marvelous purpose. When God did what He did to Egypt, using the ten plagues served a special purpose. And then, in the final great act against them, He brought Israel through the Red Sea, luring Egypt in behind them. In His destruction of Egypt, we read this, which is our text verse for today –

Text Verse: *“Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.” Exodus 14:31*

As for Moses, his life was used as a steppingstone to bring Israel to another great event. The two crossings, through the Red Sea, and through the Jordan, beautifully reflect what the number two signifies in Scripture. Bullinger says that two “affirms that there is a difference – there is another.”

Moses stands for the law. The people’s passing through the Red Sea reflects the people’s being brought into the law. Joshua stands for the grace of Christ. The people’s passing through the Jordan reflects this occurring in the people.

The law is of works; grace is a gift. The two contrast, but they also confirm the work of God in Christ. Christ did the work of the law, and Christ bestows the gift of grace.

If you follow along carefully with the verses today, you will be able to weed out some real heresies that have arisen in the church. People go running down crazy avenues of theology in the New Testament, simply because they are unwilling to do the hard work and look at what God has already told us in the Old Testament.

If we carefully follow what is said here, so so so much of that can be alleviated. Thank you for sharing in these Old Testament passages with me. May you be blessed as we

look into them today. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. What Are These Stones? (verses 15-24)

¹⁵ Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying,

It is letter for letter the same as the final clause of verse 4:1, saying, *vayomer Yehovah el Yehoshua lemor* – “and said Yehovah unto Yehoshua to say.” As noted then, the difference between said and spoke is small, but it carries with it the general sense of working together rather than simply speaking forth a command. Joshua is told to...

¹⁶ “Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.”

In the same manner that has already been seen several times in the early Joshua sermons, these words now have already been accomplished in verse 4:11, but the story is now going back to fill in the command that brought about the action there –

“Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people.”

-Joshua 4:11

This then sets off the coming verses as their own independent section. This is the opening verse of that section. The Lord commands, Joshua’s obedience in conveying the command is recorded, and then the action is taken by those to whom the command is directed.

Here, instead of the ark of the Lord or the ark of the covenant, it is called *aron ha’eduth*, or “ark the testimony.” This is the only time in Joshua that it is called this. The word *ed* signifies a testimony or witness, coming from *ud* – to repeat or go around again. It is as a warning, something to be heeded. The symbolism here seems quite obvious; the warning has been heeded by the people. Next, and in immediate obedience to the word of the Lord, it says...

¹⁷ Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, “Come up from the Jordan.”

With the people fully passed over, the time for the priests to come out of where the water was stopped up has come. In typology, Joshua anticipates Christ, the Leader of His people. The priests are typical of Christ in His mediatorial role. The ark bearing the priests is typical of Christ the fulfillment of the law and the One who then died in fulfillment of it. The Jordan, the Descender, pictures Christ who descended from heaven to earth, and the waters picture the life within Him. With these things in mind...

18 And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD

v'hi ba'alot ha'kohanim nos'e aron berith Yehovah – “And it came to pass in the ascending the priests bearing ark covenant Yehovah.” The name of the ark now returns from the word *eduth*, or “testimony” to *berith*, or “covenant.” It is the “covenant of Yehovah.”

The main focus is on the priests who bear the ark. They are a single entity for all intents and purposes. As a whole the focus is on the covenant, meaning the Mosaic covenant. Together they...

18 (con't) had come from the midst of the Jordan,

mitok ha'yarden – “from midst the Jordan.” The waters had stopped when the feet of the priests had been submerged in the water. The priests stood in that spot until all the people had passed through. Now, the priests have fully crossed and ascended, coming out of the riverbed where the waters had ceased...

18 (con't) and the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land,

It is a heavily pregnant construction: *nitequ kapoth ragle ha'kohanim el he'kharavah* – “tore up soles feet the priests unto the dry ground.” The word for “tore up” is *nathaq*. It comes from a primitive root signifying to tear off. Most of its uses in the Old Testament are very forceful, like breaking something off, tearing off fetters, snapping ropes, and so on.

As a side note, and interestingly enough, even though this word in modern Hebrew is much more mellow and conveys the idea of “disconnection,” the three uses of it in the Hebrew NT perfectly match the normal uses of the ancient Hebrew. They are found in Luke 8:29, Acts 16:29, and Acts 27:32.

In this, we can see that in the action of the priests there is as a severing of what was. It is without a doubt that this is recorded history. The soles of the feet of the priests were in the spot where they had placed their feet in the water. The ground remained moist under their soles but dried around them. They had to forcefully pluck up their feet from the ground. In this, it is next seen...

18 (con't) that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place

va'yashuvu me ha'yarden limqomam – “And returned waters the Jordan to their place.” The text of this verse implies that the waters were there at that moment. As before, the timing of the event wasn't just “step out and then the waters come later.”

Instead: 1) the waters from very far away, up in Adam, released; 2) the people continued to cross through until the last one crossed; 3) the command from the Lord to Joshua was given; 4) the command from Joshua to the priests was given; 5) the priests tore their feet from the riverbed, and they came out of the Jordan, and (6) the waters were there at that moment.”

The plan of the Lord had started to be worked out with the waters releasing in Adam. It was fully realized the moment the priests stepped out of the bed and onto dry ground. The timing of the event was perfectly executed by the foreseen knowledge of the Lord, as is evidenced with the words...

18 (con't) and overflowed all its banks as before.

va'yeleku kitmol shilshom al kal gadotav – “And went from yesterday day before yesterday upon all His banks.” The meaning is that just as it had previously flowed, so it returned to just as it was then. In these words, we should note the term “all His banks.”

19 Now the people came up from the Jordan

v'ha'am alu min ha'yarden – “And the people ascended from the Jordan.” The Jordan is the Descender. The words thus give the interesting sense of “The people ascended from the Descender.” This occurred...

19 (con't) on the tenth day of the first month,

b'asor la'khodesh ha'rishon – “In tenth to the month the first.” This is the tenth day of the year 2555 Anno Mundi. It is a most incredible date, for two reasons. The first is that

it is exactly forty years, to the day, from the time the Passover lamb was selected as noted in Exodus 12:3-6.

Secondly, the day is especially notable, based on a discovery that goes back to a study I did over fifteen years ago when looking for something completely different. This date is exactly fourteen thousand days, to the day, from the day the people departed Mount Sinai as is recorded in Numbers 10 –

“Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony.
¹² And the children of Israel set out from the Wilderness of Sinai on their journeys; then the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran. ¹³ So they started out for the first time according to the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.”

-Numbers 10:11-13

The calculation is simple and uses the standard biblical day of a 360-day year –

Starting: 30 (the first month of second year) + 20 (of second month) + 360 (the first year) = day 410.

Finishing: 10 (of first month of forty first year) + (360x40 = 14400) (forty years) = day 14410.

Subtract: 14410 - 410 = 14000.

The perfection of the dating, unknown until around the year 2005 is telling us something. The number 14 is defined by Bullinger as –

“being a multiple of seven, partakes of its significance; and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being the number associated with incarnation.” EW Bullinger

With this astonishingly precise figuring, a dating used even by rabbis in Israel today (now that it has been found), we have a picture of something that God has been carefully planning all along. With that seen, it next says...

¹⁹ (con't) **and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.**

va'yakhanu ba'gilgal biqtseh mizrakh yerikho – “And they camped in the Gilgal in extremity east Jericho.” Gilgal comes from the word *gilgal*, meaning a wheel. It thus means, A Circle, A Wheel, or, figuratively Liberty (as in a rolling away). The last meaning is derived from Joshua 5 –

“Then the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’ Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.” Joshua 5:9

It is a marvelous picture that is being conveyed for us to consider...

²⁰ And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan,

v'eth shetem esreh ha'avanim ha'eleh asher laqehu min ha'yarden – “and two ten the stones, the these, which they took from the Jordan.” These are the twelve stones the Lord instructed Joshua to have taken from where the priests stood. They are not the same ones set up at the spot where the priests stood. Of these...

²⁰ (con't) **Joshua set up in Gilgal.**

heqim Yehoshua ba'gilgal – “raised up Joshua in the Gilgal.” Joshua is said to have accomplished both the setting up of the stones in the midst of the Jordan as well as these now. After this...

²¹ Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying:

va'yomer el bene Yisrael l'mor – “And said unto sons Israel to say.” It is Joshua who now speaks, after the setting up of the stones, as he addresses the “sons of Israel,” meaning the twelve tribes descended from Israel...

²¹ (con't) **“When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying,**

There is a stress in the words: *asher yishalun benekhem makhar eth avotam l'mor* – “When (certainly) ask your sons tomorrow their fathers to say.” It is with all certainty that the stones, which are to be erected in the Gilgal, will cause the children to ask of their fathers...

²¹ (con't) **‘What are these stones?’**

mah ha'avanim ha'eleh – “What the stones the these?” As noted in the previous sermon, stone signifies establishment, as in setting up a pillar to establish something. It signifies permanence in that which is established is set to stand firm. It signifies resiliency and strength, as in that which is fixed and unyielding. For the fathers, when asked by their children of these stones...

²² then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’;

The stones were to be a perpetual reminder of the event that occurred. The entire nation, as one, passed through the Jordan *ba'yabashah*, or “in the dry ground.” It is the exact same expression used to describe the event of passing through the Red Sea on dry ground. And the reason for this being possible is...

²³ for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you

asher hobish Yehovah elohekhem eth me ha'yarden mipenekhem – “which dried up Yehovah your God waters the Jordan from your presence.” Joshua notes that the waters of the Descender were dried up right before their faces...

²³ (con't) until you had crossed over,

The words are all in the plural as Joshua speaks. The nation as a whole crossed through, but the nation is comprised of all of the people. And all of the people had crossed through in the same manner...

²³ (con't) as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over,

The words are carefully stated as Joshua includes himself in the narrative saying *mipanenu*, “from our presence,” and *av'renu* “our crossing through.” Just as had been the case with Israel and the crossing of *yam suph*, or “Sea the Ending,” so is the case with the people now. Moses led the people in the former, and Joshua now leads them in the latter. This is so...

²⁴ that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty,

The words bear an emphasis: *l'maan daat kal ame ha'arets eth yad Yehovah ki hazaqah hi* – “to end purpose may know all peoples the earth hand Yehovah for mighty IT.” This is

the purpose of what took place. The word *ha'arets* can be translated as “the land,” and for Israel in Canaan, that is probably a better intent.

However, because this is given as typology of Christ, I rendered it “the earth” as in Genesis 1:1 because what is done by the Lord in Christ demonstrates the mighty hand of the Lord to all peoples of the earth. This is the ultimate intent of what is being pictured. And there is a personal purpose for Israel as well...

²⁴ (fin) **that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”**

l'maan yeratem eth Yehovah elohekhem kal ha'yamim – “to end purpose you have feared Yehovah your God all the days.” The idea of “fear” here is that of revered fear, not of being afraid. For Israel today and for much of the church as well, for example, there is no revered fear of the Lord.

But this is the end purpose of setting forth these twelve stones in Gilgal. It is so that they will be a witness to what the Lord has done so that the people will remember His works and reverence Him for all their days, meaning forever.

*What are these stones for? Why are they there?
Are they just something someone raised up for fun?
What are they for? Should I care?
Who can I ask about what has been done?*

*Surely, these rocks were raised up with purpose and intent
They are a witness to what the Lord has done
They were taken from the Descender when the waters were spent
Like when the life ceased in God's own Son*

*They have been raised up for all people to see
And those who understand will glory at what God has done
When the waters of the Descender were cut off completely
When the life left the Man from heaven, God's own Son*

II. Pictures of Christ

How does one describe what is going to happen to an entire nation that has been disobedient to the Lord for two thousand years when they finally do what they should have done before being exiled for their rejection of Jesus?

From Numbers 14 until now, the entire panorama of what has been seen has typologically anticipated Israel's rejection of their Messiah, their exile into the wilderness (meaning, their second exile from the land after rejecting Him), their chance at individual salvation (such as in those who were bitten by snakes and looked to the serpent on the pole), their judgment under the law that Christ had fulfilled, the ending of the law for them as pictured by the death of Moses outside of the land of Canaan, their acceptance of Christ, their entering into the New Covenant, and their state of salvation once that occurs. All of this, and so much more, has been seen since Numbers 14.

This is the last step of that process, but it is not the last event of it. For example, in Joshua 5, the people will be circumcised. That is a part of what happens when the nation comes to Christ. Each account is a part of the greater story, and each conveys truths that will actually occur, in Israel's future, whether they accept that now or not – which they obviously do not.

What is now being displayed is Israel's national salvation, while also giving hints of other events that occur in and through the work of Jesus Christ. Joshua 3 already conveyed much of what was then repeated early in Joshua 4. However, in order to fill in more typology of Christ, parts of the account are repeated with different and additional information.

The first thing to remember is the symbolism of the Jordan. We saw this in Chapter 3. In fulfillment of the typology, Jesus Himself expressly tells us that He is what the Jordan pictures –

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 6:38

Jesus said, “I have come down.” *ha'yarden*, the Jordan, means “the Descender.” Jesus is the Descender. In their crossing through the Jordan (the Descender, meaning Christ) the Lord tells Joshua, who then tells the people, to take for themselves twelve stones according to the tribes, one man from each tribe is to take a stone.

As noted in Joshua 3, the word “over” used by the NKJV is better translated as “through.” This is to fit the typology repeatedly used of faith in Christ in the New Testament –

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through [*dia*] faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” Romans 3:21-22

As for the number twelve, it signifies “perfection of government, or of governmental perfection.” A governmental order is being represented by these twelve stones. Obviously, because these stones are according to each tribe of Israel, the order is a government set forth for the nation as a whole.

They are taken “from the midst of the Jordan,” meaning Christ Jesus – the Descender. The government is based upon the Person and work of Christ. That is clearly seen, for example, in Matthew –

“So Jesus said to them, ‘Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’” Matthew 19:28

That is coming, but it is only coming when the nation comes to Christ. This is confirmed throughout both testaments and it is noted innumerable times. It is the finished work of Jesus under the law, and His death in fulfillment of it, symbolizing the cutting off of the waters, that makes this possible.

This is why the death of Moses occurs outside of Canaan. That death is now explained in the Joshua account, one story overlapping and building upon the next. The stones were taken from where the priests holding the ark stood, signifying the priestly duties accomplished by Christ in His death – all carefully explained in the book of Hebrews.

The word describing the cutting off of the waters, *karath*, is used when a covenant is cut. In this, the death of Jesus in fulfillment of the Law of Moses is seen (Moses dying outside of Israel) and then the cutting of a New Covenant is seen at the same time.

As we saw in verse 7, this explains the difference between “ark Yehovah your God” (Jesus, the embodiment of the law), and “ark covenant Yehovah” (the sacrifice of Christ). Verse 7 also gave us the symbolism saying, “in His crossing through the Jordan were cut off waters the Jordan.”

Jesus, the Man, had His life cut off from Him, symbolized by the cutting off of the waters. And yet, the deity of the Lord stood in the Jordan (the priests with the Ark – the presence of the Lord accepting His priestly work).

As I noted at that time (still verse 7), it doesn't matter that the stones are lost to history. The written record means that the memorial of the stones still exists. As the stones represent the twelve tribes of Israel, it means that the same group of people who were exiled are the same group of people who are now – two thousand years later – regathered according to Scripture.

In other words, God is showing us that He has faithfully kept this group of people who rejected Jesus, just as He did in the forty years of punishment after they rejected the words of Joshua to enter the land (Numbers 14). That was typical of what we see, even today, with their continued disobedience. Someday, this people will come to Christ, and this typology will be fulfilled!

Of those stones that were selected, in verse 5 it said each was to be taken up on the shoulder of the man carrying it. These twelve tribes, under the authority of Christ, are pictured in this. As we saw, the shoulder signifies the place of bearing a burden, as in a yoke.

As such, it emblematically signifies authority and/or responsibility. It is the authority of their Messiah seen in Isaiah 9 that “the government will be upon His shoulder.” The burden of the government, and thus the responsibility for it, will be His.

The stone signifies 1) establishment, as in setting up a pillar to institute something; 2) permanence in that which is established: it stands firm; 3) resiliency and strength, as in that which is fixed and unyielding. That is also seen in Isaiah –

“Of the increase of *His* government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.” Isaiah 9:7

In verse 8, the stones representing the people of the twelve tribes were said to have been carried into Canaan by the twelve men and were laid down (*yanakh*, rested) at the place where they lodged. It is what was promised by Jesus in Matthew 11 and what is confirmed in Hebrews 4 –

“Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in

heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

“For we who have believed do enter that rest.” Hebrews 4:3

“For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.” Hebrews 4:10

In verse 9, something highly unusual occurred, however. It says that *Joshua* raised up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan. Why would he do this? The answer is because national Israel is NOT the whole point and focus of Scripture. How many elders are around the throne in Revelation? Twenty-four.

This is another government being set up. It is one that takes another group of people into account. While Israel had rejected Christ, God didn't just put things on hold; He continued on with the redemption of man. John the Baptist spoke of exactly this –

“Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.” Matthew 3:8, 9

He said this while baptizing “in the Jordan” (Matthew 3:6). But more, according to John 1:28, it is in this exact same location –

“These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.” John 1:28

Bethabara means “House *of the* Crossing.” It would have had this name based on what occurred here in Joshua 4. Whether the twelve stones that Joshua raised up were still visible at the time of John the Baptist or not is irrelevant; the account is recorded in Scripture, and the people would know exactly what he was referring to if they simply thought it through for one second.

An important point to consider is that this second set of stones is credited solely to Joshua having set them up, no one else is mentioned. The church is solely established by Jesus Christ, and it came out of His death in fulfillment of the Old and establishment of the New Covenant. And more it is set up even before Israel finishes crossing through the Jordan.

The second government set forth, and which is included in the twenty-four elders of Revelation, is that which the apostles proclaimed, and which was rejected by national Israel. And yet, it is the same gospel preached to both Jews and Gentiles by them.

As one can see in this, there is one – and only one – gospel. It is preached to Jew and Gentile alike today. But there is also another thing that God is doing. That is the keeping of, restoration of, and exaltation of the nation of Israel according to the promises made to the patriarchs (see Leviticus 26:42-45).

This is not a different gospel, but a different outworking that serves an entirely different purpose in redemptive history. The salvation of Israel the nation will occur in exactly the same way as the individual is saved today – all seen right here in Joshua 4.

The reason for raising up these stones “in the midst of the Jordan” (verse 9) is obvious. When the waters returned, the people who are symbolized by these stones (both Jew and Gentile) would be “in Christ” (the Descender) –

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.” Romans 12:4, 5

Those stones were raised up in the exact spot that the priests and ark were standing (*takhat* – under, meaning “in place of”). They signify the government of Christ over the church – comprised of both Jews and Gentiles who have come to Him during this dispensation.

This is “in place of” the law of Moses, signified by the ark of the covenant. Christ’s priestly role established the New Covenant and set aside (replaced) the Old –

“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19 (and etc.)

The words “and they are there to this day” (verse 9) clearly indicate the permanence of what took place. As for where this was, I gave several options in the last sermon. I would argue that it was on the other side of the Jordan, exactly where the priests first placed their feet, not in the middle of the river.

The main reason is that they were clearly visible to the people after the Jordan once again filled. But more, the text says nothing of the priests moving once their feet were planted. Therefore, it seems likely that they were set up on the other shore where the banks overflowed, but not enough to cover them.

Next, verse 10 said that the priests with the ark stood there until all was *tamam*, or finished. The waters were **finished** (Christ's death). The nation **finished** crossing (salvation of national Israel). And "everything was finished ... according to all that Moses has commanded Joshua" (verse 10).

The law of Moses, meaning the command and the charge for Christ Jesus in His earthly life, was finished. The New Covenant was introduced, and only after all of this do the waters return. This is why Hebrews 8:13 says –

"In that He says, 'A new *covenant*,' He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away."

Christ's work is complete, the New Covenant is introduced, but national Israel has not yet accepted it. Until they do, the Old is only "ready to vanish away." Coming soon to a tribulation period and entry into the millennium near you.

Verse 11 noted the alacrity with which Israel crossed through. Once they realize who Jesus is, there will be a national rush to accept Him, and thus "all Israel will be saved." It is reflective of Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 6:2 –

"For He says:
'In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.'
Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation."

Only after the nation crosses through does the *aron Yehovah*, the ark of Yehovah, Jesus, the God/Man, then cross through. In type, this reveals that only in the acceptance of Jesus as their Messiah will He finally appear before them –

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Mathew 23:37-39

The symbolism of reintroducing Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh is more difficult to pin down, but I would guess that these are typical of those who are of Israel, but who remain outside of the promise – meaning those who are not in the land when Jesus returns, and of those who are born in the land after Israel’s acceptance of their Messiah.

Not all from these three tribes crossed through, and thus they reflect those who must later choose to believe or not, and there are those who will not believe, even in the millennium as several verses reveal, such as Isaiah 65:20.

With the crossing through recorded as complete in verse 14, it said of Joshua that “they feared him, as they had feared Moses.” Understanding that Joshua is typical of Christ, we noted the four causes previously mentioned to reflect this. Here that is again –

The priests bearing the ark are the *material* cause (Christ’s priestly/sacrificial role in His Person). Their entry into the Jordan (His cross) is what makes the thing (like wood in a table) to be. The *formal* cause, the design, is the parting of the Jordan (His death). The *efficient* cause, what brings it about, is the Lord’s presence working on behalf of Jesus. And the *final* cause, the *purpose*, is the exaltation of Jesus in the eyes of the people.

With that complete through verse 14 last week, the account then went back in time starting in our verses today where the priests and the ark were still in the Jordan. The Lord told Joshua to command the priests who bore the *aron ha’eduth*, the ark of the Testimony (the law of Moses) to come up from the Jordan.

It is the command for Christ’s resurrection. He has been found worthy under the law according to Leviticus 18:5, “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD.”

The people have realized that Christ is the fulfillment of the law, and they have entered into Him, crossing through Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. Joshua is typical of Christ, the Leader of His people. The priests are typical of Christ in His mediatorial role. The ark borne by the priests is typical of Christ the fulfillment of the law and the One who then died in fulfillment of it. The Jordan, the Descender, pictures Christ who descended from heaven to earth, and the waters picture the life within Him.

As soon as the note about the ark of the testimony was said, it immediately returned to *aron berith Yehovah*, the ark of the Covenant of Yehovah. Christ is the embodiment and fulfillment of the Old, and He is the Initiator of the New. The use of the forceful word

nathaq, tore up, concerning the feet of the priests gives us a marvelous picture of Christ's work.

He was there, cut off and without life, symbolized by the priests with the ark standing there. His sacrificial death brought about the sudden and abrupt ending of the law. With the sacrificial work complete, the veil was torn, and the law was ended. Israel has accepted this, and they are now included in what Christ has done –

“Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
Bound in affliction and irons—
¹¹ Because they rebelled against the words of God,
And despised the counsel of the Most High,
¹² Therefore He brought down their heart with labor;
They fell down, and *there was* none to help.
¹³ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,
And He saved them out of their distresses.
¹⁴ He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
And broke their chains in pieces. [*nathaq*]
¹⁵ Oh, that *men* would give thanks to the LORD *for* His goodness,
And *for* His wonderful works to the children of men!
¹⁶ For He has broken the gates of bronze,
And cut the bars of iron in two.” Psalm 107:10-16

With this complete, it says “that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place” (verse 18). Israel has been saved through the work of Christ! The promises to the nation have been fulfilled in their acceptance of Jesus, and the Jordan, the Descender, Jesus Christ “overflowed all His banks as before.”

Remember that as long as the priests with the ark stood there, it was as if the waters never stopped, except in Jesus. In other words, the typology is showing us that these people are being baptized into the death of Jesus, just as they once were baptized into Moses. The words of Paul clearly show this –

“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness.” 1 Corinthians 10:1-5

This is exactly what has been seen since Numbers 14. The law could not save them except as it is fulfilled by Christ –

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:3, 4

With this noted, it next gave the dating of when the events took place. It was exactly, to the day, forty years after the Passover lamb was selected (see 1 Peter 1:19) on the first Passover. On this day, the people “ascended” from the Jordan, meaning they were spiritually raised in Christ (Ephesians 2:6).

Bullinger notes that forty is the number of probation, trial and chastisement of a covenant people. It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of grace (5), leading to and ending in revival and renewal (8).

From the presentation of Jesus as Israel’s true Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7), until their acceptance of Him, they have gone through the exact process and care by the Lord for them as is defined by Bullinger. But more, it was also 14,000 days, to the day, from their departure from Sinai, signifying life under the law.

Bullinger’s definition of fourteen perfectly describes their state –

“being a multiple of seven, partakes of its significance; and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being the number associated with incarnation.” EW Bullinger

In accepting Christ Jesus in His incarnation (the God/Man), they will have a double measure of spiritual perfection. They will be both individually and nationally saved in Christ.

From there, it noted that the people camped in Gilgal (Rolling Away/Liberty) on the east border of Jericho (Place of Fragrance/Paradise Restored). Where were the cherubim placed in the Garden? At the east of the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24). Because of the work of Christ, the people of Israel will come to that spot of Liberty at the door of Paradise that has been anticipated since the fall of man.

There in Gilgal, Joshua set up the twelve stones, just as he did in the Jordan. Christ is the one to set up the government. This one is for national Israel during the millennium, and which is incorporated with the government of the church to form the heavenly government described by Bullinger –

“Twenty four being a multiple of twelve, expresses in a higher form the same signification. It is the number associated with the heavenly government and worship, of which the earthly form in Israel was only a copy.”

The final verses of the chapter spoke of the reason for the setting up of the stones. They point to Christ in His many roles seen in this passage. They are a memorial of what He would do and now of what He has done. And all of it was said to be so “that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty.”

As our text verse noted, “Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.” Those deeds included the crossing of the Red Sea and the destruction of Egypt.

With the events of Joshua 3 and 4, the Lord has exalted his new leader, Joshua (verse 3:7). Joshua is a type of Christ, and it is Christ Jesus whom God has exalted to the highest degree because He is the Lord God Almighty.

The twelve stones, times two piles, were to be a witness to Israel concerning the great acts of the Lord. The first ones collected were explicitly stated to be taken, one for each tribe of the nation of Israel. The second ones were actually raised up first by Joshua though. Weren't they?

Those were then explicitly stated by John the Baptist to reflect something entirely different, and a completely different outworking of the Lord. The one chosen first was set up last, but they were, in fact, set up. God will remember His covenant with Israel, and they will receive the promises made to them in Scripture.

And yet, the process of salvation was identical for both, even if they occur in a separate way. Those of the church (individually and collectively) and those of national Israel (individually and collectively) all have to come through the same single gospel which is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This applies to each member of the church, and each member of Israel. And this applies in the same manner collectively to the church (the rapture) and to the nation of Israel

(the Second Coming). Joshua 3 and 4, when properly analyzed, clear up a lot (a lotta lot) of bad theology through simple typology.

If you are stuck in replacement theology, the typology clears that up. If you are stuck in a return to the law (such as Hebrew Roots), it clears that up. If you are deceived by hyperdispensationalism, it clears that up too. I could go on with lots of points of really bad doctrine, or even heresy, concerning what this passage clears up, but I will – instead – implore you to keep reviewing our sermons and our weekly Bible studies.

We do our best to cover all such things from time to time. Joshua 3 and 4 just put them all into a simple, easy to swallow, power pack. What a wonderful thing God has done in these precious pages. And it is all centered on one thing: the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

I would ask you to consider the simple gospel today and yield your life to Him. It is beyond comprehension that these patterns simply occurred by chance. The details are too perfect, the pictures are too exacting. Call on Jesus and be a part of what He is doing in human history to redeem the sons of man. Yes, please call on Him today!

Closing Verse: *“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

-Philippians 2:9-11

Next Week: Joshua 5:1-9 *Off it will be stripped, yes, it shall be done...* (The Reproach of Egypt, Part I) (9th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Twelve Stones, Part II

Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying
These words to him He was relaying:

“Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony
To come up from the Jordan, so I say

Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying
“Come up from the Jordan, he did relay

And it came to pass
When the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD
Had come from the midst of the Jordan
And the soles of the priests’ feet touched the dry land
-----according to the word

That the waters of the Jordan returned to their place once more
And overflowed all its banks as before

Now the people came up from the Jordan
On the tenth day of the first month as we now know
And they camped in Gilgal
On the east border of Jericho

And those twelve stones which they out of the Jordan took
Joshua set up in Gilgal as is now recorded in the Joshua book

Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying
“When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying
‘What are these stones?
Then you shall let your children know, saying
-----Yes, you shall be conveying...

‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land
For the LORD your God dried up the waters
-----of the Jordan before you
Until you had crossed over
As He promised, So the Lord did do

As the LORD your God did to the Red Sea
Which He dried up before us until we had crossed over
----- (here comes a rhyme so clever)
That all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD
That it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 5:1-9 (THE REPROACH OF EGYPT, PART I)

As a fun note concerning this chapter, when we were in Numbers 9:1-14 (The Lord's Passover), which was recorded on 18 November 2018, I mentioned a passage from this chapter in Joshua. Off the top of my head, I said that those born in the wilderness were not circumcised. I then jokingly said, "The reason for that will be addressed when we get to Joshua chapter 5, hopefully around early to mid-2022." How about them apples...!

Concerning the passage today, as regards the end of the time of wilderness wandering, the scholar Keil somewhat correctly states what the situation for Israel was at that time, and what it meant for them as a people.

I don't remember what Keil's view on Israel for today is. I may have read it and forgotten it, or I may not have come across it yet in his commentary. And, since I type the introduction to the sermons last, I was just too tired to go trying to find out.

It doesn't really matter what he thought because all that matters is what the Bible says. Having said that, if everyone read his commentary, agreed with it, and then understood the typology of what the passages since Numbers 14 anticipate, the doctrine of replacement theology would not exist.

Even without the typology, and if we only had the New Testament writings, it should be painfully obvious to even the poorest of scholars that Israel has not been replaced by the church. It is simply in a non-permanent state of punishment. But bad doctrine is easy, it is often satisfying, and eliminates the need to care about the state of the Jew for those who just don't care about the state of the Jew. Keil says –

"This clearly means, that not only was the generation that came out of Egypt sentenced to die in the wilderness because of its rebellion against the Lord, and therefore rejected by God, but the sons of this generation had to bear the whoredom, i.e., the apostasy of their fathers from the Lord, for the period of forty years, until the latter had been utterly consumed; that is to say, during all this time they were to endure the punishment of rejection along with their fathers: with this difference alone, that the sons were not to die in the wilderness, but were to be brought into the promised land after their fathers were dead. The sentence upon the fathers, that their bodies should fall in the desert, was unquestionably a rejection of them on the part of God, an abrogation of the covenant with them. This punishment was also to be borne by their sons; and hence the reason why those who were born in the desert by the way were not circumcised. As the

covenant of the Lord with the fathers was abrogated, the sons of the rejected generation were not to receive the covenant sign of circumcision. Nevertheless this abrogation of the covenant with the generation that had been condemned, was not a complete dissolution of the covenant relation, so far as the nation as a whole was concerned, since the whole nation had not been rejected, but only the generation of men that were capable of bearing arms when they came out of Egypt, whilst the younger generation which had grown up in the desert was to be delivered from the ban, which rested upon it as well, and brought into the land of Canaan when the time of punishment had expired. For this reason the Lord did not withdraw from the nation every sign of His grace; but in order that the consciousness might still be sustained in the young and rising generation, that the covenant would be set up again with them when the time of punishment had expired, He left them not only the presence of the pillar of cloud and fire, but also the manna and other tokens of His grace, the continuance of which therefore cannot be adduced as an argument against our view of the time of punishment as a temporary suspension of the covenant."

Text Verse: *"For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? ¹⁷ Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Hebrews 3:16-19*

With just a few amendments to Keil's thoughts, he is right. I would disagree with the idea of an abrogation of the covenant, and the idea of a "temporary suspension of the covenant." In other words, it is true that what occurred "was not a complete dissolution of the covenant relation, so far as the nation as a whole was concerned."

But more, it is not a dissolution of the covenant for any of them. This is exactly why they wandered in the wilderness. It was because they were under the punishment of the covenant. The same is true with Israel of today.

They have been under the curses of the covenant, and they remain under the curses even now. The lack of being circumcised does not show an abrogation of the covenant. Rather, it shows their state under the covenant, a state which is out of a proper covenant relationship.

God did not reject the nation, but only those who rejected Him. And God has not rejected His people Israel to this day. He has just rejected those who rejected Him and

those who continue to reject Him. Any who come outside the camp at this time can be saved. Someday, the entire camp will be saved.

This is the greatness of God. The disobedient nation will be made whole again someday. And disobedient us, meaning those who have come to Christ for salvation, shall be made whole someday as well. Both are absolute assurances that are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Hill of Foreskins (verses 1-5)

The words of Joshua 5 should be considered in conjunction with the final words of Joshua 4 –

“for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, ²⁴ that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

-Joshua 4:23, 24

What is said there immediately begins to be realized now...

¹ So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* on the west side of the Jordan,

More literally it reads: “And it was, according to hearing all kings the Amorite who in side the Jordan, westward.” The people group is spoken of in the singular. Despite being many tribes, they are a united people. This is then further explained by their location, which is westward of the Jordan.

The Amorite people under Sihon and Og that were east of the Jordan had already been subdued in battle, but more Amorites lay to the west. In other words, their own people, under these great kings, had been obliterated. Now, the same group that had obliterated their people to the east was on their side of the river, and the Israelites were surely ready to snuff them out as well. Further...

^{1 (con't)} and all the kings of the Canaanites who *were* by the sea,

Again, it is singular: “and all kings, the Canaanite, who upon the sea.” Together, these two people groups – the Amorite and the Canaanite – stand for all of the people groups that are mentioned elsewhere, such as the Hittites, Jebusites, and so on.

The term “upon the sea” means that they lived on its shores. Which sea is being referred to is debated, but Numbers 13 says –

“The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.” Numbers 13:29

Even with this, it is hard to be dogmatic, but it appears to be what is currently being referred to. No matter what, the Amorite and the Canaanite are the two predominant groups in Canaan proper. These groups...

1 (con't) heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel

The event would be known and talked about throughout the land almost immediately. It is not something that could be hidden from the ears of everyone. Knowing the account of the Red Sea, as Rahab already acknowledged they did, would make the event even more pronounced and terrifying.

What was once an account that could have been considered fiction was now validated by the cutting off of the waters of the Jordan. As the Lord had done this, it would truly shout out doom to all who heard what had transpired. They hadn't just forded the river, but they had walked on dry ground...

1 (con't) until we had crossed over,

Many manuscripts here say, “until they had crossed over.” The Masoretic text supplies that as the verbal reading as well. Because of this, many translations also say “they.” But the true reading is probably “we.” If it is Joshua who wrote the words, it would be natural to say this. If it was someone else, the same is true. The writer was an Israelite, and he has written the account as such.

1 (con't) that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

A literal reading will show the closeness to what Rahab had said even before Israel's crossing of the Jordan: "and melted their heart, and no is there again spirit before sons Israel." It is very close to what Rahab had said: "and we heard and melted our hearts, and no stood again spirit in man from before you."

One can see that the terror which already existed has come around again and is even multiplied by the events that are now taking place. With that noted, something important next happens...

² At that time the LORD said to Joshua,

As before, there is a direction from the Lord that will be followed by obedience to the command. A purposeful act is directed to take place, and it is one that anticipates something that is still awaiting fulfillment today. The pictures of the past anticipate events that really will occur as redemptive history continues...

² (con't) "Make flint knives for yourself,

aseh lekha kharvoth tsurim – "Make to you (sg.) swords, rocks." Some translations paraphrase this saying "sharp swords," or "sharp knives." Saying knives is technically correct, but it is the same word translated as sword, coming from the verb *kharav*, meaning to be dry or dried up. It is also identical to the name Horeb, the mountain where the law was given.

It is also connected to the word used to describe the dry ground of the Jordan in Joshua 3:17 and 4:18 and the dry ground of the Red Sea in Exodus 14:21.

Also, the word "rock," is the same word used to describe the Lord several times in the Song of Moses and in typology elsewhere. Together, the two appear to be forming a picture for us to consider, and which will be explained as we continue.

As an interesting side note, there is an addition to the Greek translation of Joshua 24:30 that is not found in the Hebrew –

And they buried him by the borders of his inheritance in Thamnasarach in the mount of Ephraim, northward of the mount of Galaad: there they put with him into the tomb in which they buried him, the knives of stone with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Galgala, when he brought them out of Egypt,

as the Lord appointed them; and there they are to this day.” Joshua 24:30 (Brenton Septuagint).

Joshua is to take these flint knives...

² (con’t) **and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time.”**

Rather than “again,” it reads: *v’shuv mol eth bene Yisrael shenith* – “and return, circumcise sons Israel second.” During the time of wilderness wanderings, meaning judgment upon the people which began in Numbers 14, the people had not received the sign of the covenant. As such, this was the first requisite to be accomplished in order to be considered as restored under the covenant.

The word “second” is given to define who was to be circumcised, the explanation of which is given in the coming verses.

³ **So Joshua made flint knives for himself,**

va’yaas lo Yehoshua kharvoth tsurim – “And made to him Joshua swords, rocks.” In exact compliance with the command, Joshua alone is said to have made them. Regardless as to whether others helped or actually made them, the text speaks only of Joshua doing this. The same is true with the next clause...

³ (con’t) **and circumcised the sons of Israel**

va’yamal eth bene Yisrael – “and (he – sg.) circumcised sons Israel.” Considering the huge number of people to be circumcised, it seems impossible for one man to accomplish this. In fact, assuming there were only 600,000 males eight days or older that needed to be circumcised (probably a low estimation), it would take more than a decade for one person, working nonstop, to do so.

An internet search says a circumcision takes about 10 minutes to perform. That comes out to 100,000 hours for 600,000 men. That, in turn, comes out to 4,166 days. Even if Joshua did this in one minute per person, it would still be well over a year, working 24 hours a day, to do this.

Obviously, for this to have been completed in a day, many people would have been involved. And yet, it only says that Joshua did it. As the representative of his people, it is

acceptable to say it this way, but it is *necessary* for the typology that is being conveyed. As for the location, it is given a name because of the immense number of skins. It is...

³ (con't) **at the hill of the foreskins.**

el givath ha'aralot – “into hill the foreskins.” The Aramaic Bible says, “in The Hill of the Uncircumcised.” The word means both “foreskin” and “uncircumcised” because having foreskin implies being uncircumcised. Hence, their translation looks to the state of the past, toward the state of the present, and into the future.

Almost all commentaries state that the name of the hill where this was accomplished was afterward called by this name. However, due to the incredible number of foreskins, I would say that the hill was made out of foreskins which were then buried. It would make a large mound.

Again, an internet search says a foreskin is about three inches long. Assuming that there are 600,000 people (again, this is probably a low estimate because of children from eight days old and up), that comes out to 1041.7 cubic feet. That alone is its own hill.

Therefore, my assumption is that the hill is formed out of them, and it received its name because of this. It is only speculation, but it adds emphasis to the enormity of what occurred. Regardless of this, either way, a reason is given for what has transpired...

⁴ **And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them:**

v'zeh ha'davar asher mal Yehoshua – “And this the word which circumcised, Joshua.” Again, the act of circumcision is credited to Joshua, regardless as to whoever participated in performing the rite. He is the leader, and it is he alone who is named as the primary force behind the action. This act was accomplished because...

⁴ (con't) **All the people who came out of Egypt who were males,**

It reads, “all the people, the goers out from Egypt, the males.” The word is *zakar*, a male. It comes from the verb *zakar*, meaning “to remember.” Hence, they are “the remembered” as being the most noteworthy sex because it speaks of the form which defines him as a man.

In other words, it is what visibly defines a man as a man. As a man, he is the head of the woman and the one from whom the woman was made. It is the man who was to be

circumcised according to Genesis 17, and that which was later included in the Law of Moses.

As has been relayed in numerous sermons, circumcision anticipates Christ. Man is the one who was given the command in the garden and who then sinned. It is implicit in Scripture that it is through the issue of the man that sin transfers.

But there is more to the symbolism than that. In the rite of circumcision, the organ of man – that which is the organ of remembrance – a picture is developed. When a man is circumcised, the form of the organ is changed, and thus the organ of remembrance is changed.

It is now a memorial, a sign, that reflects the coming of Christ who would be without sin. The line of sin is “cut” in Him, and this is what is anticipated in the rite. These men had not been circumcised, and thus, they were considered unclean in this regard. There was no connection to the Messiah in their uncircumcision.

It is this that Joshua is now correcting. But more, it is what has already been implicitly seen in Joshua 4 where the word *zikaron*, or memorial, was used. That also comes from *zakar*, or to remember.

At that time, in explanation of the twelve stones that were set up, we noted that the pile was a memorial in itself to the covenant that is derived from what occurred, and the covenant was set forth as twelve stones. Twelve being “the perfection of government, or of governmental perfection” (Bullinger).

One cannot have a government without a body to be governed. Those men (*zakar*) who were in the wilderness and who died did so according to their state of remembrance, as if uncircumcised, even if they were circumcised in the flesh.

Those that are now being circumcised form this new body represented by that memorial (*zikaron*). As males, they stand as representative of all the people, women included. Those males who died in the wilderness are next defined as...

⁴ (con't) **all the men of war,**

kol anshe ha'mikhamah – “all men the war.” Here, a different word for man is used, *enosh*. It is a word coming from *anash*, meaning to be weak or sick. As such, it is a

mortal. Being men of war, it signifies their age as being acceptable for battle. These mortal men...

^{4 (con't)} **had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt.**

metu ba'midbar ba'derek b'ts'tem mi'mitsrayim – “had died in the wilderness in the way in their coming out from Egypt.” This is referring to those who had rebelled against the Lord and who had been sentenced to die in the wilderness. It excludes Joshua, Caleb, and those who were not of age at the time –

“The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. ³⁰ Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in.” Numbers 14:29, 30

Those alive and who were nineteen and younger had obviously been circumcised, and so they would not be included in the number, but everyone younger than approximately 38.8 years old would have been uncircumcised based on those who departed Sinai in Numbers 10:11 –

“Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony.”
-Numbers 10:11

These people lived out their lives in a state of uncircumcision along with those who were sentenced because of the sins of their fathers. The details continue with the next words...

⁵ **For all the people who came out had been circumcised,**

This is referring to those in the previous verse. The structure of the Hebrew indicates that everyone who was born in Egypt, and who had subsequently departed in the Exodus, had been circumcised according to the customs handed down by Moses. On the other hand, it next says...

^{5 (con't)} **but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised.**

The translation isn't clear enough because of the timeframe involved: "and all the people the born (pl.) in the wilderness in the way in their coming out from Egypt, no circumcised."

It isn't that the people had come out of Egypt, and were no longer coming out of Egypt. The entire process, from Exodus until they arrived in Canaan, is considered as coming out. Until they entered, they were on their way out of Egypt. It is an important point to consider.

As for the words of verse 2, they are explained in what is stated here in verses 4 & 5. There it said, "and return, circumcise sons Israel second." It is referring to circumcising the second generation, not a second circumcising of the people.

The generation that had rejected the Lord was punished according to the word of the Lord –

"So the LORD's anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone." Numbers 32:13

This is seen to be correct in the next words, and it prefigures what is being seen in type and picture which will be looked at later...

*Circumcise your hearts to the Lord this day
Trust Him and believe His spoken word
This is the thing you are to obey
Attentively pay heed to what you have heard*

*And the Lord will roll the reproach from you
He will put you in a right standing once again
Don't do those things your fathers were prone to do
Don't be like those disobedient men*

*He offers you restoration if you will just pay heed
Be attentive to the word you have heard
Live your lives rightly in word and in deed
Yes, be sure to live according to His word*

II. A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey (verses 6-9)

⁶ For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness,

The forty-year period is the total time in the wilderness even though the actual sentencing only came after the transgression recorded in Numbers 14:33. That was well over a year after the Exodus. This forty-year period was noted several times in Deuteronomy as well. This time of wandering was given...

^{6 (con't)} till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed,

It is incorrect. It refers first to the nation, not individual people: *ad tom kal ha'goy anshe ha'milkhamah ha'yotseim mi'mitsraim* – “until finished all the nation men the war the comers out from Egypt.”

As we saw in Joshua 4, the term *ha'goy* is used at times when speaking of the nations of Gentiles and the nation of Israel when they are in a state of disobedience. That is exactly what is seen here with this unbelieving nation.

And so, the sentence was upon the entire nation which is then broken down into the men of war, meaning those old enough to be accountable for their actions, and who represent all the people, by not entering Canaan in order to possess the land. As it next says...

^{6 (con't)} because they did not obey the voice of the LORD

asher lo shameu b'qol Yehovah – “which no heard in voice Yehovah.” The word “obey” is a correct translation. The word means to hear, but in hearing, there is to be belief in the word. That is equated to obedience to the voice. This did not happen. That was clearly seen in our text verse where the words “obey,” and “belief” were both used to describe them.

^{6 (con't)} —to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers that He would give us,

The Hebrew is a bit more precise: “whom swore Yehovah to them to not show them the land which swore Yehovah to their fathers to give to us.” Notice again that the first person “to us” is used. The Lord had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that the land would be given to them, but due to their lack of faith, it was denied them. This land is...

⁶ (con't) **“a land flowing with milk and honey.”**

This is the only time that the phrase is mentioned in Joshua. It was mentioned six times in Deuteronomy, and every time it was accompanied by a note concerning the fathers in the immediate context. That is the same now in Joshua. It is a good land and one that comes by promise. As this is the only time the term is used in Joshua, it would be good to review its meaning again.

A land flowing with milk and honey implies richness and fertility. Milk comes from cows and so it means abundant pasture lands. Honey comes from bees which pollinate flowers and so it implies all sorts of fruit trees, herbs, and flowers.

And more, for Israel, the term “a land flowing with milk and honey” will also possess a spiritual connotation. For them, it doesn't just speak of the physical abundance but also of spiritual abundance because of the Lord, and because they are the Lord's people, through whom the word of God comes.

The word of God is said to be sweeter than honey. It is also equated with milk which nourishes. Thus, this is a reference to that as well. The land would literally flow with milk and honey for sustaining Israel's physical lives. It would also flow with milk and honey for sustaining their spiritual lives.

All of this was being given to them, but it had been denied to those who failed to believe the voice of the Lord. For those now entering, they had done nothing to deserve it, but it was simply an act of grace based upon a promise to their fathers. The Lord promised, He has fulfilled, and He has now delivered. With that noted, it next says...

⁷ **Then Joshua circumcised their sons *whom* He raised up in their place;**

This confirms the words of verse 3, once again stating that Joshua accomplished the action. In reality, this could be accomplished by others though, such as when Paul circumcised Timothy in Acts 16. As such, the procedure could have been done in a rather short amount of time.

For the typology, however, only Joshua is mentioned as accomplishing the act. This reason for the rite is next stated again...

⁷ (con't) **for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.**

As we noted in the introduction, Keil was partly right in his comments there. The punishment was to be borne by the sons. As such, they were not circumcised. It didn't mean they were not under the covenant, but that they were not in a right standing under the covenant.

This is exactly what took place and why no circumcision occurred. It is also a perfect match to the typology that we have seen and continue to see concerning Israel of today. Several points for both the wilderness generation and the generation who rejected Christ, can be noted:

- 1) This is a witness to the Lord's acceptance of the people as being in a right covenant relationship. The sign of circumcision testifies to it. As such, the guilt of the fathers would no longer be laid upon them.
- 2) They would now be acceptable to observe the Passover.
- 3) With the sign of the covenant upon them, they would now be granted that which was promised to the fathers.

With the rite complete, it next says...

⁸So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people,

Again, it refers to the nation, not the individual people – “And it came to pass according to which finished all the nation to be circumcised.” The corporate nature of the words is not to be missed.

If a bunch of people from other nations came together, you could say, “All the people who came today were circumcised.” But with the words here, it is a corporate entity comprised of individuals. After this occurred, it came to pass...

^{8 (con't)} that they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed.

va'yeshvu takhtam ba'makhaneh ad khayotam – “And they sat in their place in the camp until they were living.” There appears to be an irony in the words here. In the previous verse, it said while speaking of the sons replacing the disobedient generation, “And their sons **He raised up** in their place (*takhtam*).” It now says of those sons, “**and they sat** in their place (*takhtam*) in the camp.”

Despite the pain of healing, the words are reminiscent of the words of Psalm 133 where the same word, *yashav*, or sit, is used. It speaks of those who are united as one and the

blessing of sitting together in that state. If one understands the typology here in Joshua, the psalm could not be more perfect to the occasion –

“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*
For brethren to **dwell** together in unity! [properly: to sit down]
² *It is* like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.
³ *It is* like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.” Psalm 133

The fathers had died, the Lord raised up sons in their place, and they sat in their place until they were “living.” As for the time of healing, it is known that it takes between seven and ten days for a person to heal from this rite. This is an important point to consider when we get to next week’s verses. This is seen, for example, in Genesis 34 –

“Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males.” Genesis 34:25

Because of this, I suggest that what is detailed in the verses next week is not the time people may normally think it is when reading them. What I present will be based on what has been seen and what will next be recorded. As for the rite of circumcision being complete, with this noted, the Lord again speaks...

⁹ **Then the LORD said to Joshua, “This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.”**

There are a wide variety of opinions about what “the reproach of Egypt” means, but in considering the typology, it does seem obvious. In Numbers 14:4, it said, “So they said to one another, ‘Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.’”

This thought is repeated by Stephen in Acts 7:39. Instead of entering into the promised rest, the people had rejected the Lord, they had broken the Mosaic Covenant, and they had desired to go back to the bondage of Egypt.

As such, they had lost the right to the sign of the covenant, circumcision. They were in a state of uncircumcision and stuck under the bondage (Galatians 4:24) of the very law that they had rejected. This means that they were under the punishment of the law with no chance of entering into the promised rest on a national level.

With the crossing of the Jordan, and with the return of the sign of circumcision, they were now restored to the divine favor of Yehovah. Remembering the typology of the past sermons, it should be evident what is being pictured. If not, it will be explained in the next sermon as the chapter is complete.

With the people back in right covenant standing, the verses for today end with...

^{9 (fin)} **Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.**

As we saw in the previous sermon, Gilgal comes from the word *gilgal*, meaning a wheel. It thus means, A Circle, A Wheel, or, figuratively Liberty (as in a rolling away).

This is exactly what has occurred. The people have the reproach of their actions rolled off of them and they stand in a position of liberty because of being in a right covenant standing with the Lord.

For Israel at Joshua's time, it still meant the bondage of the law was upon them, but the law provided for atonement of sins and a propitious relationship with the Lord. For what this is picturing in Christ, it goes beyond the law. Considering the previous sermons, it is perfectly evident.

As we saw at the beginning of the sermon with Keil's lengthy commentary, which was mostly correct, if people can see that what he said doesn't just apply to the wilderness generation, but to all of the time of the law, there wouldn't be a believing Christian on the planet that would hold to replacement theology.

It would be perfectly clear that once the covenant is made, God will never fail to uphold His side of it. Everything we have seen since Numbers 14 continues to be seen in the people and nation of Israel to this day. Their extreme unfaithfulness in no way negates the Lord's faithfulness.

And if we can understand that Israel as a nation is a template for the individual believer's position in Christ, then we would not make the unfounded and egregious error in thinking that claims that a person can lose his salvation.

When God casts off Israel and breaks His covenant with them, you can start worrying about your own salvation. But as He has not yet done that, through two thousand years of unfaithfulness on their part (actually more, because they were never really faithful to Him), and as the book is written that tells us He will bring them to Himself, you really have no need to worry about your failing Him to the point of being cut off.

As this is so, we should strive all the more, not less (how perverse to even think it!) to be pleasing to Him. When we fail, we can reengage and thank Him for His infinite grace for continuing to accept us through such times.

Closing Verse: *“Thus says the LORD,
Who gives the sun for a light by day,
The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night,
Who disturbs the sea,
And its waves roar
(The LORD of hosts is His name):
³⁶ ‘If those ordinances depart
From before Me, says the LORD,
Then the seed of Israel shall also cease
From being a nation before Me forever.’
³⁷ Thus says the LORD:
‘If heaven above can be measured,
And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,
I will also cast off all the seed of Israel
For all that they have done, says the LORD.’” Jeremiah 31:35-37*

Next Week: Joshua 5:10-15 *From their backs, it has been stripped, it is true...* (The Reproach of Egypt, Part II) (10th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Reproach of Egypt, Part I

So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites
Who were on the Jordan’s west side
And all the kings of the Canaanites
Who were by the sea, where they did abide

Heard that the LORD had dried up the waters
Of the Jordan from before the children of Israel
Until we had crossed over
That their heart melted, fearing things would not go so well

And there was no spirit in them any longer
Because of the children of Israel, whose God is surely stronger

At that time the LORD said to Joshua
“Make flint knives for yourself, not for committing a crime
And circumcise the sons of Israel
Again the second time”

So Joshua made flint knives for himself as the task begins
And circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins

And this *is* the reason why Joshua circumcised them:
All the people who came out of Egypt *who were* males,
All the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way
After they had come out of Egypt, who followed Satan’s tales

For all the people who came out had been circumcised
But all the people born in the wilderness
On the way as they came out of Egypt
Had not been circumcised; their lives were a total mess

For the children of Israel
Walked forty years in the wilderness, a wandering horde
Till all the people *who were* men of war, who came out of Egypt
Were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD

To whom the LORD swore
That He would not show them the land
-----not for a million in cash money
Which the LORD had sworn to their fathers
That He would give us, “a land flowing with milk and honey”

Then Joshua circumcised their sons
Whom He raised up in their place that day

For they were uncircumcised
Because they had not been circumcised on the way

So it was, when they had finished
Circumcising all the people; in this covenant they were sealed
That they stayed in their places in the camp
Till they were healed

Then the LORD said to Joshua
“This day I have rolled away
The reproach of Egypt from you”
Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 5:10-15 **(THE REPROACH OF EGYPT, PART II)**

This sermon is a tad longer than we have had of late. If I make this introduction very long (as it is the last thing I type each week), it will be even longer. So I will keep it short. But the importance of what is said and seen in these early Joshua sermons is beyond most people's imagination.

There are many important doctrines that are either expressly seen here in the typology or that are clearly implied. For example, the heresy of reinserting the Law of Moses, or living by the Law of Moses as a means of being found acceptable to God, is explicit.

The doctrine of hyperdispensationalism, meaning the teaching that there are two gospels, one for the Jews and one for the Gentiles, is clearly refuted. There is one gospel even if the term "*kingdom*" points to different things at different times. God's promises to Israel the nation do not mean that there are two gospels. It means that He will keep His word to them as a nation.

Whether it will be a mid- or post-trib rapture is revealed in Old Testament typology as well. And, when Jesus speaks in Matthew 23 and 24, the passage today, especially, shows that it is something being spoken to the people of Israel. That couldn't be any clearer.

Text Verse: *"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"*

³³ They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free"?'"

³⁴ Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'" John 8:31-36

The problem with the heresies, or faulty points of doctrine that I mentioned above, stems from a lack of study and understanding of ... anyone? No, not necessarily the New Testament, but the Old. Unless one knows the Old as well as the New, many of the points of doctrine in the New either cannot be fully appreciated, or they can easily be manipulated to say something that is not intended.

Replacement theology (the church has replaced Israel), would not exist if people could understand the typology being given in the Old Testament, especially from Numbers 14 until now. Ecclesiastes says –

“That which is has already been,
And what is to be has already been;
And God requires an account of what is past.” Ecclesiastes 3:15

It doesn't say this simply because the sun rises every day. Rather, it says this because He has orchestrated His word to show us what is coming by what He has already done. Pay attention to the past. In it, you will find the future. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. On the Fourteenth Day of the Month (verses 10-12)

¹⁰ Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal,

va'yakhanu bene Yisrael ba'gilgal – “And camped sons Israel in the Gilgal.” This has already been noted in Chapter 4 –

“Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. ²⁰ And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.” Joshua 4:19, 20

As noted then, Gilgal comes from the word *gilgal*, meaning a wheel. It thus means A Circle, A Wheel, or, figuratively Liberty (as in a rolling away). With the rite of circumcision found in verse 5:9 (last week's sermon) complete, the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from the people. With that noted, it next says...

^{10 (con't)} and kept the Passover

va'yaasu eth ha'pesakh – “And made the Passover.” This is something those who were not circumcised could not have participated in during the wilderness wanderings. This is explicitly stated in Exodus 12:47-49 –

“All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. ⁴⁸ And when a stranger dwells with you *and wants* to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land.

For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. ⁴⁹ One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.”

It can be speculated on all day long whether the older generation observed it or not, such as Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. But this is not the point of what is being conveyed. We are being shown clear and specific typology to be considered.

The people were uncircumcised, and they could not have observed the Passover. As such, this is only the third recorded Passover that Israel has observed. The first was at the time of the Exodus. The second was at Sinai, just prior to leaving on the journey to Canaan. This is now upon entrance into Canaan.

Because of this, the first is reflective of the Exodus and delivery from bondage in becoming the Lord’s people. The second is reflective of life under the law and in anticipation of entering the promise. This third is reflective of the Eisodus, or entry, into the promise. It is a snapshot of Israel’s history that has, not yet been fulfilled. For now, they have been circumcised, and the note of observance is given directly after that was accomplished. It was...

¹⁰ (con’t) **on the fourteenth day of the month**

b’arbaah asar yom la’khodesh – “in four ten day to the month.” This was explicitly stated in Exodus 12:18 –

“In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.”

However, the question to now ask is, “The fourteenth day of which month?” The reason this is relevant is two-fold. First, if they were circumcised on a day after the tenth day of the first month, which is when they crossed the Jordan, and as would initially be thought correct based on a general reading of the passage, it would mean the men were still in the pain of having been circumcised.

It said in verse 8 last week that the men “stayed in their places in the camp until they were healed.” If this is in the first month, the account is exactly forty years, to the day, after having observed the first Passover as recorded in Exodus 12. However, since we saw in Joshua 5:8 that they remained in the camp, it doesn’t make sense that this would be in the first month.

But there is a second reason that will be seen soon for why it is not the first month. Either way, the Passover is when the moon is full. It is when the Lord (the Antitype) was crucified as is recorded in the New Testament in fulfillment of the type. It was...

10 (con't) at twilight

ba'erev – “in the evening.” Just as commanded in the original observance and as was to be observed henceforth, so they observed it in the Gilgal...

10 (con't) on the plains of Jericho.

b'arvoth yerikho – “in plains Jericho.” As has been noted, the word *aravah*, or plains comes from *arav*, meaning evening. This is identical to *arav*, meaning to take on pledge, give in pledge, exchange, become surety, and so on. As such, for the given typology, one should think of “the pledges of Jericho,” where Jericho means, “Place of Fragrance.”

Of this, Albert Barnes, not in any manner connecting the events to the typology being presented, still wisely says the following –

“The revival of the two great ordinances - circumcision and the Passover - after so long an intermission could not but awaken the zeal and invigorate the faith and fortitude of the people. Both as seals and as means of grace and God’s good purpose toward them then, the general circumcision of the people, followed up by the solemn celebration of the Passover - the one formally restoring the covenant and reconciling them nationally to God, the other ratifying and confirming all that circumcision intended - were at this juncture most opportune.” Albert Barnes

What has everything since Numbers 14 been anticipating? Without even knowing the connection and the fulfillment of the typology, Barnes’ words accurately reflect what is happening. With the observance of the Passover, it next notes...

11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover,

va'yokelu m'avur ha'arets mimakorath ha'pesakh – “And they ate from produce the land from morrow the Passover.” Here is a word found only now and in the next verse, *avur*. It is translated as “produce.” It is from *avar* – to pass over or through, the word constantly seen concerning the act of crossing through the Jordan.

Some translations indicate that the produce mentioned here is old provisions that were carried over with them. Hence, to them this conveys the idea of passing over. But this is incorrect as is seen in the next verse where it specifically ties this produce to the produce of Canaan. Therefore, it is not that the food passed with them across the Jordan. Rather, it is food waiting for them as they passed through. They are not eating old things, but new. It is...

11 (con't) unleavened bread and parched grain,

matzoth v'qalui – “unleavened bread and roasted.” The *matzoth*, or unleavened bread, is bread without yeast. The word *qalah*, or grain that is roasted, comes from *qalah*, meaning to be lightly esteemed, despised, and so on. This is because the grain is shriveled and appears as such. This was eaten...

11 (con't) on the very same day.

b'etsem ha'yom ha'zeh – “in bone the day, the this.” The meaning is on the exact same day, the 15th of the month and none other. To say, “in bone,” is to say “identical,” as in Adam’s proclamation that Eve was “bone of my bones.”

This is the fifteenth – not the sixteenth – day of the month as many commentators claim. Nor can this day of eating be considered a violation of the Feast of Firstfruits which occurred on the day after the Sabbath because these are not crops planted by Israel and intended for the harvest (see Exodus 23:16).

Rather, the people are eating what has grown of itself or what was planted by others. It is an acknowledgment that they have been circumcised, observed the Passover, and have entered into new life. With this occurring...

12 Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land;

va'yishboth ha'man mi'makhorath b'akhelam m'avur ha'arets – “And rested the manna from morrow in their eating from produce the land.” It is the sixteenth of the month. The people now eating of the produce of Canaan is the fulfillment of the word given by the Lord to sustain Israel in Exodus 16 –

“And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.”

-Exodus 16:35

As noted earlier, this is surely the second month, not the first. Not one commentator that I know of made the proper connection to what is being conveyed. The first reason is that the people had to heal from being circumcised, but more specifically, Exodus 16, where the manna was originally given, also says –

“And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt.” (v.1)

“Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, ‘At evening you shall know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt. ⁷ And in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD; for He hears your complaints against the LORD.’” (vss.6, 7)

“So it was that quail came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. ¹⁴ And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, *as fine as frost on the ground*.” (vss.13, 14)

The manna came on the 16th day of the second month. For Exodus 16:35 to be accurate concerning forty years (and it certainly is), the account in Joshua, that is now occurring on the 16th day of the month would have to be the second month. It is something for which a provision had already been made –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ ‘Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or *is* far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD’s Passover. ¹¹ On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ¹² They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. ¹³ But the man who *is* clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin.’” Numbers 9:9-13

As for the word translated as “ceased,” it is *shabath* – to cease, desist, or rest. It was first used in Genesis 2 saying –

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, **and He rested** (*va’yishboth*) on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He **rested** (*shabath*) from all His work which God had created and made.” Genesis 2:2, 3

As for the account now, the giving of the manna was rested exactly forty years, to the day, after it had first been given...

12 (con’t) and the children of Israel no longer had manna

v’lo hayah od livne Yisrael man – “and no had again to sons Israel manna.” Forty years after the initial giving of the manna, to the day, the manna rested and did not come again...

12 (con’t) but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

va’yokhelu mit’vuath erets k’naan ba’shanah ha’hi – “And ate from the yield land Canaan in the year, the it.” Instead of manna, the people ate from the *tevuah*, or yield of the ground of Canaan.

Canaan is derived from *kana*, “to humble,” or “to subdue.” That comes from a root signifying “to bend the knee.” Thus, it signifies something like humiliated, or humbled, or even subdued.

*Let us keep the Passover, we are no longer defiled
We have come to the One who purifies us
We were objects of His wrath, but upon us He has now smiled
He is our Lord, He is our God, He is Jesus!*

*We missed Him on the first time around
And at that time of Passover, we were defiled
Upon us, His wrath grew hot; it did abound
But, finally, upon us He has smiled*

*We are circumcised not just in the flesh, but in the heart
We have come through His death into life
Today, we have made a glorious new start
For to us has come reconciliation after the many years of strife*

II. The Commander of the Lord's Army (verses 13-15)

13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho,

v'hi bihyoth Yehoshua birikho – “And it came to pass in being Joshua in Jericho.” The wording is specific. It says, “in Jericho.” The same phrase is used four more times and it refers to being in Jericho, as in a border going through there or people residing there. Because of this, there is no reason to assume this is chronological.

Rather, it seems that this actually belongs chronologically in the contents of the next chapter, but it is being presented now for typological fulfillment. There in Jericho it is...

13 (con't) that he lifted his eyes and looked,

va'yisa enav va'yar – “and lifted his eyes and saw.” It is the exact same expression seen in Genesis 18:2 when Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the Lord (Yehovah/Jesus) with two others. There in Jericho, the Place of Fragrance, Joshua's attention is now raptly fixed on what he sees...

13 (con't) and behold, a Man stood opposite him

v'hineh ish omed l'negdo– “And behold! Man standing to opposite him.” This is a human male that is standing right in front of him, just like in Genesis 18 where the Lord physically appeared to Abraham. The text can mean nothing else.

13 (con't) with His sword drawn in His hand.

v'kharbo sh'lupha b'yado – “And sword drawn in His hand.” It is the exact same expression seen in Numbers 22:23 & 31 where the Lord (Yehovah/Jesus) stood with His sword drawn in His hand when opposing Balaam on his donkey. The connection to Genesis and Numbers is leaving us no doubt about the identity of this Man.

As an important side note, the word *kherev* is identical to Horeb, or the mountain where the law was given. Certainly, a picture is being made for us to see.

13 (con't) And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?”

va'yelek Yehoshua elav va'yomer lo halanu atah im l'tsarenu – “And went Joshua unto Him and said to Him, “Are to us You, if to our adversaries?” Joshua has no idea who this Man is, and so he is asking whether he is one of his men or one of the adversaries. Everything about the words appears to mean that this is occurring in Jericho at some point during the time of the battle...

14 So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.”

va'yomer lo ki ani sar tseva Yehovah atah bati – “And said, ‘No! For I Prince(-iple) host Yehovah now have come.’” The word *sar* signifies the head, chief, prince(-iple) figure, and so on. It signifies the one in charge.

The host of the Lord does not simply mean Israel, but all of the powers that are arrayed under Him. This would include humans, angels, even the sun, moon, planets, stars, elements, and so on. Everything at the disposal of the Lord is considered as His host. This Man is in the position of all power and authority over all of creation. As such...

14 (con't) And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped,

va'yipol Yehoshua el panav artsah va'yishtakhu – “And fell Joshua unto his face earth and worshiped.” The word translated as “worshiped” can mean to simply bow down, but he has already fallen on his face. Hence, it means nothing other than the act of worshiping.

This is more so because of who the Man has claimed to be. If Joshua did not believe Him, an entirely different reaction would have taken place. The context itself clearly indicates that this is a Man, and this man is God, because only God has all power and authority.

14 (con't) and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?”

va'yomer lo mah adoni m'daber el avdo – “and said to Him, ‘What my Lord from word unto His servant.’” Again, Joshua is the leader of Israel. Israel is the Lord’s people. There is none greater than Joshua in Israel because of this. And yet, he subordinates himself to this Man by calling Him “Lord” and by saying he is His servant.

The Lord has already spoken to Joshua seven times since chapter 1. Joshua is fully aware of who the Lord is, and he is fully aware of what the Ten Commandments say. The Lord

alone is to be worshiped, and yet he is worshiping this Man who is obviously, therefore, the Lord.

15 Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua,

v'yomer sar tseva Yehovah el Yehoshua – “And said Prince(-iple) host Yehovah unto Joshua.” While Joshua is in the act of worshiping the Lord with his face to the ground, the command is given. From the perspective of the Bible, it is another indication that this Man is God. He is accepting worship while giving out a command to the leader of His people. And the command is...

15 (con't) “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.”

The words are emphatic: *sal naalkha m'al raglekha ki ha'maqom asher atah omed alav qodesh hu* – “Remove your sandal from upon your foot for the place where you stand upon, holy IT.” With only a few changes, it is the exact same words spoken to Moses at the burning bush –

Remove your sandals from upon your feet for the place where you stand upon, ground holy it. Exodus 3:5

Remove your sandal from upon your foot for the place where you stand upon, holy it. Joshua 5:15

Other than these differences, the only other major difference is that there is an additional letter, a *vav*, in the word “stand” in Exodus 3 that is missing in Joshua 5.

In this command, and it is a command, the Man is instructing Joshua from One who is greater to one who is lesser. In essence, “Resign yourself to me.” He is the possessor of, and in authority over, the place. Joshua's sandals, whether made by him or by someone else, were the work of man's hands. His footprints were created by God, implying God's mastery over him.

There is then a uniting of the created foot with the dust from which it was created. Nothing of human origin would be considered acceptable in the presence of such a place of holiness. This was seen in Exodus 20 which says –

“And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it.” Exodus 20:25

God made the stones, not man. If man's efforts are placed along with God's holiness, only defilement will occur. God calls, God sanctifies, and God glorifies. The process of holiness is "of and by God and God alone." And yet, this is a Man who is, obviously, God. Because of this, and because of the command, it says...

¹⁵ (fin) **And Joshua did so.**

In compliance to the directive, and just as his predecessor Moses surely had done, Joshua removed his sandals. It is with this note that the chapter ends.

*The sword of the Lord is drawn in victory
Great things for us He has done
His hand is held high for all to see
And in it is the sword by which the battle was won*

*He is the One who came for the battle to win
A challenge to undo the failings of our first father
He was called to live a life without sin
And in His victory, no more will the devil man bother*

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised
Great and mighty things He has done
With shouts of joy, our voices are raised
Hallelujah to Christ our Lord! God's own Son*

III. Pictures of Christ

Joshua 5 started with a note about the inhabitants on the west side of the Jordan being in fear and their hearts melting. It is perfectly obvious that since Numbers 14, the record has been of Israel being under punishment for rejecting the Lord and failing to enter the promise.

Everything since then has been in anticipation of them eventually being brought into Canaan. At the same time, that has been a parallel to Israel having rejected their Messiah. They went into exile and punishment according to the law of Moses.

Joshua 3 and 4 typologically anticipated the time when they will finally accept Jesus and enter into the promise. With Moses, the Law, dead, they could finally enter into God's

grace by following Jesus' fulfillment of it. Christ went first, and Israel will join Him in His victory someday. Hence, the plural "we" was used in verse 5:1.

In verse 2, Joshua was told to make "swords rocks" and to circumcise the sons of Israel who had not been circumcised. This is a clear reference to the state of Israel during their time of exile after having rejected Christ. Paul explains this in Romans 2. Despite being circumcised in the flesh, Israel has been in a state of uncircumcision since their rejection of Jesus –

"For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision." Romans 2:25

The Jewish people today are uncircumcised. Joshua, picturing Jesus is told to make the instruments of circumcision and to circumcise the people. It was all in the singular. He was to do it. In Israel's having crossed the Jordan, it anticipates Christ's circumcision of the nation – by Himself. This is exactly reflected in the words of Paul concerning those at Colossae –

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."
-Colossians 2:11, 12

Only Christ can truly circumcise according to God's standard, of which the physical rite of circumcision only anticipated, meaning the cutting of the sin nature in man. But notice how Paul tied this circumcision in with baptism. It is the baptism that was typologically seen in Israel crossing the Jordan in Chapter 3.

In other words, and to understand what is going on, we have been seeing the process of salvation in individual passages, but they all happen at once. *Moses, the law dies. Israel accepts Christ's fulfillment of the law. *Israel enters the Jordan (Christ); Israel is baptized into Christ's death (Chapter 3). *Israel, signified by the stones carried to Gilgal and which are then rested there, enters its rest (Chapter 4). *Two sets of stones are set up, signifying the heavenly government of Jews and Gentiles (Chapter 4). *Israel is circumcised; Israel has put off the body of sins of the flesh / The reproach of the past is taken away when believers are circumcised by the Lord (Chapter 5). *Believers partake of Christ as their Passover (Chapter 5). *The Lord is the Leader of the people, and they are brought into "holy ground." (Chapter 5).

These (and all other events) happen at the same moment, but we have seen the individual applications spread out over five chapters so far. All of this will happen to Israel someday, just as it happens to every believer now who comes to Christ.

The circumcision is performed with “swords, rocks.” The symbolism is the law (sword – *kherev* (חרב) / law – *Horeb* (חרב)) and the Lord who is the Rock (the same word, *tsur*, is used to describe Him in Exodus 17:6 when the water came from the rock). Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:4, citing that example, that Christ is the Rock.

In other words, the “circumcision” is Christ’s fulfillment of the law being imputed to the people and becoming their “circumcision.” The interesting addition in the Greek translation of Joshua 24:30 which we cited when looking at Joshua 5:2, and which noted that these knives were buried in the tomb of Joshua, if original, gives its own marvelous picture of Christ’s tomb being the very place where all of this is made possible.

Verse 2 finished with the note of the “second” being circumcised. It is referring to the second generation who did not die in the wilderness. In other words, it anticipates the generation that follows the disobedient generation noted by Jesus in Matthew –

Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. Matthew 24:34, 35 (refers to the generation of wilderness wanderings)

The “generation” Jesus is referring to is the same generation of Israel today. This is why he can speak of them even two thousand years later, meaning those who will enter the tribulation period – of which Matthew 24 is describing – as “this generation.” They are the first, disobedient, generation. The “second” generation has yet to call on Christ, but they will do so, as He said to them in the previous chapter –

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” Matthew 23:37-39

In verse 3, it expressly stated that Joshua (he – sg.) circumcised the sons of Israel. That is why only Joshua is mentioned even though it would be impossible for him to do it alone. It is Jesus alone who does this. It is deliberately stated this way anticipating Christ’s work in granting them the seal of righteousness Paul writes of –

“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised.” Romans 4:11, 12

Israel today still cannot see what is exactly being shown right in their own writings. They are uncircumcised and in their sinful state they have completely missed what Scripture is telling them.

Verse 3 next continued with “the hill of the foreskins,” meaning “the hill of the uncircumcised.” It is, again, telling us that Israel is in a state of uncircumcision at this time. But someday they will join the saints of Christ and the “hill of the uncircumcised” will become a reality.

They will put off the body of sins of the flesh in coming to their Messiah, Jesus, in whom the line of sin in man is “cut.” That is what is pictured in the rite of physical circumcision and is fulfilled in Christ.

Verse 4 specifically showed that Israel was circumcised under Moses in anticipation of Christ, but those who rejected Christ – either before His coming or after His arrival – were destined to die apart from God’s mercy. The circumcision of the next generation is given to correct that based on their faith in coming to Christ (as seen in Matthew 23:37-39 above).

This is why the words *zakar* (male – coming from *zakar*, “to remember”) and then *enosh* (male – coming from *anash* and signifying a mortal) are used. It was to show the state of those who die apart from Christ, and those who are remembered by Christ.

It is also why the term “coming out from Egypt” is used. Until Israel enters Canaan, which anticipates Israel finally coming to Christ, they are always “coming out of Egypt,” meaning that which pictures sin. They are in bondage to the law by which is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20). The Mosaic Covenant has total hold over them until they enter into the New Covenant.

Verse 5 reconfirmed this. It was anticipated in what was said in Numbers 32:13, and it will be fulfilled when Israel finally calls out to Jesus –

“So the LORD’s anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone.” Numbers 32:13.

Verse 6 continued to show this, speaking of the generation walking forty years in the wilderness. Forty, as we have seen, is the number indicating “a period of probation, trial, and chastisement ... It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of grace (5), leading to and ending in revival and renewal” (Bullinger). This is exactly what is anticipated in Israel’s final restoration.

Until all the “comers out of Egypt” (vs. 5) are no longer coming out, meaning they have come to Christ, the picture will not be realized. They are a nation just like any other Gentile people, reflected in the term *ha’goy* or “the nation,” as it says, “because they did not obey [hear] the voice of the Lord.”

The words could not more perfectly reflect Israel. They failed to believe, they did not heed His voice, and they were punished. As such, they were denied entry into the promise, exactly as the author of Hebrews states and as we saw in last week’s sermon. They did not enter into the land of milk and honey that Jesus offered them.

Verse 7 repeated the note concerning the uncircumcised generation and that Joshua (alone) had personally circumcised the second generation. At that time, I noted three things that the circumcision meant:

- 1) This is a witness to the Lord’s acceptance of the people as being in a right covenant relationship. The sign of circumcision testifies to it. As such, the guilt of the fathers would no longer be laid upon them.
- 2) They would now be acceptable to observe the Passover.
- 3) With the sign of the covenant upon them, they would now be granted that which was promised to the fathers.

This all lies ahead for Israel, but it is being pictured in Joshua for them to finally see someday. Maybe they will read or watch the Superior Word sermons and realize this.

Verse 8 noted that “all the people” were circumcised. It speaks of the time of national salvation. The pun of the words of verses 7 and 8 was noted at that time. “And their sons **He raised up in their place** (*takhtam*).” It now says of those sons, “**and they sat in their place** (*takhtam*) in the camp.”

Verse 9 referred to “the reproach of Egypt” having been rolled away. The people had rejected the Lord and wanted to go back to Egypt in Numbers 14. The people rejected the grace of God in Christ and determined to stay under the law and living in sin. Only in coming to Christ is the “reproach of Egypt” rolled away.

With the crossing of the Jordan (being baptized into Christ), and with the fulfillment of the sign of circumcision (a result of that baptism), they will someday be restored to the divine favor of the Lord, Yehovah.

With that noted last week, the final words of verse 9 gave the name Gilgal, or Liberty. The people will enter into Liberty after the years of bondage to the law. (John 8:31-36; Acts 15:10, 11; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:9, 24&25, 5:1; Hebrews 2:15, etc.).

Starting with verse 10 today, it again noted the Israelites were in Gilgal, or Liberty, where they “kept the Passover.” It is an obvious reference to Christ’s death and their acceptance of that –

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”

-1 Corinthians 5:7

The purging out of the old leaven is not speaking of the Passover, but of what follows it, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Christ died to make us sinless. Thus, believers are to purge the sin from their lives. In observing the Passover it signifies commemorating Christ’s death, the fulfillment of what the Passover from Egypt only anticipated.

It was “in the evening (*erev*), and in the plains (*aravah*) of Jericho.” Both words are connected to *arav*, which speaks of a pledge. It is thus hinting to us of the *erevon* found in Genesis 38, which anticipates the *arrabón* noted 3 times by Paul, all referring to the pledge of the Spirit, such as –

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God,
²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a **guarantee.**”

-2 Corinthians 1:21

As verse 10 refers to the “plains of Jordan,” the Place of Fragrance, it means the guarantee of a return to Eden and restored fellowship with God. As Albert Barnes correctly noted concerning the circumcision and Passover observance, without ever making the connection to Christ –

“...the one formally restoring the covenant and reconciling them nationally to God, the other ratifying and confirming all that circumcision intended - were at this juncture most opportune.” Albert Barnes

This is exactly what is being pictured. As I said earlier, all these things occur simultaneously in coming to Christ, but we are seeing them in individual bites to help us understand the magnitude of what God has done for us, and of what He is still doing for Israel.

As for the unusual word *avur*, or “produce,” found only in verses 11 and 12, that is from *avar*, or to pass over or through. Both are connected to the word “Hebrew.” In other words, the people are now true Hebrews who have crossed over in both person and substance, signified by the next words of verse 11, *matzoth v’qalui*, or “unleavened bread and parched grain.” This is explained by Paul’s continued words of 1 Corinthians 5-

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.”

-1 Corinthians 5:8

The *matsah* is the unleavened bread Paul refers to – life without sin. The *qalah* is the state of man in Christ, reflected in the description of Moses in Hebrews 11 –

“By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.”

-Hebrews 11:24-26

The food they are noted as eating reflects the state of new life that believers now, and national Israel someday will, participate in.

Verse 12, along with Exodus 16:35, clearly showed that the Passover they observed was the second, not the first, Passover. The law is fulfilled in Christ, but Israel missed it the first time. The second Passover was given for those who were unclean – meaning Israel – at the first Passover.

In other words, though the law is fulfilled in Christ, its fulfillment for Israel lies yet ahead. This is exactly why the Lord gave a second Passover in the law. It was to provide for Israel who remains in their uncleanness to this day. The death of Christ clings to them and it

must be purged away through faith in what He has done. It is exactly why the author of Hebrews says –

“In that He says, ‘A new *covenant*,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:13

The law, which is obsolete, will only vanish away for Israel when they observe the second allowed Passover. Until that time, the manna – meaning God’s supernatural preservation of Israel – will continue until they partake of the true Bread from Heaven, Christ. This is the reason for His statement to the apostles on the night before He was crucified –

“When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, ‘With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.’” Luke 22:14-16

He was the first Passover. He will be Israel’s second Passover. Israel will enter into God’s rest, His *shabbath*, that has been anticipated since creation week of Genesis 1. The preservation of Israel, until the millennium, is absolutely guaranteed in the symbolism of the manna.

When they eat of Christ, the need to supernaturally preserve them will no longer be needed. The goal will have been attained. After that, they will dine on “the food of the land of Canaan.” The meaning is that they will eat in the land of the humbled – those who have bent the knee to Christ.

With this picture now complete, the narrative turned to Joshua encountering the Commander of the Lord’s Army. It is a picture of Israel’s leadership and their long-awaited meeting with Christ –

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.”
-Revelation 19:11-14

The armies of heaven, those who are taken at the rapture, are a portion of the Commander of the army of the Lord. Joshua meets Him “in Jericho,” meaning in the Place of Fragrance. It is Israel’s understanding that Christ is the Lord God.

The same terms used in Joshua, and which point to Christ, were seen in Genesis with Abraham and in Numbers with Balaam. It is clearly and unambiguously telling us that Yehovah is incarnate, and that Jesus is Yehovah.

The drawn sword (*kherv* (חרב) is the law (*Horeb* (חרב) of which Jesus is the embodiment [the Word of God].) That is exactly explained in the citation from Revelation. It is saying that Christ is the victorious One over the law! He is the embodiment and fulfillment of it! He is Jesus!

When asked if He was for or against Israel, His response was, “No!” Charles Ellicott beautifully states why –

“The war is a Divine enterprise, in which human instruments are employed, but so as to be entirely subordinate to the Divine will. Jehovah is not for Israel, nor for Israel’s foes. He fights for His own right hand, and Israel is but a fragment of His army.” Charles Ellicott

Israel, to this day, thinks it is all about them. Rather, it is all about Jesus. Israel is a small, but hugely important, portion of what God is doing. Someday, the leadership of Israel (who speak for all of Israel) will realize who He is, and they will fall and worship before Him, just as Joshua did.

With that, verse 15 noted the Lord’s command for Joshua to remove his sandals. I noted then the difference between His command to Moses and the one to Joshua –

Remove your sandals from upon your feet for the place where you **stand** upon, ground holy it. Exodus 3:5

Remove your sandal from upon your foot for the place where you **stand** upon, holy it. Joshua 5:15

Other than these differences, the only other major difference is that there is an additional letter, a *vav*, in the word “stand” in Exodus 3 that is missing in Joshua 5.

Moses (the law) was given for all people of Israel individually (your feet) to accomplish. Joshua (Jesus, the law's fulfillment) was given for all of Israel collectively (your foot) to participate in.

The additional *vav* is the sixth letter of the aleph-beth and was given to indicate man, especially fallen man, under the law. The omission of the *vav* in relation to Joshua indicates the fulfillment of the law (to stand) by Christ, the sinless God/Man.

This, and the account with Moses at the bush, are the only two times this was commanded. When two similar things, or two similar occurrences, are noted in the Bible, there is a reason for it. There will be a contrast between the two and yet they will confirm something.

In the case of these two accounts, one is before Israel is delivered from bondage; one is after they have been safely led into the land of promise. He is the Covenant-Keeping Lord.

One is outside of Canaan; one is in Canaan. The Lord is God over the whole earth – over both Jew and Gentile. In one there is the Lord unseen and the voice of God from “over there.” In the other, there is the Lord visible, tangible, and in human form. The Lord is the incarnate Word of God; He is Jesus.

In one, He is the Lord who will give the law – the Angel or Messenger of it; in the other, He is the Lord who defends the law which is given – the Commander of the Lord's army. He is the Lord of the law, its herald and upholder.

And more, the bush that burned with fire but was not consumed signifies the life of Israel under the law that was to be given. They would suffer affliction under it, but they would not be consumed. Likewise, Jesus suffered under it, but He was not consumed.

On the other hand, the Man with the sword drawn is the Champion of the law, the Victor over it. Israel has now entered into the promise, following Him in this state.

In the end, we are seeing the amazing story of what God is doing in Christ, and He is confirming it through a particular group of people. To absolutely prove to the world that it is so, He has, and He continues to work through Israel, confirming His covenant with them despite their unfaithfulness to Him. We serve a great God because we serve Jesus.

Closing Verse: *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ² Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. ³ And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.” Galatians 5:1-3*

Next Week: Joshua 6:1-16 *It’s time for this city to go, even until it is done...* (The Battle of Jericho, Part I) (11th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Reproach of Egypt, Part II

Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal
And kept the Passover on the fourteenth day, we know
Of the month at twilight
On the plains of Jericho

And they ate of the produce of the land
On the day after the Passover, so it was this way
Unleavened bread and parched grain
On the very same day

Then the manna ceased on the day
After they had eaten the produce of the land after many a year
And the children of Israel no longer had manna
But they ate the food of Canaan that year

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho
That he lifted his eyes, and behold
-----it appeared to be one of his contemporaries
A Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand
And Joshua went to Him and said to Him
-----“Are You for us or for our adversaries?”

So He said, “No, I have now come
But *as* Commander of the army of the LORD”
And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped

And said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?
-----What is Your word?"

Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua
"Take your sandal off your foot as now you know
For the place where you stand *is* holy"
And Joshua did so

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 6:1-16 (THE BATTLE OF JERICHO, PART I)

While most of you were out having a fun day off on July the 4th of 2022, I got to sit in my chair in front of the computer and do my regular work – uninterrupted by vacation, sickness, or holiday. In fact, it's certain I had more fun than all of you combined as I went through the verses.

People sped by on boats and jet skis, the smell of barbecue permeated the air, hanging heavily all-around Siesta Key, and Sergio attempted to entice me to join him at the north end of the island in a place he had rented for the day while he and Rhoda had visitors.

I blew him and all of the other temptations off, focused with laser concentration on the task set before me, and began typing about the coming destruction of Jericho. After an hour or so, I realized the parallel between the two events and sent a quick note to Sergio, saying, "I just realized. I am typing Joshua 6 and today is the 4th of July. They fit! Shout with a great shout at the victory of the Lord!"

America was established, undoubtedly and without question, by the victorious hand of the Lord. Our squandering of that blessing in no way negates the miraculous and divine intervention that was experienced by those who set out to make this an independent nation. After sending Sergio my message, I got something touching back from him that was penned by one of our great founding fathers –

"I conceive we cannot better express ourselves than by humbly supplicating the Supreme Ruler of the world . . . that the confusions that are and have been among the nations may be overruled by the promoting and speedily bringing in the holy and happy period when the kingdoms of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ may be everywhere established, and the people willingly bow to the scepter of Him who is the Prince of Peace." Samuel Adams

That hasn't happened yet, but it probably isn't far off..

Text Verse: *"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the*

handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

-Colossians 2:11-15

There is this theme that has been running through the Joshua sermons and which is based on what transpired at the end of Deuteronomy when Moses died. And, of course, that is based upon Israel's transgression back in Numbers 14. Notice the progression of thought – circumcision, baptism, sins forgiven – it is all pictured so far in Joshua.

The law cannot bring anyone into the promise, except in Christ's fulfillment of it. And because of His work, the promise is not only available, it will come to pass for all who come to God through Him. This truth continues to be seen in Joshua 6.

Although it is late afternoon on the 4th of July for me and I have not yet figured out what is going on in this chapter, things have become a bit clearer. I'll keep talking to the Lord about it, and – hopefully – in a week or two the chapter will be finished, and it will all fit together.

For now, it is certain that we have a whole heap of verses to get through. For you, it's sermon time. Joshua 6! Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Lord Speaks to Joshua (verses 1-5)

Chapter 5 ended with Joshua encountering the Commander of the Army of the Lord. As we noted then, that may not have been a chronological event, but simply a logical placement based on the surrounding text.

The text was clear that the events occurred “in Jericho.” If that is to be taken literally, then it would mean that it occurred after the attack began, while Joshua was in the midst of battle. Regardless of that, verse 1 of chapter 6 is now a statement of fact that sets the tone for what lies ahead.

¹ Now Jericho was securely shut up

The words are emphatic: *v'irikho sogereth u-m'sugereth* – “And Jericho shutting up was closely shut up.” There is both the act of closing the city and then the continued closure of the city being detailed in the single thought.

With the spies having come into the city, and with the word that Joshua and the people of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground, it was a certain indication that a siege lay ahead for Jericho, the Place of Fragrance. As it says, the city was securely shut up...

1 (con't) because of the children of Israel;

The word “because” is an explanatory paraphrase. Rather, it says: *mip'ne bene Yisrael* – “From faces sons Israel.” The people of Jericho were fully afraid of facing Israel, and so they shut themselves away and secured the gates with bars and bolts. They were in total siege mode, hiding from the faces of the sons of Israel. And...

1 (con't) none went out, and none came in.

This signifies a state of siege. The crops would not be tended to, any flocks in the fields or herds would be abandoned, and anyone who had not entered before it was shut down would be told to travel on to another friendly city, but they would not be allowed in.

And more, those inside would be there for the duration. To lay siege to a city was often a lengthy, and thus costly, thing to carry out. As such, stores of food, a source of water, and time were the inhabitants' best friends during a siege.

If the city inhabitants lasted until the invaders could no longer afford to stay and be slowly picked off, the city would survive. If not, exile, death, or total subordination was normally the result of being overrun. With this understood, the narrative now turns to Israel's side of things...

2 And the LORD said to Joshua:

The Lord addresses Joshua. Because of this, it is deemed by pretty much every scholar that verse 6:1 is parenthetical and that the closing of chapter 5 and the opening of chapter 6 are referring to the same conversation –

“Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, ‘Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand *is* holy.’ And Joshua did so. ...

(Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.) ... And the LORD said to Joshua: 'See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, *and* the mighty men of valor.'

I disagree. The two accounts are completely separate. Chapter 5's conclusion was an encounter with the eternal Christ, Jesus, revealing Himself to Joshua at a certain point in the narrative which is not necessarily chronological (5:13-15).

Chapter 6 opens with a simple statement of fact concerning Jericho (6:1), and then it takes up the narrative concerning Israel after their circumcision (5:2), observance of the Passover, and the ending of the manna (5:12).

As such, the same formula is followed as has been seen repeatedly throughout the first five chapters. The Lord speaks to Joshua, Joshua repeats the command to the people, and then the command is carried out by the people under Joshua's direction. The passage then ends with a statement of closure.

In this case, it will be verse 6:27, "So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country." But here, the Lord's introductory words are...

² (con't) **"See! I have given Jericho into your hand,**

The aspect of the verb is perfect – "I have given." It is a statement of surety and completion. Joshua only needs to enter into the process and the Lord will see it through to its end. With that, the Lord describes the scope of the grant...

² (con't) **its king, *and* the mighty men of valor.**

malkah gibore he'khayil – "king – mighties the valor." It is a way of saying that the king and all of his most powerful men have already been defeated before the Lord. Again, Joshua simply needs to enter into the process, and it will come to pass. Next come the explicit instructions...

³ **You shall march around the city, all *you* men of war;**

v'sabotem eth ha'ir kol anshe ha'milkhamah – "And go around the city all men the war." It would be an unusual and notable display for Jericho to behold. There is no hint of attacking, just men of war going around the city. That is further described as...

³ (con't) **you shall go all around the city once.**

haqeph eth ha'ir paam ekhat – “circling the city stroke one.” The word I translate as “circling” is different than the previous clause. They are to go around, thus making a full circuit. The word *paam* signifies a stroke, as if on an anvil. It is thus something that marks out time. As unusual as this is, it is all the more unusual because that is all they were to do. Jericho would be mystified. And more...

³ (con't) **This you shall do six days.**

Each day for six days, the exact same thing was to be done. Nothing is said of Sabbath observance. As such, it could be that the words are inclusive of a Sabbath, or the command ignores a Sabbath.

Jewish writers, who are generally not to be trusted, say the city fell on a Sabbath day. It seems highly unlikely that the Lord would have them purposefully break the Sabbath by carrying things, walking great distances, and engaging in battle.

In speculation, I would go with the idea that the words are inclusive of a Sabbath. Nothing says they are six consecutive days. They circled the city six times, but on the Sabbath, they observed the day and then resumed the circling the next day. It would be hard to imagine they simply ignored the Sabbath. Either way...

⁴ **And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark.**

v'shivah kohanim yisu shivah shofroth ha'yov'lim lipne ha'aron – “And seven priests shall bear seven shofars the Jubilees before the ark.” These are not the *khatsothroth keseph*, or the silver trumpets, of Numbers 10 that were to be used for signaling during war.

Rather, these are shofars first seen at the giving of the Ten Commandments, and which were mandated to be blown at the time of the Jubilee in Leviticus 25. Psalm 81 shows that they are blown at the New Moon festivals and on the full moon during the solemn feast, meaning Passover and/or Tabernacles.

They are also blown at numerous other times throughout the Old Testament. The word comes from *shafar*, meaning comely or beautiful. One can think of the shape of a ram's horn like that of a woman due to its curves.

These *shofars* are then described as *ha'yov'lim*, or “the Jubilees.” The word *yovel* comes from *yaval*, to conduct or bear along, and that will explain what these are picturing. Because the *shofar* is affixed to *yovel*, or “Jubilee,” it is telling us that this is a time of proclaiming liberty for the land. Those who possess it will be dispossessed. Jericho is the beginning of that event.

^{4 (con't)} **But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times,**

u-b'yom ha'sheviy tasovu eth ha'ir sheva peamim – “and in day the seven you shall go around the city seven strokes.” The meaning is obvious. Unlike the first six days, they are to walk around the city seven full times. All the while...

^{4 (con't)} **and the priests shall blow the trumpets.**

v'ha'kohanim yitqeu ba'shofaroth – “And the priests shall blow in the shofars.” With the change from the first six days, the inhabitants of Jericho would know, without any doubt, that the battle was imminent. But they will have no way of expecting what was coming...

⁵ **It shall come to pass, when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn,**

v'hayah bimsok b'qeren ha'yovel – “And it shall be in the prolongation in horn the Jubilee.” This is the signal for the events to really begin. There was to be a long blast. The word “horn” is singular even though the word “they” is plural. As such, it would be a terror to the people within, and it would be a sound of confirmation of the miracle of the Lord that was about to occur...

^{5 (con't)} **and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout;**

b'sham'akhem eth qol ha'shofar yariu kal ha'am t'ruah gedolah – “in hearing you (pl) voice the shofar shall shout all the people acclamation whopping!” The word *t'ruah* signifies a great clamor, an acclamation, a battle cry, rejoicing, etc. The idea is that of victory even before the battle has begun.

One could think of our use of “hurrah” (oohrah, hoo-rah, huzzah, booyah) in shouting out victory. It is an acknowledgment that the victory is secured, and without a doubt it is the victory of the Lord.

⁵ (con't) **then the wall of the city will fall down flat.**

v'naphelah khomath ha'ir takhteha – “And shall fall wall the city under it.” No battering ram was needed. Rather, the description is very precise. The wall will simply collapse from below leaving the city entirely exposed.

It can be assumed that this was not the entire wall of the city. Rahab's house was on the wall and yet they were unharmed. Further, unless Israel completely encircled the city, people could escape in the areas where it was not surrounded. As such, it seems certain that the walls came down where Israel was and in a manner that would allow them to pour in and utterly destroy all life within. With this in mind, it says...

⁵ (con't) **And the people shall go up every man straight before him.”**

v'alu ha'am ish negdo – “And will ascend the people man opposite him.” Wherever the soldiers were, the wall would be sufficiently razed to allow them to ascend directly opposite to where each was. Each could rush straight in.

As many soldiers of Jericho would certainly have been stationed along the wall, they would have been crushed along with the collapse and the soldiers would be able to rush in completely unopposed.

*The city is under siege, and none go out or in
While we prepare for that great and awesome day
Soon our battle plan will begin
And then the enemy we shall slay*

*As we march forward, those armed go first according to the word
And then the priests set out as the shofars they blow
Following them are the priests and the ark of the Lord
Making a circuit around the doomed city of Jericho*

*With us is the Lord our God! We cannot fail
Nothing can stop our destruction of the city – Jericho
We shall attack and we shall assail
And on to victory over the enemy, we shall go*

II. Joshua Speaks to the People (verses 6-11)

⁶ Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests

They are words of immediate compliance. The Lord spoke and now Joshua speaks: *va'yiqra Yehoshua bin nun el ha'kohanim* – “And called Joshua son Nun unto the priests.”

Joshua is mentioned eleven times in this chapter, and yet he is only called by his father's name this once. The name Joshua means, “The Lord is Salvation,” and Nun signifies to propagate or increase. He now calls the priests...

^{6 (con't)} and said to them, “Take up the ark of the covenant,

va'yomer alehem seu eth aron ha'b'rith – “And said unto them, ‘Lift to you ark the covenant.’” Notice that the designation is changed from “the ark” to “the ark of the covenant.” The priests are to lift it up...

^{6 (con't)} and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.”

v'shivah kohanim yisu shivah shofroth yov'lim liphne aron Yehovah – “and seven priests shall bear seven shofars Jubilees before ark Yehovah.” Now the designation is changed again to read “ark Yehovah.” When the Lord spoke, He simply called it the “ark.” Joshua is conveying the words of the Lord, but he is stating each thing in the manner in which the situation demands.

⁷ And he said to the people,

The written Hebrew says: *va'yomeru el ha'am* – “And they said unto the people.” Joshua gave direction to the priests, and then it can be assumed that the priests instructed the people to...

^{7 (con't)} “Proceed, and march around the city,

For consistency, I would say, “Pass on, and go around the city.” Assuming it is the priests bearing the ark that are giving this instruction, they are telling the people to pass on before them and begin the process which will last for seven days. They then say...

^{7 (con't)} and let him who is armed advance before the ark of the LORD.”

v'he'khaluts yaavor liph'ne aron Yehovah – “and the drawings off shall pass on before ark Yehovah.” The “drawings off” signifies those who have been drawn off for battle, and thus they are armed.

They are to pass on before the priests who are bearing the ark in the procession as it goes around the city. Now, from the command of the Lord to the command from Joshua comes the immediate compliance and fulfillment of the word...

⁸ So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people,

v'hi k'emor Yehoshua el ha'am – “And it was according to say Joshua unto the people.” Joshua spoke to the priests, the priests told the people to pass on before them, and now according to the words of Joshua unto the people...

^{8 (con't)} that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD advanced and blew the trumpets,

v'shivah ha'kohanim nos'im shivah shofroth ha'yov'lim liph'ne Yehovah av'ru v'taq'u ba'shofaroth – “And seven the priests bearers seven shofars the Jubilees before Yehovah passed on and blew in the shofars.” Everything is occurring in a specific order. The armed passed on first. From there, the trumpet blowers pass on. Next...

^{8 (con't)} and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

v'aron b'rith Yehovah holekh akharehem – “and ark covenant Yehovah went after them.” Everything is being done with military precision. One thing follows directly after another according to a set plan. And again, the order is next restated...

⁹ The armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets,

The words essentially repeat the thought already expressed. Those who were drawn off, meaning who are armed, were first and they were then followed by the priests who blew the shofars. However, the next words are extremely complicated...

^{9 (con't)} and the rear guard came after the ark, while *the* priests continued blowing the trumpets.

v'hamaseph holekh akhare ha'aron halokh v'taqoa ba'shofaroth – “and the gathering went after the ark, going on and blowing in the trumpets.” It is unsure what “the

gathering” is. It is a verb. Despite this, most translations turn it into a noun and say, “rear guard.”

The same general thought is found several more times, such as in 1 Samuel 29:2 –

“And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the **rear** with Achish.”

It is also seen in Isaiah 52:12 where many translations again say, “rear guard.” Young’s goes with “gathering” –

“For not in haste do ye go out, Yea, with flight ye go not on, For going before you is Jehovah, And **gathering** you is the God of Israel!” (YLT)

Some speculate that this is, in fact, a rear guard. But that seems unlikely. It could be people that wanted to participate in the march but were not a part of the battle. It could be those who carried supplies of weapons, bandages, and other needed items for the soldiers who went into battle.

Again, the same thought is used in Isaiah 58:8 –

“Then broken up as the dawn is thy light, And thy health in haste springeth up, Gone before thee hath thy righteousness, The honour of Jehovah doth **gather** thee.” (YLT)

¹⁰ Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, “You shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout.”

The translation is close enough and the meaning is obvious. Joshua has strictly forbidden any type of noise at all. This is to be a completely quiet procession with the exception of the blowing of the shofars by the priests.

Only when Joshua gives the command were the people to shout and then they were to really let go. But until then the only sound was to be the noise of acclamation proceeding from the shofars.

¹¹ So he had the ark of the LORD circle the city, going around *it* once.

The verb is not causative. Rather than “he had the ark,” it says: *va’yashev aron Yehovah eth ha’ir haqeph paam ekhat* – “And went around ark Yehovah the city, circling stroke one.” The words are very precise. Even though the people performed their duties as instructed, the attention is on the ark...

11 (con’t) Then they came into the camp and lodged in the camp.

That was it for the day’s activity, exactly as the Lord has said to Joshua, and exactly as he then conveyed to the people. One thing to wonder about is whether Rahab’s family had all gathered together each day, anticipating the battle to begin. Depending on the number of them, could they all stay in her house? If not, all would have dispersed each day after the procession left, probably repeating this seven times.

Nothing is said, but it is something to be curious about. With the words of this verse complete, the next verses reexplain the process that occurred for the next day...

*Listen to the sound of the shofar blow
It is telling us that the Lord is on our side
Here we are circling around Jericho
Ready to be an overflowing tide*

*Once a day, six times in all
We get up and circle around Jericho
Waiting for the day when down comes the wall
At the sound of the long shofar blow*

*One step at a time and around we go
Six days we do it and then back to the camp we head
But on the seventh day, we have a surprise for Jericho
On that day, we shall face the city and march straight ahead*

III. Seven Days (verses 12-16)

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

The note of rising early in the morning is probably anticipating the seventh day. Each day the same pattern would be followed, but because of what occurs on the seventh day, it was necessary to set the pattern as being early in the morning from the beginning.

As such, Joshua rose early, ensured everyone was awake and ready, and then the priests would bear the ark of the Lord. Once it was readied...

13 Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD

v'shivah ha'kohanim nos'im shivah shofroth ha'yov'lim liph'ne aron Yehovah – “And seven the priests bearers seven shofars the Jubilees before ark Yehovah.” The order is reversed in the details even though it is the same order as always. The ark follows the priests with the shofars who...

13 (con't) went on continually and blew with the trumpets.

It is a sort of superlative concerning their blowing: *hol'khim halokh v'taq'u ba'shofaroth* – “goings going on and blew in the trumpets.” It gives the sense of nonstop blowing as they continue around the city. Despite the silence of the people, this was by no means a solemn silent procession.

It would have been a most disturbing sound to those within the city as the wails of the trumpets continually rose and fell with the breath of the priests...

13 (con't) And the armed men went before them. But the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD,

More precisely, it reads, “And the drawn off went before them and the gathering went after ark Yehovah.” It is the same order as always despite having been referred to in reverse – 1) the armed men, 2) the seven priests with the shofars, 3) the priests bearing the ark, and 4) the gathering. And again, it notes...

13 (con't) while the priests continued blowing the trumpets.

The words are very similar to those of verse 9. They give the sense of the entire procession simply moving forward and the sound of the trumpets unceasingly accompanying the movement: *holekh v'taqoa ba'shofaroth* – “going on and blowing in the trumpets.”

14 And the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp.

v'yashovu eth ha'ir ba'yom ha'sheni paam akhat – “And went around the city in the day the second stroke one.” It is a confirmation that as the Lord had instructed, so the people did. And more...

¹⁴ (con't) **So they did six days.**

koh asu shesheth yamim – “Thus they have done six days.” Exactly as instructed, so they did. Again, as noted earlier, nothing here indicates that they failed to observe a Sabbath. Several possibilities seem to exist. The first is that the days are not all joined together, and the Sabbath was observed at some point, such as: Day 1 march, day 2 march, Sabbath, Day 3 march, and so on.

Or, the Lord gave them a waiver to the Sabbath law, which I noted above seems unlikely. Or it could be that the distance walked was not considered a violation of the Sabbath and the priests bearing the ark as a priestly duty is not considered a violation according to both the law and Jesus' note concerning it –

“Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?” Matthew 12:5

The problem is that the soldiers carrying their weapons would not be exempted without a waiver. I would go with the first option, but others argue different views.

¹⁵ **But it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early,**

The events of the seventh day are the reason for rising early each day. What will happen on the seventh day necessitates rising early in order to have enough sunlight to accomplish the tasks set before them. And so...

¹⁵ (con't) **about the dawning of the day,**

ka'aloth ha'shakhar – “according to rising of the dawn.” It is very early, in fact...

¹⁵ (con't) **and marched around the city seven times in the same manner.**

It says *ka'mishpat ha'zeh* – “according to the judgment, the this.” In other words, it was determined that they should go early each day, and that is because of the necessity on the seventh day. It was set forth as an ordinance by the Lord in verse 4 that on the

seventh day, they were to go around the city seven times. The other days anticipated this seventh day ordinance by going early each day.

¹⁵ (con't) **On that day only they marched around the city seven times.**

There is an emphasis in the words: *raq ba'yom hahu shavevu eth ha'ir sheva peamim* – “Only in the day the this they went around the city seven strokes.” The point is not that Israel marched around Jericho thirteen times. The point is that they marched around Jericho six times once and once seven times.

¹⁶ **And the seventh time it happened,**

v'hi ba'paam ha'shevit – “And it came to pass in the stroke the seventh.” Each circuit of the city was as if an anvil had been struck. On the striking of the seventh, events began to take place quickly. It was...

¹⁶ (con't) **when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people:**

taq'u ha'kohanim ba'shofaroth va'yomer Yehoshua el ha'am – “blew the priests in the shofars and said Joshua unto the people.” This would have been the long blast mentioned in verse 5, and it probably would have scared the living daylights out of everyone in the city.

Not only had the city been circled seven times, telling them that today was the day, but now, instead of a continuous sounding of the shofars, there is a long and prolonged sounding of them. There would be no doubt that this was the moment they had dreaded.

Hearts would have seized in the old, terror would have seized the young, and horror would have seized anyone else with a modicum of sense in his head. But that sudden and ghastly sensation would be overcome by one even worse within mere moments. After the command of Joshua was obeyed...

¹⁶ (fin) **“Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!**

hariau ki nathan Yehovah lakhem eth ha'ir – “Shout! For has given Yehovah to you the city!” It is completely unknown how many people surrounded the city each day or on the seventh day, but even one-tenth of the capable fighting men would be sixty thousand.

And it could be well less than that, but supposing only twenty thousand were drawn off for the battle, the sound of the shout would have paralyzed every person in the city with abject fear.

And more than that came something that would have been so terrifying that there would not be a breath of hope left in anyone within the city except Rahab and those with her, as will be seen when we continue the passage next week.

For now, let us consider that Jericho was destroyed because it was a part of a nation of people that had completely departed from what God expects of His creatures. He did it on a global scale in Genesis 6, and He has continued to remove miscreant nations and peoples since then.

The Bible says that He will do it on a global scale again someday. That is probably not too far off. Isaiah says that He will make man more rare than fine gold (Isaiah 13:12). People who keep track of such things say that there will be eight billion people on earth in just a few months, probably in November.

Imagine the magnitude of the carnage if even a billion survive. The people of the US are just like the people of the rest of the world. We have left behind our Christian heritage, and we are actively fighting against it. Will there be another 4th of July celebration? Time will tell, but every year, we are a bit closer to the end.

The people of Canaan had their chance and blew it. The battle against Jericho is the first part of the destruction to come. But in the midst of it, there was salvation. And before the coming global catastrophe, there is salvation and escape from what lies ahead still available.

I hope you would make the right choice and consider the holiness of God. We cannot stand before such greatness on our own merit. But God has made a way for us to do so – on His merit. Come to Jesus Christ who makes this possible.

Closing Verse: *“If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done it?” Amos 3:6*

Next Week: Joshua 6:17-27 *The city has got to go; yes, it is true...* (The Battle of Jericho, Part II) (12th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Battle of Jericho, Part I

Now Jericho was securely shut up
Because of the children of Israel
None went out, and none came in
That was pretty much it in a nutshell

And the LORD said to Joshua:
“See! I have given Jericho into your hand
Its king, and the mighty men of valor
None will be able to make a stand

“You shall march around the city
All you men of war
You shall go all around the city once
This you shall do six days, once and nothing more

“And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets
Of rams’ horns, before the ark they shall go
But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times
And the priests shall the trumpets blow

“It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast
-----with the ram’s horn
And when you hear the trumpet’s sound
That all the people shall shout with a great shout
Then the wall of the city will fall down flat all around

“And the people up they shall go
Every man straight before him, not running to and fro”

Then Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them
“Take up the ark of the covenant, according to my word
And let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns
Before the ark of the LORD”

And he said to the people
“Proceed, and march around the city, hear now my word
And let him who is armed advance
Before the ark of the LORD”

So it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people
That the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of
-----rams’ horns before the LORD
Advanced and blew the trumpets
And the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them rearward

The armed men went before the priests
Who blew the trumpets as they were going
And the rear guard came after the ark
While the priests continued the trumpet blowing

Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying
“You shall not shout or make your voice ring out
Nor shall a word proceed out of your mouth
Until the day I say to you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout!”

So he had the ark of the LORD
Circle the city, going once around
Then they came into the camp and lodged
This was not the day for the battle sound

And Joshua rose early in the morning
And the priests took up the ark of the LORD, so they did do
Then seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns
Before the ark of the LORD went on continually
-----and with the trumpets blew

And the armed men went before them
But the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD
While the priests continued blowing the trumpets
All according to the spoken word

And the second day they marched around the city once
Such were their ways

And returned to the camp
So they did six days

But it came to pass on the seventh day
That they rose early, about the dawning of the day
-----surely with that yawning sound
And marched around the city seven times in the same manner
On that day only, the city they seven times marched around

And the seventh time it happened
When the priests blew the trumpets, as instructed to do
That Joshua said to the people
“Shout, for the LORD has given the city to you!”

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 6:17-27 **(THE BATTLE OF JERICHO, PART II)**

Of the passage today, Adam Clarke says –

“The city shall be accursed - That is, it shall be devoted to destruction; ye shall take no spoils, and put all that resist to the sword. Though this may be the meaning of the word חרם cherem in some places, see the note on Leviticus 27:29, yet here it seems to imply the total destruction of all the inhabitants, see Joshua 6:21; but it is likely that peace was offered to this city, and that the extermination of the inhabitants was in consequence of the rejection of this offer.”

This is entirely incorrect. Deuteronomy 20, when referring to the cities within the borders of Canaan is very clear, it says –

“But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, ¹⁷ but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, ¹⁸ lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God.”

-Deuteronomy 20:16-18

Adam Clarke is one of my favorite scholars, but he does what too many people do. He inserts his emotions and personal affections into the narrative. I often say, “We are never to allow our emotions to drive our theology. Rather, we are to have our theology drive our emotions.”

We are to be emotional over what the Lord has done for us. We are to be angry at what angers the Lord. But we are to ignore our own personal thoughts about the tenderness or frailty of the young, old, feminine, or supposedly innocent as we evaluate what Scripture is telling us.

When it says in Genesis 6, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth,” we are to allow God to be God. He created and thus He is the Creator. How He dispenses with His creation is up to Him.

At the time of Noah, it was through a global flood. At the time of Israel entering Canaan, it was to be through the sword of Israel. In the end, dying by a flood is really no different than dying by the sword. When the action is complete, dead is – after all – dead.

But just as Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, Rahab was also spared. And both of them are ancestors of Jesus. As for Noah, Hebrews says that by faith he moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, and by that he “condemned the world and became the heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” In like manner, we now come to Rahab’s deliverance...

Text Verse: *“By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:31*

Rahab’s deliverance is attributed to her faith. She had faith in Yehovah the God of Israel, and she had faith that He would be merciful to her. The others of Jericho may have had faith in Yehovah (meaning belief in the existence of), but they did not possess faith in His grace and mercy.

And more, in her state of faith, she was willing to step forward and act on her faith by receiving the spies. This could have cost her life if she was found out, but she was willing to trust the Lord beyond head knowledge and act out her internal faith by deeds of faith. If she didn’t do this, she would not have received the promise of deliverance.

The others in the city could have demonstrated faith as well, just as the Gibeonites will in Joshua 9. Though cunning on their part, what they did demonstrated faith that they could be saved, or at least that inaction would certainly result in death. Those in Jericho did not even attempt to act on what they knew.

They may have had faith in the existence of the Lord, but they never acted on it. Their faith was misdirected, and misdirected faith is, after all, wasted faith. How close one can come to salvation and yet miss the mark! Israel has been in that state for millennia. But that time will end. Another typological hint of that continues to be seen in Joshua 6.

Such great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Bring Out the Woman and All That She Has (verses 17-27)

17 Now the city shall be doomed by the LORD to destruction, it and all who *are* in it.

v'hayetha ha'ir kherem hi v'kal asher bah l'Yehovah – “And shall be the city anathema, it and all who in it, to the Lord.” The word *kherem* is a noun that speaks of something shut up and kept apart. Hence, it is where the word harem comes from. It is under the ban, meaning doomed to destruction.

As a noun, the word anathema is what best suits. In this case, it is anathema “to Yehovah,” and thus it is a total devotion to Him alone. However, an exception has been made that must be carefully adhered to...

17 (con't) Only Rahab the harlot shall live,

The word “only” should be set off with a comma to convey the proper intent. It says: *raq rakhav ha'zonah tihyeh* – “Only, Rahab the prostitute shall live.” The adverb *raq* comes from a noun signifying “lean.” Hence, here it means “leanness,” and thus “as a narrow exception.” Rahab is to be excepted...

17 (con't) she and all who *are* with her in the house,

The translation is exact. The “leanness” of exception is to include only her and those in her house, according to the vow previously made –

“Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father’s house, and give me a true token, ¹³ and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.” Joshua 2:12, 13

“So the men said to her: ‘We *will be* blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, ¹⁸ unless, *when* we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household to your own home. ¹⁹ So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰ And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear.’” Joshua 2:17-20

This is...

17 (con't) because she hid the messengers that we sent.

Here the word often translated as angels, *malakh*, is used: *ki hekh'b'atah eth ha'malakhim asher shalakhnu* – “for she hid the messengers that we sent.” It signifies a messenger, specifically of God. The use of the word adds credence to the analysis provided in chapter 2 concerning what they pictured, meaning the two testaments of Scripture.

Rahab had faithfully hidden these two men. At that time, the agreement was made, and it became binding upon Israel. As such, Joshua specifically acknowledges this and commands her and those with her to be spared.

An interesting thought comes forth concerning the devotion of Rahab to the Lord. Being devoted is essentially what happened to her, meaning those who issue from her. A section of her line entered into the genealogy of Christ Jesus, being devoted to this purpose.

18 And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things,

v'raq atem shimru min ha'kherem – “And only, you watch from the anathema.” Joshua’s words form an exhortation of warning. The people must carefully keep from being enticed into taking anything at all from the city. It is wholly devoted to the Lord, and nothing from it must enter into common use.

18 (con't) lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things,

The words are not passive, but causative – *pen takhrimu u-l'qakhtem min ha'kherem* – “lest you anathematize yourselves and you take from the anathema.” Any who takes something that is anathema causes himself to become anathema.

The sad result, however, will be seen in the next chapter. As one makes himself anathema, then everything that comprises who he is – meaning family and home – becomes anathema. But more...

18 (con't) and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

v'samtem eth makhaneh Yisrael l'kherem wa'akhartem oto – “And place camp Israel to anathema and trouble it.” Any Israelite who takes of what is anathema causes his anathematization to go in both directions, thus subjecting the entire camp to

become anathema. This clearly demonstrates the corporate nature of the nation. With that stated, it next says...

19 But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron,

The precious metals were to be set apart because of their intrinsic value and probably because they couldn't be burned. This would make it possible for them to later be removed by treasure seekers as they would not be a part of the burning of the city. If so, they could then be converted for common use. As such they...

19 (con't) are consecrated to the LORD;

It is emphatic: *qodesh hu l'Yehovah* – “holiness IT to Yehovah.” The city was to be wholly devoted to the Lord as *kherem l'Yehovah*, anathema to Yehovah. As these belong to Yehovah but would not be burnt up, they would become holy to Him. And therefore...

19 (con't) they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.”

otsar Yehovah yavo – “storehouse Yehovah they shall come.” They are set apart as holy and therefore, they were to be brought to the place where the sacred things of the Lord were stored. Thus, it makes the entire city of Jericho, the Place of Fragrance, holy to the Lord.

In this devotion to the Lord, the city is given as a type of firstfruits to the Lord and a token to Israel that all of the land would likewise fall into their possession.

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets.

va'yara ha'am va'yitqeu ba'shofaroth – “And shouted the people and blew in the shofars.” This is what was mandated in verse 5 last week, and is more fully explained in the next words...

20 (con't) And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet,

vayhi kishmoa ha'am eth qol ha'shofar – “And it came to pass according to hearing the people voice the shofar.” This would have been the long blast specifically noted in verse 5. And like in verse 5, the word is singular, shofar, even though all seven priests were told to blow.

The shofars had been blowing all the time around the city, but this is when they all blew in unison with a long blast, such as was heard at the sounding of the shofar at the giving of the law –

“And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.” Exodus 19:19

The signal is given with the sounding of the shofar. Therefore...

20 (con't) and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat.

va'yariu ha'am t'ruah g'dolah va'tipol ha'khomah takhteha – “and shouted the people acclamation whopping and fell the wall under it.” Exactly as the Lord said would occur in verse 5, so the wall collapsed from below, leaving the city entirely exposed. Thus...

20 (con't) Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

Like verse 5, it is more precise, saying, “And ascended the people the city, man – opposite him – and they took the city.” Each man, regardless of where he stood, had freedom to go in directly. Nothing obstructed him from doing so, and there was no need to divert because no wall remained standing where he was.

It cannot go without note at this point that our text verse, Hebrews 11:30, says that the walls fell down “by faith.” There is no secondary cause described by Joshua, such as a trembling of the earth or a meteorite slamming into it and causing it to drop. But even if that was the case, the miracle of timing would still be sufficient.

But nothing else is recorded. The people were to have faith that the walls would collapse, and they did collapse. It is an important point to consider in regard to typology. Next, it says...

21 And they utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city,

It more correctly says, “And they anathematized all that *was* in the city.” Everything was devoted to the Lord as required...

21 (con't) both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.

me'ish v'ad ishah, mi'naar v'ad zaqen, v'ad sor va'se va'khamor l'pi kharev – “from man and unto woman, from young and unto old, and unto ox and sheep and donkey to mouth sword.” As always, the sword is considered a devouring instrument where the edge is equated to a mouth that consumes as it strikes. No one and nothing escaped it within the city, except...

22 But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country,

v'lishnayim ha'anashim hamrag'lim eth ha'arets amar Yehoshua – “And to two the men, the reconiterers the land, said Joshua.” The same two men who had made the agreement with Rahab are chosen to also rescue her from the destruction. Logically they are chosen because they are aware of the layout of the house.

22 (con't) “Go into the harlot’s house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has,

The translation is close enough to get the full sense of what is expected. What is notable is that her house was built up to the wall of the city.

And so, either the wall did not fall down where her house was, or it fell down without harming anyone inside as it fell. In this, it is seen that the walls fell by faith, and she was also saved by faith. Both were accomplished through the superintending hand of the Lord. Knowing this, the final words of the verse are important...

22 (con't) as you swore to her.”

kaasher nishbatem lah – “according to which you swore to her.” In swearing to her, the agreement was made, and it had to be performed. They were sent out at the word of Joshua, and therefore what they said had to be performed as if Joshua himself had said it.

23 And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had.

This was what she had asked for, and what they agreed to –

“Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father’s house, and give me a true token, ¹³ and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all

that they have, and deliver our lives from death.”

¹⁴ So the men answered her, “Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you.” Joshua 2:12-14

²³ (con’t) **So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.**

The word “left” gives an awkward sense: *v’eth kal mishp’hoteha hotsiu va’yanikhum mi’khuts l’makhaneh Yisrael* – “And all her families they brought out and rested them from outside to camp Israel.” Israel didn’t abandon them but settled them as a people under their protection.

Being outside the camp means that they were deemed unclean and not acceptable to be in the camp itself. That obviously changed later, and they were assimilated into the community as verse 25 implies.

²⁴ **But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire.**

This is the formal act of *kherem* on the city. The people had all been killed with the sword, but the city also was to go up as an offering devoted to the Lord through fire. But in accord with verse 19, it says...

²⁴ (con’t) **Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.**

These are as firstfruits to the Lord. They could withstand fire and would have been put through fire before they were placed in the treasury. This is seen in Numbers 31:22, 23 –

“Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, ²³ everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified with the water of purification.”

²⁵ **And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father’s household, and all that she had.**

The verb is causative, “And Rahab the harlot, and house her father, and all that to her, *caused to* live Joshua.” The power of life rested with him as the leader of the people and under his authority, Rahab and her family lived...

²⁵ (con’t) **So she dwells in Israel to this day,**

va'teshev b'qerev Yisrael ad ha'yom ha'zeh – “And she dwells in midst Israel until the day, the this.” This shows us quite clearly that she was accepted into the congregation. She no longer was “rested” outside the camp, but she dwelt in Israel’s midst. Also, the phrase, “to this day,” clearly shows that the writer of Joshua is a contemporary of Rahab.

²⁵ (con’t) **because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.**

Here again, the term *ha'malakhim*, or “the messengers,” is used of the two men. They were sent by the direction of Joshua, and she hid them, thus indirectly acknowledging Joshua’s authority.

Her act of faith, as explicitly stated in Hebrews 11, is recorded here indicating the same thought by using the word *ki*, “for” or “because.” Because she acted, she was *caused to* live among Israel.

²⁶ **Then Joshua charged *them* at that time, saying, “Cursed *be* the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this city Jericho;**

The verb is causative. It essentially means, “And Joshua caused them to swear.” Joshua made them swear on behalf of all generations, confirming their oath with a curse. It is implied from Deuteronomy 13 that any city that was anathematized was to not be built again –

“And *if it is* indeed true *and* certain *that* such an abomination was committed among you, ¹⁵ you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, **utterly destroying** [*kherem*] it, all that is in it and its livestock—with the edge of the sword. ¹⁶ And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and completely burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the LORD your God. It shall be a heap forever; it shall not be built again.” Deuteronomy 13:14-16

As this is the case, Joshua pronounced a particular curse upon anyone who would rebuild Jericho saying...

²⁶ (con’t) **he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates.”**

There is an alliterative and almost poetic nature to the words: *bivkoro yeyas'denah u-vitsiro yatsiv d'lateha* – “in his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and in his least he shall set up its doors.” This curse came into effect as is recorded in 1 Kings 16 –

“In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.”

-1 Kings 16:34

Despite the curse being realized, it was confined to Hiel's house and not the city. Jesus spoke of and visited the city, showing that the rebuilt city was not considered anathema.

***(fin) 27 So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.**

The wording is simpler: “And was Yehovah with Joshua; and was his fame in all the land.” There is a new word, *shoma*, meaning a report or fame. It will be seen again in Joshua 9:9 when speaking of the fame of the name of the Lord, once in Esther 9 when referring to Mordecai, and once in Jeremiah 6 concerning a bad report coming to the people about their impending doom.

The closing out of the chapter is given to highlight Joshua as the key point of focus for all that is to be honored or feared in the land – meaning among Israel, and also among all who heard of him.

*Listen to the sound of the shofar blow
It is telling us that the Lord is on our side
Here we are circling around Jericho
Ready to be an overflowing tide*

*Once a day, six times in all
We get up and circle Jericho
Waiting for the day when down comes the wall
At the sound of the long shofar blow*

*One step at a time and around we go
Six days we do it and then back to the camp we head
But on the seventh day, we have a surprise for Jericho
On that day, we shall face the city and march straight ahead*

II. Pictures of Christ

Almost every day of the week prior to this sermon, I re-read the passage from Joshua 6:1-16 and tried to fully harmonize what is said here with the same general typology that we have already seen concerning Israel's finally coming to Christ.

As we have seen, the individual passages are all part of one process that has been carefully separated to show the finer details of what occurs in the process of salvation, even if they all occur at once.

In other words, and to understand what is going on, we have been seeing the process of salvation in individual passages, but they all happen at once. *Moses, the law dies. Israel accepts Christ's fulfillment of the law. *Israel enters the Jordan (Christ); Israel is baptized into Christ's death (Chapter 3). *Israel, signified by the stones carried to Gilgal and which are then rested there, enters its rest (Chapter 4). *Two sets of stones are set up, signifying the heavenly government of Jew and Gentile (Chapter 4). *Israel is circumcised; Israel has put off the body of sins of the flesh / The reproach of the past is taken away when believers are circumcised by the Lord (Chapter 5). *Believers partake of Christ as their Passover (Chapter 5). *The Lord is the Leader of the people, and they are brought into "holy ground." (Chapter 5). *Access to that holy ground is brought about by acceptance of Christ's work (Chapter 6).

These all happen at the same moment, but we have seen the individual applications spread out over several chapters now. All of this will happen to Israel someday, just as it happens to every believer who comes to Christ now.

With this in mind, we can evaluate the chapter as it is given. In Chapter 1, Jericho is said to be securely shut up. Heaven, a return to paradise is securely shut up "from faces sons Israel" (see Genesis 3:24). But the Lord says to Joshua (typical of Jesus) that He has given Jericho into his hand.

In order to do this, Israel is to march around the city one time a day for six days. The instruction is that seven priests are to bear seven "shofars the Jubilees." Being consistent with the previous passages, the priests are typical of Christ in His priestly duties. In blowing the shofars, they are heralding what He has accomplished in order to bring about the Jubilee.

The first time such a horn was blown was at the giving of the law and with a long blast to introduce it (Exodus 19:19). As was noted in verse 4, these *shofars* are described as

ha'yov'lim, or “the Jubilees.” The word *yovel* comes from *yaval*, to conduct or bear along. Because the *shofar* is affixed to *yovel*, or “Jubilee,” it anticipates a time of proclaiming liberty for the land.

On the seventh day, Israel was to circle the city seven times and a long blast was given to proclaim the moment of the Jubilee. As noted, the word horn was singular even though it also said “they,” meaning seven priests. They gave a united blast. It was at that time that the army was to give a whopping acclamation and the wall would fall under itself.

In verse 6, Joshua (the Lord is Salvation) was also designated by his father’s name, Nun, to propagate or increase. Jesus is the Lord who is salvation, and He is the one who increases the family of God by including both Jew and Gentile.

In verse 6, it was noted that the term “ark” changed to “ark of the covenant.” The name continued to change throughout the narrative according to what is going on in the surrounding text. Each time, it is giving hints as to Christ’s role – His person, His humanity, His deity, His death, His fulfillment of the covenant, and so on. Thinking on each instance as you read will help you see this.

Still in verse 6, Joshua (typical of Jesus the Leader) confirms the words of the Lord for seven priests (typical of Jesus in His priestly duties) to bear the seven shofars of the Jubilees before the ark of Yehovah. I would suggest that these seven shofars of the seven priests are the seven proclamations of Christ’s deity –

“I am the bread of life.”

“I am the light of the world.”

“I am the door of the sheep.”

“I am the good shepherd.”

“I am the resurrection and the life.”

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

“I am the true vine.”

If you remember (or if you didn’t yet see or read – shame on you) Exodus 40:1-16, entitled “Seven I AMs,” you know that the construction of the tabernacle (a picture of Jesus the God/Man) followed the same order as the seven I AMs that were spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of John.

He is the tabernacle where the priestly duties are conducted. The seven priests with the seven shofars of the Jubilees picture Christ proclaiming who He is. He is the procession that will lead to retaking paradise.

With that understood, it next said (vs. 7), “And they said to the people.” It can be assumed that the priests (Christ in His priestly role) give the next instruction.

In other words, Jesus in His priestly role is giving the instruction to the armed men at the head to “Pass on and go around the city.” They go first (vs. 7), then the priests with the shofars (vs. 8), then the ark of the covenant of the Lord (vs. 8), then “the gathering” (vs. 9). The entire procession anticipates the Lord, as was seen in Isaiah 52:12 –

“For not in haste do ye go out, Yea, with flight ye go not on, For going before you is Jehovah, And gathering you is the God of Israel!” (YLT)

This is just what is seen in Joshua. There is no haste, the Lord goes first, and the God of Israel gathers up as well.

Verse 10 was Joshua’s imperative to not shout or make any noise until he gave the order to shout. Until Jesus speaks the word, the event will not take place.

Verse 13 gave the description of the nonstop blowing as the procession continued around the city. Only the sound of the priests proclaiming the Jubilees through their horns is heard, and it continues unabated.

Also in verse 13 was the reversal of the references concerning the procession. It was as if the passage was telling us, “Don’t worry; even if the ark of the Lord passes by, there is still the gathering.” In the completed work of the law and the death of Jesus, the story is not over.

The procession went on for six days in the same manner, and then it noted that on the seventh day (vs. 15), things started at the rising of the dawn. It is reminiscent of the words of Luke –

“Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.”

-Luke 24:1, 2

It was noted at that time that the point is not that Israel marched around Jericho thirteen times. The point is that they marched around Jericho six times once and once seven times.

The typology is that of Christ in His humanity proclaiming who He is prior to His fulfillment of the Law. On the seventh day, it is Christ in His deity demonstrating that the Law is fulfilled.

At the end of last week's passage, the words of Joshua concluded the verses, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!" The word went forth claiming victory.

Stopping to remember the typology, this is Christ's work but it also anticipates Israel's finally accepting Jesus someday. Each step has shown the process of this. It is the Lord who accomplishes the work, and Israel will enter in by faith in that. As such this week's passage began with the note that the city and everything in it was to be anathematized to the Lord.

It is the Lord who defeats and destroys the enemy. And the enemy is comprised of any who are not of Israel. However, in this account, the promise to Rahab is brought back to the center of focus. Israel was given the promise and they will receive the Lord someday, but there are those who are not of Israel who are joined to the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12).

The thing about Rahab is that she was actually saved before Israel entered the inheritance. Even if it is not realized, the guarantee of salvation was already given, as was noted in Chapter 2. The reminder of that is seen in verse 17 where it noted she hid the messengers that were sent.

As we saw in Chapter 2, they pictured the two testaments of Scripture. She hid them and preserved them by faith, and she is to be preserved. It anticipates Gentile salvation, even before national Israel is saved.

Along with that is the note of those of Israel taking of the accursed things and becoming accursed. That is easily understood from the words of Hebrews, a book directed to the Hebrew people –

"Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is

called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

-Hebrews 3:12, 13

"Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it." Hebrews 4:1

The words of Hebrews are giving the same warnings as Joshua. "Have faith and don't come short of the promise." Those who fail to believe will be dealt with.

Verse 21 noted the blowing of the shofar on a long blast. It is recorded as a single long blast, even if all seven blew. The parallel of a long blast at the giving of the law and the completion of the law isn't to be missed.

Christ completed His work, and the law was ended, heralding that the Man who had proclaimed the seven I AM's is also the Lord God Almighty. At that moment, the walls of Jericho fell, and at that moment, access to heaven was restored.

It is to be noted that the trumpet of the Jubilee described in Leviticus 25 was to be blown on the Day of Atonement –

"Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land." Leviticus 25:9

The Day of Atonement is a picture of Christ's atoning death (see Leviticus 16 and Leviticus 23 sermons). This is exactly why the shofars of the Jubilee are mentioned in Joshua 6. It is to show us this typology. Christ died saying, "It is finished," and the trumpet is blown. Liberty is proclaimed, and the walls come down.

Someone could argue that the typology doesn't fit because Christ died on Friday and on Sunday early in the morning He arose. As such, the account of Joshua and Jericho doesn't match.

But that would be incorrect. In Romans, Paul ties the crucifixion and the resurrection into one event, saying, He "was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Romans 4:25).

The death of Christ on the cross performed one function of the act, the fulfilling of the Law, His resurrection performs another, both confirming it and calling forth the victory of

it in our justification. Having this account in Joshua occur starting in the early morning is just a nice touch to strengthen that notion.

Remember, the six days picture Christ in His humanity. The seventh day is confirming Christ in His deity. In order to match all of the typology, the account must provide these different parts separately.

Christ proved He is God by fulfilling the law. That happened on the cross, actually, when the veil was torn because only God can fulfill the law. But the resurrection also confirms it.

The people (Christ as the head of the procession) were, at that moment, given free and unfettered access into the city. They went straight forward, each one of them, and the city was anathematized.

At the same time, Rahab was identified by the two who reconnoitered the land and she and all her father's house were delivered. Upon their delivery, they were rested outside the camp of Israel (vs. 23). Their state of salvation is then confirmed in the words of verse 25, saying, "And Rahab the harlot, and house her father, and all that to her, *caused to live* Joshua."

Jesus will cause all who come to Him in faith to live, which means granting the life that is truly life. Those who come to Christ are joined to the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12).

With this typology hopefully understood, verse 26 noted the curse spoken forth by Joshua. No person should ever presume to rebuild what had been destroyed. Paradise was inaccessible because of the violation of law. Christ restored access through fulfillment of the law. Paul speaks of exactly this in Galatians 2 –

"For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. ¹⁹ For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain." Galatians 2:18-21

We cannot reintroduce the law and come away unscathed. This is what is being told to those who would try to rebuild what Christ has eliminated.

With this now understood, we can go back and review our text verse from last week and see how what Paul says in Colossians so closely matches the details of what we have been seeing in these Joshua sermons.

The theme has been running through them and it is based on what transpired at the end of Deuteronomy when Moses died. And, of course, that is based upon Israel's transgression back in Numbers 14 –

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:11-15

In Christ, the law is ended (Moses' death), there is circumcision, baptism, sins forgiven, and being made alive together with Christ all because the law is taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. In this, the principalities and powers are disarmed (Joshua 6).

This is what happens in each person who comes to Christ, and it is what will happen to Israel when they finally come to Him as well. The template is Israel. What is stated for them will come to pass, and because God has been faithful to preserve them, it is for sure that He will do so for us as well.

Our chapter today ended with words about Joshua. All we need to do is change the name to Jesus and we can see what is being conveyed –

“And was Yehovah with Jesus; and was his fame in all the earth.”

In the end, the entire story is about what God is doing in and through Jesus Christ. The fact that He has been faithful to Israel, even after their rejection of Him, should give us total assurance “that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

Thank God for Jesus Christ who gives us such a strong and wonderful guarantee.

Closing Verse: *“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.” Hebrews 11:30*

Next Week: Joshua 7:1-15 *Bad times are coming for Achan for shor’ and it won’t be no fun...* (The Valley of Achor, Part I) (13th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Battle of Jericho, Part II

Now the city shall be doomed by the LORD to destruction
Both it and all the people, be sure their lives are spent
Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her
-----in the house
Because she hid the messengers that we sent

And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things
Lest you become accursed, and not just a bit
When you take of these things
You make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it

But all the silver and gold
And vessels of bronze and iron, according to this word
Are to the LORD consecrated
They shall come into the treasury of the LORD

So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets
And it happened when the people heard the trumpet sound
And the people shouted with a great shout
That the wall fell down flat all around

Then the people up into the city they went
Every man straight before him, and they took the city
-----before the day was spent

And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city
Devoting it to the Lord

Both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey
With the edge of the sword

But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country
“Go into the harlot’s house for sure
And from there bring out the woman and all that she has
As you swore to her

And the young men who had been spies went in
And brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers
-----and all that she had as well
So they brought out all her relatives
And left them outside the camp of Israel

But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire
Only the silver and gold, according to the word
And the vessels of bronze and iron
They put into the treasury of the house of the LORD

And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot
Her father’s household and all that she had, as we know
So she dwells in Israel to this day
Because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent
-----to spy out Jericho

Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying
“Cursed be the man before the LORD who rises up and builds this
-----city Jericho
He shall lay its foundation with his firstborn
And with his youngest he shall set up its gates, so shall his fate go”

So the LORD was with Joshua, exalting his name
And throughout all the country spread his fame

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 7:1-15 (THE VALLEY OF ACHOR, PART I)

In the verses today, it notes that the people of Israel had sinned. This is despite only one person having sinned. Regardless, the Lord turned away from them and allowed them to be struck down before their enemies.

In this, Adam Clarke wrote, “It is impossible that God should turn against his people, if they had not turned away from him.” This is an important point to consider, not only from a reading of the biblical history of the nation, but also from reading the extra-biblical state of them.

And the reason for this is that the extra-biblical history of Israel is actually not extra-biblical at all. The things that have come about in their history since their dispersion are spoken of in the Bible in great detail, carefully fulfilling what it said would happen.

Because of this, we can have every confidence that what is recorded about their future will come about as well. And there is a reason for this. That is because the Lord has covenanted with them and because His name rests upon them. The psalmist confirms that the two, the Lord and Israel, are united in this regard –

Text Verse: *Do not keep silent, O God!*

Do not hold Your peace,

And do not be still, O God!

²For behold, Your enemies make a tumult;

And those who hate You have lifted up their head.” Psalm 83:1, 2

The psalmist identifies the enemies of Israel as the Lord’s enemies. This was true, and it remains true to this day. Even though the Lord has had Israel under the curses and punishments of the law, He has also carefully kept them as a people for exactly this reason.

What happens to them is a corporate thing because they are one people under His covenant. Nothing will ever separate them from Him because of this truth. As this is incontrovertible, it should give us every assurance that it is so with us, too. God has covenanted with each believer in Christ. That means that just as sure as Israel’s continued existence is, so is our salvation.

To avoid error, we need to not look at these things from our perspective. But this is just what we do. We look at failed marriages and say, “The covenant is broken,” and then we transfer that to Israel’s relationship with the Lord. And when we see Israel in that light, the natural thing is to look at our own covenant relationship in that light. “God has rejected Israel and so He will reject us. It is up to us, not Him, to see things through to the end.”

Instead of this, and instead of looking at everything from our own perspective, we need to remove ourselves from the equation and view things from God’s perspective. He does not fail, He does not make mistakes, and He will never go beyond His word.

His word is a reflection of who He is. If we can hold fast to that thought, we will not fall into such grievous errors in our thinking. The eternal nature of God’s decrees is one marvelous part of the treasure we can find in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. But the People Fled (verses 1-5)

¹ But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things,

va’yimalu bene Yisrael maal ba’kherem – “And acted unfaithfully sons Israel - unfaithful in the anathema.” Both the verb and noun forms of the word *maal* are used here. It comes from a root meaning “to cover.” Thus, it signifies to act unfaithfully or treacherously, as if covering over or hiding a deed. It is to commit a trespass.

But notice that it says, “the children of Israel.” Even before any further charge is made, the entire congregation is noted as having acted unfaithfully. The corporate nature of the people is that which is immediately highlighted.

It is of note that the same word used here in the Greek translation, *nosphizó*, meaning to pilfer, is also used in Acts 5:2 in the account of Ananias and Sapphira. There, no corporate guilt is assigned because it was an offense of lying to the Holy Spirit, but the parallel between the two accounts is noteworthy.

For now, the corporate nature of the act is highlighted even though the treachery was found in only one man...

^{1 (con't)} for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah,

The meaning of the name Achan is not readily determined. The closest known word comes from the Chaldean *akhana*, meaning a serpent. In 1 Chronicles 2:7, he is called Achar. That is based on a word used in Joshua 6:18 and which will be used again in verse 7:25. It means “to trouble.” Hence, he is the serpent who troubles; The serpent, the troubler; or The serpent of trouble.

He is noted as the son of Carmi. That is from the word *kerem*, or vineyard. Thus, he is “My Vineyard,” or “Vinedresser.” He, in turn, is the son of Zabdi. That is from the word *zavad*, to give. The “i” is either possessive, or it refers to the Lord, and so he is either Gift of Yehovah or My Gift.

Zabdi is the son of Zerah, that is from the word *zarakh*, to rise or come forth, as in the sun. Thus he is Dawning, Rising of Light, etc. And he was born to Judah meaning Praise, Praised, or Let Him (God) be Praised.

If this is an unbroken genealogy, and because it has been 256 years since Judah and Zerah went down to Egypt, it means that the fathers bore the children at an average of 50 or more years of age. Of this person, Achan, it says he...

^{1 (con't)} took of the accursed things;

It is singular: *min ha'kherem* – “from the anathema.” The entire city is as a whole. No part of it was to be taken for common use but was to be dedicated to the Lord either through destruction or removal to the treasury of the house of the Lord.

^{1 (con't)} so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.

va'yikhar aph Yehovah bivne Yisrael – “and burned nostril Yehovah in sons Israel.” The mental image is of the anger of the Lord being so great that He stands in the middle of the people while smoke and fire proceed from His nostrils, burning among them. This sets the tone for what next occurs...

² Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai,

va'yishlakh Yehoshua anashim mirikho ha'ay – “And sent Joshua men from Jericho the Ai.” The name of the city is always prefixed by an article: *ha'ay*, or “the Ai.” Ai means “Ruins” or “Heap of Ruins.” It was first mentioned in Genesis 12 –

“And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.” Genesis 12:8

Thus it is The Ruins...

² (con't) **which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel,**

asher im beith aven mi'qedem l'beith el – “which with house wickedness from east to house God.” Beth means “house.” Aven comes from *aven* meaning wickedness, trouble, vanity (meaning idols, which are vain), iniquity, and so on. And so it means something like “House of Wickedness.”

Bethel, or Beith el, means “House of God.” It was also first noted in Genesis 12:8 and was named that again by Jacob in Genesis 28:19 after he had his dream of a ladder ascending to heaven. In Hosea 4, 5, and 10, the prophet combines the two, calling Bethel where the calf of the northern tribes was set up Beth Aven.

² (con't) **and spoke to them, saying, “Go up and spy out the country.”**

va'yomer alehem lemor alu v'rag'lu eth ha'arets – “and said to them, to say, ‘Go up and reconnoiter the land.’” The word *regel* means foot, and so they are to go out and “foot” the land, meaning reconnoiter.

² (con't) **So the men went up and spied out Ai.**

va'yaalu ha'anashim vay'rag'lu eth ha'ay – “And went up the men and reconnoitered – the Ai.” It is essentially the same command Joshua gave to the two men in Chapter 2 concerning checking out the land along with Jericho. However, this time it only says he sent men without giving any specific number.

³ **And they returned to Joshua and said to him, “Do not let all the people go up,**

The evaluation of Ai, based upon their search, is that this will be an easy defeat. First, they know the Lord is with them. Because of that, and because of the diminutive size of the city, it would be overkill to send a large force. Therefore, they say...

³ (con't) **but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai.**

k'alpayim ish o kishloshet alapim ish yaalu v'yaku eth ha'ay – “according to two thousand man or according to three thousand man let go up and strike the Ai.” The number is insignificant compared to the number of available fighting men.

The reason for this is that the total number in the city (Joshua 8:5) is said to be twelve thousand. Therefore, a fighting force of about three thousand would be all the city could hope to muster.

Other than their confidence in the Lord's presence, it would be the height of presumption for Israel to go into battle with such a small force because the city would be fortified. Therefore, they would be fighting a comparable force while also trying to enter the city. The next words elevate that thought.

³ (con't) **Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are few.***”

al t'yaga shamah eth kal ha'am ki meat hemah – “Not do weary there all the people for few they.” Here is a new word, *yaga*. It is from a primitive root signifying to grasp. As such, it means to be exhausted, tire, toil, be weary, and so on. When one is tired, he will grasp onto something to hold himself up. This is the idea. It can be used in a physical or a mental sense. In Isaiah, it says –

“You have bought Me no sweet cane with money,
Nor have you satisfied Me with the fat of your sacrifices;
But you have burdened Me with your sins,
You have **wearied** [*yaga*] Me with your iniquities.” Isaiah 43:24

One can see the Lord saying, “Uggh. I'm just worn out by these people and their wickedness.” The men who checked out Ai feel that any more than a small force would be a waste, and the people would be wearied, meaning simply getting up and heading out to battle, for no reason at all. Therefore...

⁴ **So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai.**

It doesn't yet speak of any men falling in battle. It simply says that Israel fled before the men of Ai. This heightens the sense of the loss of the battle. Israel was simply unable to muster an attack and it was apparent to them that the Lord was not with them, but had abandoned them to their own effort. Only after noting the disgrace of defeat are any of the particulars then noted...

⁵ And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men,

Using the word "about" makes no sense when a definite number is given: *va'yaku mehem anshe ha'ay kiloshim v'shisha ish* – "And struck from them men the Ai according to thirty and six men." Thirty-six were killed. The number is derived from a multiple of nine and four. In the Bible, nine is the number of finality or judgment. Four is the number of material completeness, the world number, the city number.

^{5 (con't)} for they chased them *from* before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent;

This is the only time that *ha'shevarim*, or "the Shevarim," is mentioned in the Bible. It comes from *shever* which signifies a fracture as in a broken foot; also a breach, a crushing, destruction, or figuratively as ruin. It is surely not a location that bore the name previously.

Rather, the place is named because of what occurred. There was a breach in the ranks of Israel; they panicked and fled, and the ranks were then utterly broken at a particular spot – the Shebarim. From there, the men of Ai simply chased the retreating horde of Israel, striking them down as they descended.

What is hard to actually determine is whether there were only thirty-six killed, or – as the Greek translation seems to indicate – thirty-six were killed at first, and then all the rest were destroyed after that. Either way, the point is that it was evident the Lord was not with them in the battle...

^{5 (con't)} therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

This is the penalty for the corporate sin of Israel. In Joshua 2 and Joshua 5, the same word, *masas*, or melt, was used concerning the people of the land. Now, that has been turned back on them –

“And as soon as we heard *these things*, our hearts **melted**; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He *is* God in heaven above and on earth beneath.” Joshua 2:11

“So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who *were* on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who *were* by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart **melted**; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.” Joshua 5:1

It is plainly evident that the Lord was not with Israel, and it is certain that confusion permeated the entire congregation as they pondered what this would mean for them.

*Why, O Lord, has this come about?
What is it that has caused all this suffering?
What has happened has caused me to doubt
What is the source of this terrible thing?*

*Lord, we look to you and wait for a word
We long to know what has caused this trouble
When the answer is given, and we have heard
We will take action to correct it on the double*

*Lord, don't let anything tarnish Your great name
Be with Israel and rescue us from this terrible state
Spread around the world Your glorious fame
Let the nations know that Your name alone is great*

II. Distress, Humility, and Mourning (verses 6-15)

In response to the events that took place, Joshua goes through a series of outward displays reflecting his inner state, surely wondering how things could have gone from glorious to disastrous in such a short amount of time. First, it says...

⁶Then Joshua tore his clothes,

Tearing one's garments is less a sign of mourning than it is a sign of great distress. It is an outward display of the high emotions occurring within. One might say, “My heart was

torn by what happened.” This is the sense of what is being conveyed. It is, therefore, why the Lord said this to the people in Joel –

“So rend your heart, and not your garments;
Return to the LORD your God,
For He *is* gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness;
And He relents from doing harm.” Joel 2:13

The people were told that catastrophe was coming with the Day of the Lord. In this, there would be much tearing of their garments as the distress came upon them. But the Lord corrected them, noting that outward signs without the inward distress were ineffective. Therefore, they were to rend their hearts and turn to Him. Next...

^{6 (con't)} **and fell to the earth on his face**

To fall on one's face is a demonstration of humility. It is what Abram did when the Lord appeared to him and changed his name to Abraham while promising to make His covenant with Him.

It is also what the people did when the Lord sent fire out to consume the burnt offering on the altar at the establishment of the priestly ministry in Leviticus 9. These, and many other such incidents relay to us the idea of humility from the person. Joshua did this...

^{6 (con't)} **before the ark of the LORD until evening,**

Whether the ark was in the Most Holy Place or not, the intent of the words is that Joshua lay prostrate before the presence of the Lord, indicated by the presence of the ark, until the evening, meaning when the day had expired. And more, it says...

^{6 (con't)} **he and the elders of Israel;**

It is obvious that he called the leaders together for this outward display of distress, humility, and also of mourning...

^{6 (con't)} **and they put dust on their heads.**

This is a sign of distress, humility, and mourning all tied up in one. The idea goes back to the earliest pages of Genesis. Man was formed from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7).

As such, it is an acknowledgment of the Lord's creation of, and sovereignty over, humanity. Therefore, to put dust on one's head is a sign of humility before the Creator.

It is a sign of mourning because of what the curse upon the man from Genesis 3 means-

“In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
For dust you *are*,
And to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3:19

Man's lot is to return to the dust. Joshua and the elders were certainly mourning for those who were lost, but the mourning extends to all humanity who must come to the same end. Joshua, not knowing why they have been defeated, felt the onrush of that for himself and all of Israel, anticipating that one defeat meant total defeat unless the Lord would again be with them.

Dust on the head is also a sign of distress because of what the curse upon the serpent from Genesis 3 signifies –

“Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.” Genesis 3:14

The serpent would dine upon the unredeemed of the world as their bodies decayed and turned back to dust. Joshua and the elders are showing their distress that the Lord may have abandoned them permanently. If so, instead of victory in Messiah, Israel would find defeat in the devil. That comes forth clearly in the next words...

⁷ And Joshua said, “Alas, Lord GOD,

va'yomer Yehoshua ahah Adonay Yehovah – “And said Joshua, “Ah, Adonai Yehovah.” The interjection *ahah*, meaning Oh!, Ah!, or Alas! is introduced here. It is a word that extends beyond surprise to a state of woeful shock, such as when Jephthah saw his daughter coming out of the house and he realized that he would then have to sacrifice her as a burnt offering based on a hasty vow he had made to the Lord.

Along with this word, Joshua combines the word Adonai – a reference to the Lord Yehovah as his sovereign master – and also the proper name of Yehovah. The entire phrase then shouts out great distress, saying...

7 (con't) why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all

The words bear a particular emphasis: *lama heavarta haavir eth ha'am ha'zeh eth ha'yarden* – “Why bringing over you brought over (at all!) the people, the this, the Jordan?”

This appears less like a lack of faith in the Lord than complete bewilderment of what the purposes of the Lord are. Israel was told they would conquer the land and possess it. But suddenly there is a defeat that should not have taken place with no discernible reason for it. He simply cannot fathom what would cause this to transpire. But it did, and it, therefore, appears that the intent is...

7 (con't) —to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us?

Joshua mentions the Amorite (it is singular), meaning Renown, specifically because they had defeated the Amorites Sihon and Og on the other side of the Jordan. If this small city of Ai could prevail against Israel, then the Amorites who were certainly bent on revenge would tear through them without restraint, totally destroying them.

Joshua appears to think that what has occurred is actually by design and that it must be based on a previously undisclosed failing prior to their entry into Canaan. Therefore, he says...

7 (con't) Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!

v'lu hoalnu va'neshev b'ever ha'yarden – “And O! We had been content and we stayed in side the Jordan.” The land on the other side had been subdued. For whatever reason, the Lord was displeased with Israel and Joshua thinks it must have something to do with their crossing over.

It doesn't appear, at all, that he has considered that something has happened since then, especially when Jericho was such a great victory. With that said, Joshua questions the Lord concerning their conduct...

8 O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies?

Rather, the words refer to Israel collectively – *biy Adonai mah omar akhare asher haphak Yisrael oreph lipne oyeavav* – “Oh, Adonai, what I say after which turns Israel his neck before his enemies.”

Israel, collectively, had transgressed. Joshua doesn't know this yet, but Israel had turned his neck before his enemies. Joshua both knows and understands this. As Israel is the people of Yehovah, he is utterly confused as to what will come of this...

⁹ For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear *it*, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth.

Again, it is singular – the Canaanite. Joshua notes that they and all of the other people groups will hear of what has transpired. When that happens, they will immediately take the initiative and come after the entire nation of Israel and utterly destroy them, cutting off their name. If that is to happen, and because Israel is the bearer of the name of Yehovah...

^{9 (con't)} Then what will You do for Your great name?"

Joshua has inextricably tied the name of Israel to the name of the Lord. This is because the Lord has already inextricably tied His name to that of Israel. This was clearly seen in our text verse when the psalmist equated attacking Israel as an attack against God.

If what Joshua says is not turned around, these nations will align and come to destroy Israel and thus end the name of the Lord. It is what Psalm 83 conveys about the people's surrounding them later in their history –

“They have taken crafty counsel against Your people,
And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.

⁴They have said, “Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation,
That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.”

⁵For they have consulted together with one consent;
They form a confederacy against You:

⁶The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites;
Moab and the Hagrites;

⁷Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek;
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;

⁸Assyria also has joined with them;
They have helped the children of Lot. *Selah*” Psalm 83:3-8

With this seen and noted, the Lord now responds to Joshua...

10 So the LORD said to Joshua: “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?”

It must be remembered that Joshua and the elders had lain prostrate before the Lord until evening. It is not known how long that time was, be it 45 minutes or four and one-half hours. It is now the start of the new day. And so imperative words follow, demanding action.

Further, the word “you” is emphatic: *qum lakh lamah zeh atah nophel al panekha* – “Arise to you! Why this YOU falling upon your face?” Joshua is the leader of the people, and the people now require their leader to act because...

11 Israel has sinned,

khata Yisrael – “Has sinned Israel.” The collective nature of what occurred is highlighted here. It is as if every person in the nation was guilty of actively doing what only one person had done. That is clear with the next five clauses where the plural is used – they, they, they, they, they. They all have done it and they all are now under the ban.

11 (con’t) and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put *it* among their own stuff.

The entire verse is one clause of accusation after another, producing a strong and poignant emphasis. After the first clause, the word *v’gam*, or “and also,” begins each clause which is followed by a plural verb: *v’gam averu*; *v’gam laqehu*; *v’gam ganevu*; *v’gam kikhashu*; *v’gam samu* – “and also **they** have transgressed; and also **they** have taken; and also **they** have stolen; and also **they** have deceived; and also **they** have put.

The collective nature of each clause is highlighted by the plural. Joshua surely understands the collective meaning and accepts it as such, even if he doesn’t know yet what has transpired. This is because Jericho was to be anathema as he conveyed quite clearly to the people –

“And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.” Joshua 6:18

Because of the actions of one or more people, pilfering that which belonged to the Lord, the entire nation had now become anathema, as the Lord next says...

12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies,

The invasion was a small number of soldiers, but it could just as easily have been the entire army. The Lord had, only a short time before, expressed this to them in the Song of Moses –

“How could one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock had sold them,
And the LORD had surrendered them?” Deuteronomy 32:30

The Lord had sold them, and He had surrendered them. They could not stand before even a small city...

12 (con't) but turned *their* backs before their enemies,

The words are short and concise and show the collective nature of what happened: *oreph yiphnu liphne oyevehem* – “neck (sg.) they turn before their enemies. And this is...

12 (con't) because they have become doomed to destruction.

ki hayu l'kherem – “because they have become to anathema.” In taking that which is anathema, or devoted, they have become devoted. What happened to the soldiers, be it thirty-six or all three thousand, was the just penalty for them and indeed for the entire nation, as the Lord says...

12 (con't) Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you.

The word *shamad*, destroy, is used here. Joshua knows that this is referring to not only the thing that was anathema but the person who is now anathema as well. But depending on who it is, that may extend further. At this time, he is unaware of the extent of it.

This word, *shamad*, is translated as *exairó*, or eject, in the Greek translation. It is used only once in the New Testament, and it is probable that Paul was thinking of exactly this

passage from Joshua when he wrote his instructions to those in Corinth concerning the man who was having his father's wife –

“But those who are outside God judges. Therefore ‘put away from yourselves the evil person.’” 1 Corinthians 5:13

Evil is an infection that must be dealt with at all times and in all situations. As for Joshua, he is now told what he must do...

¹³ Get up, sanctify the people, and say, ‘Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel: “There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel;

The Lord repeats the same thought as in verse 10, “Get up!” He is to not only arise from lying prostrate but to also arise to the task at hand. This task is to have the people sanctify themselves (pl.) because there is “an accursed thing in your (sg.) midst, O Israel.”

They are many who must sanctify themselves individually, but they are one because they are collectively anathema. As such, they are to prepare themselves *l'makhar*, or “to tomorrow.” If the sun has set, this means the same day, but after the rising of the sun.

^{13 (con't)} you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.”

The meaning is clear. They will be pushed back and destroyed until the anathema is removed from their midst. The proof of that has already been handed to them in the day's defeat. That would continue, unabated, unless the necessary action is taken. And so...

¹⁴ In the morning therefore you shall be brought according to your tribes. And it shall be *that* the tribe which the LORD takes shall come according to families; and the family which the LORD takes shall come by households; and the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man.

The speculation on how this was conducted is extensive. Some argue it was determined by lots. Others demand that this could not be the case and it was rather determined by the Urim and Thummim.

If the manner in which it took place was important, we would have been told what was done. But that is not where the focus is. Rather, it is on the fact that the Lord already knows who the offender is, and there is a process by which the man will be singled out.

Which, incidentally, now tells Joshua that there is a single offender who has brought all of this trouble upon the nation. When he is identified, bad news lies ahead for him...

¹⁵ Then it shall be *that* he who is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire,

A verb is used as a noun. More rightly it says, "And it shall be the taken, in the anathema, shall be burned in the fire." The one whom the Lord identifies was to be burned, but that is not the entirety of the matter...

^{15 (con't)} he and all that he has,

Because he is anathema, he must be totally destroyed. If he has possessions, they are to be destroyed too. And if he has a family, his entire family was to be destroyed. Just as it was with Jericho, there was to be no leniency on anything or anyone belonging to him.

The law recorded in Deuteronomy 24:16 does not apply here. There it said, "Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* children, nor shall children be put to death for *their* fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin."

That is referring to a person receiving the penalty of death under the covenant. The law of *kherem*, or anathema, means that the man and all that he comprises (including his family under his authority) are subject to the ban, without exception.

This would have made for a really sleepless night for the offender if he knew what the Lord said to Joshua, especially if he was a family man. All was anathema...

^{15 (con't)} because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD,

ki avar eth b'rith Yehovah – "because he has crossed over covenant Yehovah." This is more than a violation of the covenant but causing oneself to be taken out of the covenant graces altogether. To cross over the covenant is to remove oneself from it. This is what this man has done and his life and all that he has is now anathema...

^{15 (fin)} and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel."

The word *nevalah* is used. It is not just something disgraceful, but it is senseless in the extreme. It is a disregard for that which is moral, and it exemplifies foolishness.

A word in the New Testament that might be close is *moros* or foolish. It is equivalent to our modern word moron. However, Paul turns the moronic around and uses the word in a surprising way saying that as Christians, we must become **foolish** when we think we are wise (1 Corinthians 3:18), and that the apostles are **fools** for Christ's sake (1 Corinthians 4:10). The word *nevalah* is never used that way in the Old Testament.

Such a person in the Old Testament has committed a moral violation that is deserving of whatever comes his way in regard to punishment. The one identified in the morning would get exactly what his moral state deserved.

This is a good point on which to end our thoughts today. The suspense is high and that will keep us until the next time we meet. But it is also a good point to make a comparison to what Paul did by turning around the moronic in his epistles.

This is what the gospel does, it turns things around. The law brings death; the gospel brings life. The law was exclusive, belonging only to Israel. The gospel is inclusive of all peoples. The law demanded rigidity of worship. The gospel gives freedom of worship. The law brought about fear to those who understood its constraints. The gospel brings about confidence to those who understand its liberties.

Where the man who is to be identified was to be removed from the people and burned to death, finding only earthly condemnation, the man who was identified for wrongdoing in 1 Corinthians 5 was to be removed for the destruction of his flesh, but also for the saving of his soul.

Everything about what God offers in Christ is not only better than what is faced under the law, it is infinitely better. Where the law has an end, the gospel starts immediately now for those who come to Christ, and it goes on for eternity.

Don't miss out on what Christ has done. Come to Him and find peace with God and rest from your labors. Come to Christ and find pardon from your sin. Be sure to not wait. Come to Christ Jesus today.

Closing Verse: *"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵ deliver such a one*

to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” 1 Corinthians 4:4, 5

Next Week: Joshua 7:16-26 *After getting stoned, the penalty adds even more, sad but true...* (The Valley of Achor, Part II) (14th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Valley of Achor, Part I

But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding
-----the accursed things
For Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah
-----as the account does tell
Of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things
So the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai
Which *is* beside Beth Aven, on Bethel’s east side
And spoke to them, saying, “Go up and spy out the country
So the men went up and Ai they spied

And they returned to Joshua and said to him
“Do not let all the people go up, there is no need to
But let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai
Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are few*

So about three thousand men from the people went up
But they fled before the men of Ai like wine from a trembly cup

And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men
For they chased them *from* before the gate as far as Shebarim
And struck them down on the descent
Therefore the hearts of the people melted, becoming like water
-----it would seem

Then Joshua tore his clothes

And fell to the earth on his face until evening before
-----the ark of the LORD
He and the elders of Israel
And they put dust on their heads all with one accord

And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord GOD
Why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all
-----to deliver us," he cried
"Into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us?
"Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on Jordan's other side

"O Lord, what shall I say about this attack
When Israel before its enemies turns its back?

"For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land
Will hear *it* and surround us. What a shame!
And cut off our name from the earth
Then what will You do for Your great name?

So the LORD said to Joshua: "Get up from that place!
Why do you lie thus on your face?"

"Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant
-----which I commanded them
For they have even taken some of the accursed things
-----as if their blessings were not enough
And they have both stolen and deceived
And they have also put *it* among their own stuff

"Therefore the children of Israel could not stand
-----before their enemies
But turned *their* backs before their enemies, sad but true

Because they have become doomed to destruction
Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy
-----the accursed from among you

"Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves
For tomorrow, because thus says the LORD God of Israel:

*“There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel
You cannot stand before your enemies, for you it will not go well*

*Until you take away – Hear Me, My word is true!
The accursed thing from among you*

*“In the morning therefore you shall be brought
-----according to your tribes
And it shall be *that* the tribe which the LORD takes shall come
-----according to families, this is the plan
And the family which the LORD takes shall come by households
And the household which the LORD takes shall come man by man*

*“Then it shall be *that* he who is taken with the accursed thing
Shall be burned with fire, he and all that he has, a burning hell
Because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD
And because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel*

*Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true*

*And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days*

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 7:16-26 **(THE VALLEY OF ACHOR, PART II)**

A lot is going on in the Bible. Unusual patterns go on and on and on (and on). One of the great patterns that is evident once it is explained is that the first twenty-eight books have matching patterns and parallels to the twenty-eight chapters of Matthew.

Some patterns are types, some are numbers, some are word patterns. For example, Matthew 1:1 begins with, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." This is a direct link to Genesis 22:18, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Also, in Genesis 37, **Joseph** has a messianic dream. Likewise, in Matthew 1:20, **Joseph** has a dream about the coming Messiah.

In the second book of the Bible, we find in Exodus 4:22, 23 it says, "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn. ²³ So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.'"

In Matthew 2:15, we see the following link to Exodus: "And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I called My Son.'" In one instance is the firstborn son, Israel, and in the other, God's only begotten Son, Jesus our Lord.

A great one is found in Daniel (27th book) and Matthew 27. Daniel 6:17 says, "Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed." Likewise, Matthew 27:66 says, "So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard."

Again in Daniel 9:2, it says, "in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."

Matthew 27:9 says, "Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet." Notice the intricacy where Jeremiah is quoted in Daniel (27)9 and Matthew 27:9.

Text Verse: *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”*

-1 John 2:15-17

John speaks about the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These things can only lead us down the wrong path. That is where Achan has gone, and it will cost him.

The patterns between the first 28 Old Testament books and the Matthew chapters I mentioned above go throughout twenty-eight of both. And there are similar patterns like this in other books of the Bible as well. As for Joshua (the sixth book) and Matthew 6, the pattern is seen in our verses today.

Joshua especially highlights the silver in what was taken by Achan. It does this twice and in a most curious way. Here is the pattern along with its counterpart in Matthew.

Joshua (6th book) 7:21 says, “When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”

Now in Matthew 6:21, it says, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Also, notice the parallel in the number where both are found in verse 21 – 6 (book) 21 (verse) & 6:21.

As I said, these patterns go on and on in the Bible. There are too many and they are too precise to simply be flukes. Rather, they are purposeful hints about what is going on in the word, leading to even further insights for us to know and to then find our confidence in this precious word.

For now, knowing these patterns exist, with a part of them in today’s verses, let us proceed into the passage. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Valley of Achor (verses 16-26)

¹⁶ So Joshua rose early in the morning

va'yishkem Yehoshua ba'boqer – “And rose early Joshua in the morning.” These exact same words were seen in Joshua 3:1 when the people were setting out from Acacia Grove (Shittim) prior to crossing the Jordan. They were again seen in Joshua 6:12 when the armies set out to march around Jericho.

In other words, the very note concerning Joshua rising early in the morning tells us that a great and important event lies ahead, highlighted by the words. With that noted, it says...

¹⁶ (con't) and brought Israel by their tribes,

It is masculine singular: *va'yaqrev eth Yis'rael lish'vatav* – “And brought near Israel to his tribes. The only other time the word *shevet*, or “tribe,” is formed this way is in Numbers 24:2 when Balaam looked out over all of Israel encamped in the valley below and blessed them –

“And raised Balaam his eyes and saw Israel encamped to his tribes (*lish'vatav*).”

In other words, as has already been seen, there is a corporate guilt upon Israel. It is as if Israel and his sons are sitting there at the moment, being judged for the anathema among them. That must be identified, singled out, and removed or the corporate guilt will remain. And so, the matter begins...

¹⁶ (con't) and the tribe of Judah was taken.

The first identification. As noted last week, the manner in which this identification took place is not what is important. Rather, the focus is on the fact that the Lord already knows who the offender is, and there is a process by which the man will be singled out. From the tribes of Israel, Judah is taken. From there...

¹⁷ He brought the clan of Judah,

Much is written about these words –*va'yaqrev eth mishpakhath Yehudah* – “And brought near family Judah.” Keil says, “we should expect ‘the tribe’ (*shebet*) or ‘the families’ (*mishpachoth*) of Judah, instead of ‘the family.’” And that would normally be true.

But just as the text identifies the tribes with Israel the man (“to his tribes”), so it now identifies Judah according to “family.” It is, again, as if Judah is sitting right there being judged for what has occurred within his family. Next...

17 (con’t) and he took the family of the Zarhites;

The second identification. Again, it is singular: *va’yilkod eth mishpakhath ha’zarkhi* – “And he took family the Zarhite.” One family of the family of Judah is taken. It is the family of the Zarhite. Everything is being precisely identified, one unit at a time, demonstrating that the Lord is fully aware of the offender and is closing in on him. Next...

17 (con’t) and he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man,

When the Zarhite family is identified, it then says that the identification goes *la’gevarim*, or “to the man.” By this time, the offender must be beside himself, knowing full well that he is known. And yet, he does not come forward, but still waits...

17 (con’t) and Zabdi was taken.

The third identification. The man of the Zarhite family who is singled out is Zabdi who obviously had his own sons, and it is obvious that more than one son went into battle, or else this next step would be superfluous...

18 Then he brought his household man by man,

This would be the household of Zabdi being brought forward “to the man.” It is a methodical process of eliminating the guiltless and identifying the guilty. This would be needed because it could have, until this point, been two brothers if they both went into the battle. Therefore, it is right to not just assume only one man was guilty...

18 (con’t) and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

The fourth identification. It is now repeated in reverse to ensure that he is carefully pinpointed. It is he alone who has done it and none other. Therefore, the leader next speaks to him...

19 Now Joshua said to Achan, “My son, I beg you, give glory to the LORD God of Israel,

More precisely, it reads: *beni sim na khavod l'Yehovah elohe Yis'rael* – “My son, set, I pray, glory to Yehovah, God of Israel.” In saying, “My son,” you can feel the bond Joshua feels with the person despite what has transpired. A sense of pity can be interpreted from the words.

Achan is being asked to set (*sim*) before the Lord the glory that He is due, as if it is a guilt offering. Unfortunately, by doing so, he is placing himself as that guilt offering on behalf of the congregation...

19 (con't) and make confession to Him,

v'ten lo todah – “And give to Him thanks.” The word *todah* comes from the word *yadah* – or “to throw out” with the *yad*, or hand. Thus, it signifies “to extend the hand” as if in adoration. One can think of a choir of worshippers raising their hands to the Lord.

Joshua is basically telling him to set himself before the Lord and to raise his hands in thanksgiving to Him. It may seem odd, but when one considers that the entire congregation stands before the Lord as anathema, Achan's acknowledging his guilt is to give back to Israel their status as being no longer anathema.

19 (con't) and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me.”

This sounds like any father that has ever caught his child doing something wrong. As in such a case, Joshua conveys the same basic idea in two different ways: declare/do not hide. The word *nagad* means to make conspicuous or literally “to front.” The word *kakhad* means to secret away or conceal. This is what is expected, and this is what he will now receive...

20 And Achan answered Joshua and said, “Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel,

The words are emphatic and filled with a sense of superlative guilt: *am'nah anoki khatati l'Yehovah elohe Yis'rael* – “Truly, I, I have sinned to Yehovah, God of Israel.”

He emphatically pronounces that it was he who had done it and he acknowledges it as sin which was “to Yehovah.” It is not unlike David's words in the 51st Psalm, where he said, *l'kha l'badekha khatati* – “To you, to you alone, I have sinned.”

Though this is true, the congregation stood guilty collectively for what he had done. As such, he must pay the penalty for their guilt to be removed. Achan also uses a word, *omnah*, or truly, found only one other time in Scripture. In Genesis 20 when Abraham confessed to Abimelech that Sarah was actually his sister, he used this same word. Next, Achan again speaks emphatically...

²⁰ (con't) **and this is what I have done:**

v'khazoth v'khazoth asiti – “and according to this, and according to this, I have done.” Of his words, Adam Clarke says, “This seems a very honest and hearty confession, and there is hope that this poor culprit escaped perdition.” That may be so, but he won't escape temporal judgment, even if his soul is saved. For now, he says...

²¹ **When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment,**

The first failing: *va'ereh ba'salal adereth shinar akhat tovah* – “And I saw in the spoil garment Shinar, one beautiful.” His eyes alighted upon a garment of Shinar, meaning the plain noted in Genesis 11 where the tower of Babel was built. The meaning of the name is wholly speculative and can come from one of several possible roots.

Scholars highlight the fact that the garments from this area were particularly beautiful, skillfully made, and highly ornamented. The word used, *addereth*, comes from *addir*, or majestic. We can only speculate, but it may have been the king's robe, or it may have been used in the temple of an idol. Next, he took...

²¹ (con't) **two hundred shekels of silver,**

This would be two hundred by weight, not necessarily two hundred coins. As such, we could estimate it at a bit more than five pounds of silver. As of sermon typing day, this was worth about \$1375 in standard ounces, not troy ounces. The main thing to consider in this is the weight.

As the narrative gives it to us, we need to determine what it signifies. Bullinger says the number two hundred signifies *insufficiency*. Next...

²¹ (con't) **and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels,**

ul'shon zahav ekhad khamishim sh'qalim mish'qalo – “and tongue gold one fifty shekels his weight.” The gold was in the shape of a tongue or wedge. It would be about 1.26

pounds, and so the value of this as of sermon typing day was about \$31,378. Again, this is in standard ounces.

The number fifty must be considered. It “is the number of jubilee or deliverance.” Bullinger says it is the issue of 7 x 7, and points to deliverance and rest following on as the result of the perfect consummation of time. With that noted, Achan next says...

21 (con't) I coveted them

The second failing: *va'ekh'm'dem* – And desired them. It is the same word, *khamad*, used concerning the tree in the garden, (it was desirable to make one wise). It was used in the Tenth Commandment where it is translated as “covet.” It was also used in Deuteronomy 7:25 –

“You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not **covet** the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it *is* an abomination to the LORD your God.”

21 (con't) and took them.

The third failing: *va'eqakhem* – “and took them.” Achan took the same path, using the same words, that brought about the fall in the first place. The woman saw (*raah*), she desired (*khamad*), and she took (*laqakh*). Then she passed it on to the man. It is also what James especially warns against –

“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” James 1:14, 15

21 (con't) And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”

The words are spoken very precisely: *v'hinam t'munim ba'arets b'tok ha'aholi v'ha'keseph takh'teha* – “And behold them, hidden in the earth, in midst the my tent, and the silver under it.” Scholars say things like, “The mantle would naturally be placed uppermost, and be used to cover up the others” (Barnes).

But that does not explain the precise wording at all, especially singling out the silver. Nevertheless, the admission is made...

²² So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent;

va'yishlakh Yehoshua mal'akhim va'yarutsu ha'ohelah – “And sent Joshua messengers, and they run the tent.” The word “messengers” is the same word often translated as “angels.” It is one who is dispatched to perform a duty. And they find...

²² (con't) and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it.

The Hebrew is briefer: *v'hineh t'munah b'aholo v'ha'keseph takh'teha* – “And behold! Hidden in his tent. And the silver under it.” Again as with the previous verse, the silver is singled out. The other two items are not even named, but must be inferred.

²³ And they took them from the midst of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

The idea here is that of guilt. The anathema is taken from the guilty party and brought to the leader of the people. He bore the guilt because he bore the responsibility for his people. It was brought to all the sons of Israel, surely meaning the elders who represent them, because the congregation bore the collective guilt.

And next, the Hebrew reads *va'yatsiqum liph'ne Yehovah* – “and poured them out before Yehovah.” One can imagine a blanket laid out and the contents of the anathema being poured out onto it revealing the guilt with the drop of each item.

What should have either been burned, ascending to the Lord as an offering, or what should have been brought into the treasury of the Lord, and which was now no longer acceptable in that capacity, lay exposed to the sight of all.

²⁴ Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had,

Here it calls him “the son of Zerah.” That is an acceptable Hebraism where “son” can mean any descendant. He is Zerah’s great-grandson.

In the Hebrew, Joshua is highlighted as the main figure. Israel is mentioned at the end of the action – “And took Joshua Achan son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and tongue the gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his ox, and his donkey, and his

flock, and his tent, and all that he had – and all Israel with him. The joint nature of the matter is mentioned only next...

24 (con't) and they brought them to the Valley of Achor.

It more correctly reads, “and they took them **up** to the Valley of Achor.” This place, *emeq akhor*, is mentioned again in Joshua 15, Isaiah 65:10, and Hosea 2:15. The word *emeq* signifies a deep place, coming from *amoq*, meaning to be deep or to make deep.

The word *akhor* comes from the verb *akhar*, or trouble. Thus, it means “Trouble,” and it is a play on words based on what Joshua says in verse 25. Together, the two words mean the Valley of Akhor, or the “Depth of Trouble.”

It is uncertain exactly where this valley is located, but a really good candidate would be Wadi Qelt, a very deep canyon that runs through the surrounding area. It is where Sergio and I and our friend Yossi (with one “s” – it’s a private joke) walked from Jericho to Jerusalem and which Jesus took on His travels.

25 And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day.”

Here, Joshua uses the word *akhar*, to trouble, twice. It gives the reason for the name of the valley. After saying this, it says...

25 (con't) So all Israel stoned him with stones;

va'yirg'mu oto kal Yis'rael even – “And stoned him all Israel stone.” Because of this being in the singular, many scholars say that only Achan was stoned, and that the family was simply taught a lesson by watching dad get stoned to death.

That is wrong because 1) the next clause says so, 2) Joshua 22:20 says so, and 3) the law of *kherem*, or anathema, demanded that his entire family perish with him. Achan is singled out as the representative of his family.

As for the word “stone” being singular, it may convey the idea that someone walked up to him and clobbered him over the head with a single stone, dispatching him off to the next world. Also...

25 (con't) and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.

va'yish'r'phu otam ba'esh va'yisq'lu otam ba'abanim – “and burned them in the fire and stoned them in the stones.” The plural of these words indicates the extent of the stoning. The entire family and all the animals were stoned. Noting that there were originally no verse numbers in the Hebrew, the words make sense when read along with the words of the next verse...

²⁶ Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day.

Taken together with the previous verse, you can see the progression – “And stoned him (sg.) all Israel stone, and burned them (pl.) in the fire, and stoned them (pl.) in the stones, and raised over him (sg.) heap stones great to until the day, the this.”

In other words, his death and the stones over him also stand for the entire household who accompanied him in the punishment. It is a collective punishment even though it was solely his transgression. And more, the cairn of stones signifies the shameful nature of the death that the one under it received.

^{26 (con't)} So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger.

va'yashav Yehovah me'kharon apo – “And turned Yehovah from burning His nostril.” This takes us right back to verse 1 –

“But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.” Joshua 7:1

With the obedience of the people now realized, they no longer stand as anathema. The offense has been atoned for, and the propitious relationship has been restored...

^{26 (fin)} Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

al ken qara shem ha'maqom ha'hu emeq akhor ad ha'yom ha'zeh – “Upon this is called name the place, the it, “Valley Akhor” until day, the this.” In other words, the valley got its name from what occurred.

Why, O Lord, has this come about?

What is it that has caused all this suffering?

What has happened has caused me to doubt

What is the source of this terrible thing

*Lord, we look to you and wait for a word
We long to know what has caused this trouble
When the answer is given, and we have heard
We will take action to correct it on the double*

*Lord, don't let anything tarnish Your great name
Be with Israel and rescue us from this terrible state
Spread around the world Your glorious fame
Let the nations know that Your name alone is great*

II. Pictures of Christ

What we have in Joshua 7 is not unlike several passages in Deuteronomy. For example, Deuteronomy 21 gave several situations which Israel might face, such as finding the body of someone in a field who was clearly slain, female captives, the rights of the firstborn, what to do with a rebellious son, and what to do with a person who was hanged on a tree.

Each of these was clearly seen to anticipate the work of Christ. For example, the disobedient son pictured Israel. He was to be taken out and executed for his transgressions. Israel was the disobedient son, but Christ took their place instead.

Here, we have a passage where Israel has become anathema –

*“Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction [*kherem*].” Joshua 7:12*

But this was said of such a state in Leviticus –

*“No person under the ban [*kherem*], who may become doomed to destruction among men, shall be redeemed, *but* shall surely be put to death.” Leviticus 27:29*

And this is exactly what Isaiah says the state of Israel has been –

*“I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake;
And I will not remember your sins.*

²⁶ Put Me in remembrance;
Let us contend together;
State your *case*, that you may be acquitted.
²⁷ Your first father sinned,
And your mediators have transgressed against Me.
²⁸ Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary;
I will give Jacob to the curse [*kherem*],
And Israel to reproaches.” Isaiah 43:25-28

And more, the land itself went under the ban because of their rejection of Jesus –

“And he will turn
The hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse [*kherem*].” Malachi 4:6

How can Israel, both the land and the people, be redeemed if they are devoted to destruction? That is what Joshua 7 deals with. Israel went under the ban. Achan, because of what he did, typifies Israel. They have been under the ban since their rejection of Christ. This is made clear in several New Testament passages where the comparable Greek word, anathema, is used –

“If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be **accursed**. O Lord, come!” 1 Corinthians 16:22

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be **accursed**.⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be **accursed**.” Galatians 1:8, 9

Israel failed to love the Lord Jesus and they have preached a false gospel of law, works, and self-righteousness. Despite this, we see in Joshua 7 that national Israel’s collective guilt, which is clearly evidenced in verses 1, 12, and indeed the entire chapter, can be removed.

Verse 1 shows that they acted unfaithfully in regard to the *kherem*, the anathema. Israel rejected Christ making themselves anathema. In Joshua, that was specifically done by Achan (Achar as noted in 1 Chronicles 2), the serpent of trouble. The names of his ancestors give a picture – My Vineyard, My Gift, Rising of Light, Praise.

Like Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5, Israel came under the ban and is subject to death. Unlike them, however, Israel falls under corporate judgment because of their corporate guilt and so the anger of the Lord burned against them.

With that, the details of the battle of Ai were given to show this. Ai means “Ruins.” That is beside Beth Aven or the House of Wickedness and east of Bethel, the House of God. In the Bible, east is the place of exile.

It is a picture of Israel in their time of rejecting Christ – exiled from God, the land is in ruins, and they are a house of wickedness – a state that they cannot defeat. In trying to do so, they were defeated, and it specifically noted that thirty-six were killed.

That number was defined as a multiple of nine and four – finality or judgment and the world number (creation). It reflects the state of Israel apart from Christ – under judgment in the world and being chased as far as “the Shevarim,” or “the crushing.” Their state is a state of ruin and it will continue to be into the tribulation.

It was especially highlighted in the words of verses 11 and 12 concerning the corporate nature of the offence, followed by the explanation of why Israel had turned their necks before their enemies. It was “because they have become to anathema.”

This is where they are and unless the matter is corrected, they will remain that way. Starting our verses today, Israel was brought forward by tribes, then the families of the tribe, then the next generation of families, and then man by man.

The process of identifying him is accomplished in the reverse of how the names are mentioned in verse 7:1 – Achan, Carmi, Zabdi, Zerah, Judah / Serpent, My Vineyard, My Gift, Rising of Light, Praise, thus forming a pattern that speaks of Jesus reversing what happened at the fall: The serpent brought sin into the Lord’s vineyard. The Lord promised the gift of the coming Messiah. The Light of Messiah arose and accomplished His work. The Messiah is the Praise of God.

Once identified, Achan admits his guilt, saying, “Truly, I, I have sinned to Yehovah, God of Israel.” He then explains his three failings – his eyes (*raah*), his desire (*khamad*), his taking (*laqakh*). It was this sequence of things that brought his downfall and that brought Israel under the anathema. Jesus, like Achan, is from Judah. He, like Achan was in a battle for the Place of Fragrance (Jericho/Eden), He like Achan was tempted in the same general area in Israel, and yet – unlike Achan – He did not transgress.

Three things Achan was tempted by were a beautiful garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a tongue of gold weighing fifty shekels. The garment pictures the state of a person. Silver pictures redemption. Gold pictures holiness, divinity, and royalty.

They are each something Christ offers – garments of righteousness, redemption, and holiness, divinity (not deity), and royalty. Achan attempted to get those things on his own, and it cost him. But, if you remember, the narrative twice focused on the silver, it being “underneath.”

As we saw in the opening, Jesus noted that “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” The weight, being two hundred, signifies insufficiency. What he had was insufficient to redeem him. The guilt of what he did was transferred to all of Israel, and thus all of Israel was under the ban.

When those items were poured out before the Lord, it stood as a witness against all the people. Thus, they had to remove the accursed from among them. And so that is what they did. They took Achan and everything belonging to him, meaning his entire household, along with the three banned things, down to the Valley of Achor, the Depth of Trouble, and there they stoned and burned him and all that he had.

This is picturing Israel removing everything that is contrary to Christ that puts them under the ban – the total removal of it – by coming to Him. Think of what has been presented from the previous sermons –

We have been seeing the process of salvation in individual passages, but they all happen at once. *Moses, the law dies. Israel accepts Christ’s fulfillment of the law. *Israel enters the Jordan (Christ); Israel is baptized into Christ’s death (Chapter 3). *Israel, signified by the stones carried to Gilgal and which are then rested there, enters its rest (Chapter 4). *Two sets of stones are set up, signifying the heavenly government of Jew and Gentile (Chapter 4). *Israel is circumcised; Israel has put off the body of sins of the flesh / The reproach of the past is taken away when believers are circumcised by the Lord (Chapter 5). *Believers partake of Christ as their Passover (Chapter 5). *The Lord is the Leader of the people, and they are brought into “holy ground.” (Chapter 5). *Access to that holy ground is brought about by acceptance of Christ’s work (Chapter 6). And now, *Coming out of the state of anathema (*kherem*) is realized through the love of Jesus (1 Corinthians 16:22) and pursuing the true gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:8, 9) (Chapter 7).

This is what the meaning of the uses of the name “Valley of Achor” found later in the Old Testament signify. First, Isaiah refers to it in relation to the millennial kingdom –

“Thus says the LORD:
‘As the new wine is found in the cluster,
And *one* says, ‘Do not destroy it,
For a blessing *is* in it,’
So will I do for My servants’ sake,
That I may not destroy them all.
⁹ I will bring forth descendants from Jacob,
And from Judah an heir of My mountains;
My elect shall inherit it,
And My servants shall dwell there.
¹⁰ Sharon shall be a fold of flocks,
And the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down,
For My people who have sought Me.’” Isaiah 65:8-10

And in the other instance, Hosea refers to it when speaking of the covenant relationship they will enter into with the Lord –

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Will bring her into the wilderness,
And speak comfort to her.
¹⁵ I will give her her vineyards from there,
And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope;
She shall sing there,
As in the days of her youth,
As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.
¹⁶ And it shall be, in that day,
Says the LORD,
That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’
And no longer call Me ‘My Master.’” Hosea 2:14-16

Later, in that same chapter, it says –

“Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth,
And I will have mercy on *her who had* not obtained mercy;
Then I will say to *those who were* not My people,

'You *are* My people!'

And they shall say, 'You *are* my God!'" Hosea 2:23

Peter, writing to the Jews of the end times, cites that, saying –

"But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

-1 Peter 2:9, 10

The people will be brought out of anathema, and the land will as well. Referring to the millennial kingdom, Zechariah says –

"All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. *Jerusalem* shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and *from* the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.

¹¹ *The people* shall dwell in it;

And no longer shall there be utter destruction [*kherem*],

But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." Zechariah 14:10, 11

With this seen, the one point that may seem contradictory to what I have presented is Joshua's statement of verse 7 –

"And Joshua said, 'Alas, Lord GOD, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all—to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan!'"

The question may be, "If crossing the Jordan pictures Israel coming to Christ, then why would Joshua (Israel's leadership) say this?" It is because this is showing the stages of what occurred one after another. Although the process of salvation, meaning each thing that happens to Israel, all occurs at once, each thing is being detailed separately to show us it in an understandable way. As such, this is what Joshua 7 is anticipating.

The Lord is faithful to Israel, even in their unfaithfulness. This is perfectly evident from Joshua 7 where the entire nation was anathema because of the failings of one man. This is certainly not the only time in their history this came about, and it is certain that they went under the ban when they rejected Jesus.

And yet, the Lord has spared them because He covenanted with them. That ought to be the greatest of reassurances for each of us when we fail Him. When we do, His faithfulness is highlighted all the more. But let us endeavor to not fail Him. Rather, let us be grateful, all our days, for the wonderful salvation that He has provided us through the shed blood of Christ.

And when we have those moments of doubt that arise in our minds, let us remember the intricacy of this word He has given us. The patterns I showed you when we opened today are just a tiny smidgen of what is in the word.

Read the word! Cherish the word! Cling to this word as we await the sure promised return of the Lord for us. He is faithful, and He will perform. Just look at Israel and you can be perfectly certain of this. What a great and glorious God we serve. Hallelujah and Amen!

Closing Verse: *“For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.*

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith;

But if anyone draws back,

My soul has no pleasure in him.”

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.” Hebrews 10:37-39

Next Week: Joshua 8:1-20 *They didn’t get it on the first try, but they will now get it done...* (The Fall of Ai, Part I) (15th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Valley of Achor, Part II

So Joshua rose early in the morning
And brought by their tribes Israel
And the tribe of Judah was taken
For Judah it wasn’t going well

He brought the clan of Judah
And he took the family of the Zarhites –

-----surely they were all shakin'
And he brought the family of the Zarhites man by man
And Zabdi was taken

Then he brought his household man by man
And Achan the son of Carmi – now this guy was really shakin'
The son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah
Of the tribe of Judah, was taken

Now Joshua said to Achan
“My son, I beg you, to the LORD God of Israel give glory
And make confession to Him
Tell me now what you have done; do not hide *it* from me

And Achan answered Joshua and said
“Indeed I have sinned, yes, I am the one
Against the LORD God of Israel
And this is what I have done:

“When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment
Two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold
-----weighing fifty shekels. Yes, I admit
I coveted and took them. And there they are
Hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it

So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent in a fit
And there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver under it

And they took them from the midst of the tent
Brought them to Joshua, according to the word
And to all the children of Israel
And laid them out before the LORD

Then Joshua, and all Israel with him
Took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment
-----the wedge of gold – and more...
His sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent
-----and all that he had
And they brought them to the Valley of Achor

And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us?
The LORD will trouble you this day (set the pyre!)
So all Israel stoned him with stones
And after they had stoned them with stones, they burned them
-----with fire

Then they raised over him a great heap of stones
-----still there to this day
So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His angry way
Therefore the name of that place
Has been called the Valley of Achor to this day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 8:1-20 (THE FALL OF AI, PART I)

The words in our verses today have some extremely complicated sections. So much so, they seem irreconcilable. John Lang, who almost always is a staunch literalist, says –

“Joshua 8:3 does not agree with Joshua 8:13, 14. Here it is said that 30,000 men are placed in the ambush; according to Joshua 8:12 they are only 5,000. Further, the 30,000 men were, according to this verse, sent out already on the evening before; in Joshua 8:13, on the contrary, the 5,000 betake themselves to their safe concealment first on the morning of the battle. These contradictory, statements taken from different sources cannot be reconciled...” John Lange

As always, the idea of “scribal error” or “different sources” is the easiest way to blow off something complicated like this. Cambridge, who almost always goes with one of those two choices, must have had a literalist make this portion of their commentary. Instead of blowing it off as an error, their commentary says –

“There is an apparent discrepancy between this statement and that in Joshua 8:10-12. But possibly (a) while 30000 were selected for the ambush, 5000 were actually employed when the decisive moment came; or (b) Joshua may have sent two distinct bodies of men, one of 30000, the other of 5000; or (c) as Bp Wordsworth suggests, on the day after the 30000 had taken up their position the 5000 may have been sent from Joshua’s own force to encourage and assure them.” Cambridge

It is great they said this, but it still doesn’t resolve the difficulties entirely. This is especially the case because what is seemingly irreconcilable is the location of the thirty thousand and the five thousand. Both are supposedly in the same area – west of Ai between Bethel and Ai. That really makes it hard to reconcile.

Text Verse: *“So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her.” 1 Kings 10:3*

I wish the Queen of Sheba had asked Solomon about this passage. That would have taken care of things for us. But, alas, there is no record of that. As for the main problem with the dilemma mentioned above, it is – as I see it – verse 9 –

“Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people.”

This is obviously the thirty thousand. Well, if this is so and verse 12 says, “So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city,” then both groups are on the same side of the city, even though the thirty thousand were supposed to be “behind the city” as is seen in verses 4 and 14.

I have a proposed solution to this which, though not accepted by the translation of the Masoretic text, is still a possible translation – though very unlikely. I would rather have “possible but unlikely” than any of the other options mentioned. I suggest that verse 9 should be divided differently and translated exactly as the Hebrew reads with my added clarifications –

“And sent them out [meaning the thirty thousand], Joshua, and they went unto the lurking place. And stayed [Joshua] between Bethel and between Ai from west. And lodged Joshua in the night the it in midst the people.”

In other words, “Joshua therefore sent them [the thirty thousand] out; and they went to lie in ambush. And they [meaning Joshua’s camp, not the thirty thousand] stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai, and Joshua lodged that night among the people [of the camp].

As I said, this would resolve the difficulties in the text and it is a possible, even if highly dubious, translation because the subject has changed without an identifiable change in the text. I would still prefer that to anything that is otherwise irreconcilable.

As we go through these extremely (and I mean highly extremely, plus fifty) difficult verses, try to remember this solution as it will resolve the other difficulties. Poor Sergio – I emailed him thinking that his evaluation would take about two minutes. He spent over an hour researching various texts. In the end, all he came up with is “grammatically it is possible.” Thank you, Sergio.

For now, we must get into these difficult verses. They give us more insights into the redemptive narrative. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. See I Have Commanded You (verses 1-8)

¹ Now the LORD said to Joshua: “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed;

al tira v'al tekhat – “no be afraid, and no be dismayed.” It is the same words of Joshua 1:9 –

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

If you noticed, the Lord said, “for the Lord your God *is* with you wherever you go.” That was obviously conditional based on what He had just said in the previous verses –

“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” Joshua 1:7, 8

What Moses had said, very clearly, was –

“And He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will destroy their name from under heaven; no one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. ²⁵You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it *is* an abomination to the LORD your God. ²⁶Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it *is* an accursed thing.”

-Deuteronomy 7:24-26

“So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers, ¹⁸because you have listened to the voice of the LORD your God, to keep all His commandments which I command you today, to do *what is* right in the eyes of the LORD your God.”

-Deuteronomy 13:17, 18

The collective nature of Israel was highlighted in the offense committed by Achan. With him now removed, the Lord has returned to Joshua, and by extension, to all the people. Therefore...

^{1 (con't)} **take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai.**

The words *kal am ha'milkhamah*, or "all people the war," appear to mean all of the warriors of Israel at this point. If so, all of the soldiers were to leave the main camp at Gilgal and head to the location of Ai. However, the coming verses show that during the battle the men of war will be divided into smaller forces as well.

If all the soldiers went, as the text indicates, it would be for them to see the battle progress and learn tactics. But more, it would be a response to what was said in the previous chapter –

"Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, 'Go up and spy out the country.'" So the men went up and spied out Ai. ³ And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for *the people of Ai are few.*"

-Joshua 7:2, 3

There was no note of consulting the Lord in that passage. Joshua merely accepted the words of the men who reconnoitered and sent a small force in. Now, the Lord has spoken, and His words contrast those of the men who reported to Joshua.

The habit of not consulting the Lord will again surface in the next chapter over an issue of great importance. At this time, the Lord says to send all the men of war, and so we can assume that they all went, even if they all did not engage in battle.

^{1 (con't)} **See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.**

As was seen in the previous chapter, the name of the city is always prefixed by a definite article: *ha' Ai* or "the Ai," meaning "the Ruins." This location is going to be given wholly into the hand of Joshua, and its name will be a permanent testament to its state.

Remembering that it is east of Bethel, or "House of God," it helps us to remember the typology. East is the place of exile and enmity with God. That will, someday, be a place of ruin forever and all that belonged to it will be given into the hands of the Lord.

² And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king.

Just for precision, the words more closely say “to Ai and her king” and “to Jericho and her king.” The sense isn’t changed, but the city is treated as a single entity, like the mother of a family. This idea is fully expressed in 2 Samuel 20 –

“I am among the peaceable and faithful in Israel. You seek to destroy a city and a mother in Israel. Why would you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?”

-2 Samuel 20:19

The king is the leader of it. As such, the meaning is that every living person was to be *kherem* or anathematized. None were to be spared...

² (con’t) Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves.

Simply for consistency, it should continue to read in the feminine: *raq shelalah u-b’hemtah tabozu lakhem* – “Only, her spoil and her cattle you (pl.) shall plunder to you (pl.).” The spoil of the mother city Ai, unlike Jericho which was as firstfruits to the Lord of all that was in Canaan, was to be taken by the people.

² (con’t) Lay an ambush for the city behind it.”

sim lekha orev la’ir me’akharekha – “Set to you a lying in wait to the city from behind her.” The verb *arav* signifies to lie in wait. As such, it is generally translated as “ambush,” but that can be a noun or a verb depending on its use. The idea is that there is to be a contingent actively set, lying in wait, for the right time to attack.

Amazingly, there are those that question the appropriateness of this order, as if an ambush is an illegitimate form of taking a city. First, it is the Lord who issues the order as much for future instruction as for anything else. Employing appropriate battle tactics to win a war is something that must be learned.

But more, the very fact that the city is to be taken and all in it are to be put to death means that the manner in which it is taken is completely irrelevant. The saving of lives in battle is as much of a rule as is the destruction of the enemy. For the enemy, dead is dead, regardless of how it comes about. There is nothing deceitful or wrong with the instruction given.

³ So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai;

In immediate obedience to the Lord's word, as has been seen in the command/obedience pattern thus far, Joshua mustered the army for battle against Ai.

^{3 (con't)} **and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night.**

The number is given, the state of them is provided, and the time that the order is made is specified.

The number thirty thousand is simply a multiple of thirty. Thirty in the Bible "denotes in a higher degree the perfection of Divine order, as marking the right moment" (Bullinger).

Joshua has determined that a particular sized force of mighty men of valor were to be used for a particular task. This was done stealthily by night. Further...

⁴ **And he commanded them, saying: "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city.**

reu atem or'vim la'ir me'akhare ha'ir – "Behold, you liars in wait to city from behind the city." This is the set directive. The thirty thousand are to lie in wait facing the city but behind it. And more...

^{4 (con't)} **Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready.**

This is the force that will have a main and pivotal role in what transpires, and so they are to remain near and prepared. Being near, they will be able to see the sign that Joshua will give to begin their part of the battle. With that, Joshua tells them the rest of the plans.

⁵ **Then I and all the people who are with me will approach the city;**

Joshua notes that he will be a part of the attacking force. He is the one to lead it, and he will be the one to give the signal at the command of the Lord and at the appropriate time, as is indicated in verse 18.

^{5 (con't)} **and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that we shall flee before them.**

The expectation is that those in the city will see the contingent with Joshua, they will feel confident in the outcome, and they will engage just as they previously did. When they do, they will see the same reaction as before and will assume they can beat the attackers all the way back to Destruction as happened in the first battle...

⁶ For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city,

The word translated as “drawn” is a forceful word, *nathaq*, signifying to tear away or break off. It was used in Joshua 4:18 when the priests lifted (tore away) their feet from the riverbed after standing in it while the people crossed over.

As for this account, this is the obvious thing to do. The inhabitants would leave the city in order to engage far enough away from it so that it would not be under siege. Once out, they would also assume that the results would be the same as with the first battle...

^{6 (con't)} for they will say, ‘They are fleeing before us as at the first.’

The words “They are” are inserted, and they are not correct. Joshua is speaking as if he were from Ai. It says: *nasim l’phanenu ka’asher ba’rishonah* – “They flee before us as which in the first.” The inhabitants will assume that Israel will cowardly flee before them, just as they had previously. Therefore, Joshua will allow them to believe exactly this...

^{6 (con't)} Therefore we will flee before them.

v’nasu liph’nehem – “And we flee to their face.” It will be exactly as they expect. When that happens, Ai will think they have the same result that they previously had. When they do...

⁷ Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city,

The thirty thousand who are set to lie in wait are the ones to come against the city itself. The word “seize” is not the intent. The word means to dispossess or disinherit. They will disinherit the city, taking it away from those who live there. And the reason is...

^{7 (con't)} for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.

u-n'thanah Yehovah elohekhem b'yadkhem – “and will give it, Yehovah your God, in your hand.” The matter is resolved. There will be no question that when they go to dispossess it, it will be dispossessed.

⁸And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire.

It more precisely reads, “according to your taking the city.” It specifically says in verse 27 that the spoil of the city was taken as booty. The number of men that would pour into such a small city would be able to slay, plunder, and take very quickly. A smaller force of five thousand could not do so.

Once the city was plundered it was set on fire. It could even be that a large, smoky fire was lit to show that the city was taken. From there, it was plundered, and finally, it was completely burnt after being plundered...

^{8 (con't)} According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. See, I have commanded you.”

The words are in accord with verse 2 which the Lord commanded to Joshua. Now he repeats them as a command to the men who are to act in accord with that word.

*We are ready for battle, so let us begin
Nothing can thwart us from the victory ahead
Surely in Christ, we shall win
Because for us, the Lord's blood was shed*

*In Him is the victory, once and for all
In Him is the glory that lies ahead
He has recovered everything lost at the fall
Because for us, the Lord's blood was shed*

*Let us go forth unto victory today
Never worrying about the battles ahead
Christ, the Lord has paved heaven's way
Because for us, the Lord's blood was shed*

II. A Valley Lay Between Them and Ai (verses 9-14)

⁹ Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai;

In these words, a new word to Scripture is seen, *maarav*. It is the noun form of *arav* already seen in this chapter. It is the place of lying in wait, a lurking place. He directed this larger contingent to go to the place where they will lie in wait which is on the west side of Ai. As Ai is east of Bethel, it is then between Bethel and Ai.

This is the verse I mentioned in the opening comments that my translation may solve the dilemma that scholars have faced. I would hope it is correct. If so, then the whole narrative makes a lot more sense. If not, the text is extremely hard to pin down.

If my thought is right, there should be a period after “ambush,” and then the subject, “Joshua,” would again be the subject of the next clause, “And [Joshua] stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of it.” As such, the word “but” in the next clause would be an incorrect translation...

^{9 (con't)} but Joshua lodged that night among the people.

va'yalen Yehoshua ba'laylah ha'hu b'tok ha'am – “And lodged Joshua in the night the it in midst the people.” Joshua stayed with the main body of people while those set to lie in wait went out to the lurking place. This larger body is currently between Bethel and Ai. That is, if my proposal is correct...

¹⁰ Then Joshua rose up early in the morning

va'yashkem Yehoshua ba'boqer – “And rose early Joshua in the morning. This is now the fourth and final time that these exact words are repeated in Joshua. The first time was to cross the Jordan (3:1), the next was to circle Jericho for the battle (6:12), the third was to determine who had violated the law of anathema (7:16), and now it is to prepare for the battle and taking of Ai.

^{10 (con't)} and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

As it is the morning, the camp is readied for the battle. It literally says, he “visited” the people, meaning he reviewed the ranks, ensured all was ready, and so on. After that was accomplished, and with the leaders accompanying him, they went before the rest of the army to Ai. From there...

11 And all the people of war who were with him went up and drew near;

This is certainly the main army of Israel mentioned in verse 3, saying “and all people the war.” Here, it says, “and all the people the war who with him.” It is this force that is drawing near to Ai...

11 (con’t) and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley lay between them and Ai.

The main force camps on the north side of the city with a *gai* (a valley) between them and the city. The word indicates a gorge, coming from the word *gevah*, pride. That is because the sides are lifted up, being exalted above what lies between them. Now encamped there, it next says...

12 So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city.

Those who feel the numbers in verse 3 are in error say this is the same force as verse 3, but instead of being thirty thousand, they say it is actually only five thousand. But even the Greek translation says there are two forces, one of thirty thousand and one of five thousand. There are certainly two separate forces being described.

The number five thousand is a multiple of fifty. And so, it signifies “jubilee or deliverance. It ... points to deliverance and rest following on as the result of the perfect consummation of time” (Bullinger).

The smaller force is the force intended to draw out the inhabitants of the city. These are set *orev ben beith’el u-ben ha’Ai*, or “liers in wait between Bethel and between the Ai” which is on the west side of Ai.

13 And when they had set the people, all the army that was on the north of the city,

va’yasimu ha’am eth kal ha’makhaneh asher mits’phon la’ir – “And set the people, all the camp which from north the city.” In other words, they are on the other side of the valley mentioned in verse 11 which is to the north of the city. This is where they have encamped.

13 (con’t) and its rear guard on the west of the city,

Most translations either say “rear guard,” or “the ambush.” But that is not what it says: *v’eth aqevo mi’yam la’ir* – “and his heel from west to the city.” The meaning is that the ending of the encampment (his heel) reached all the way to the west end of the city, across the valley.

The Douay-Rheims gives a good sense of this with, “so that the last of that multitude reached to the west side of the city.” With them there...

13 (con’t) Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

It is a different word for “valley” here: *va’yelek Yehoshua ba’laylah ha’hu b’tok ha’emeq* – “and went Joshua in the night the that in midst the depth.” The word is the same used in Joshua 7:26 when referring to the valley of Achor. It is a deep valley. Joshua has gone to an area further away in order to draw the warriors of the city out, luring them into the trap.

14 Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw it, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle,

This must be that they went out of the city to the west. That will be seen in the next verse where Joshua acts as if they are beaten before these men. It was said in verse 12 that these men were set lying in wait between Bethel and Ai. It is those that the warriors of Ai will chase. But first, in rising and going out it says...

14 (con’t) he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain.

What this means is that Israel is opposite the valley. They have sent out a force as a ruse for battle with a larger force than before. This was done in the sight of the king and men of Ai and so they think, “Now we have these guys, and we’ll easily wipe them out just as before.”

Therefore, he and his army went to a place they knew they could defeat the force *liphne ha’aravah*, or “before the plain.” The word *aravah* is from the verb *arav* which means to grow dark or become evening. This is identical with the verb *arav* signifying to give in pledge. Therefore, typologically, this would read “at an appointed place before the pledge.”

While the king is meeting at this spot, he doesn’t realize that the true intentions of Joshua have been hidden...

14 (con't) **But he did not know that *there was* an ambush against him behind the city.**

v'hu lo yada ki orev lo m'akhare ha'ir – “and he no knew that liers in wait to him from behind the city.” This is now referring to the thirty thousand mentioned all the way back in verses 3 and 4. They were told to wait *m'akhare ha'ir*, “from behind the city.” Those same words are again mentioned now.

In Chapter 7, it said the city had a gate, singular. As Israel is encamped north, and the five thousand began from between Bethel and Ai, meaning west, I would assume the gate faced in one of those two directions and those in ambush would have been either to the east or south of the city.

Wherever they were located, it is “behind” the city as clearly indicated in the text. With them carefully hidden there and ready to pounce, Joshua begins his feint...

*Who can defeat us with Christ as our Head?
We have nothing to fear as we continue on
Our sins are forgiven, placed on Him instead
He who knew no sin has taken them; they are long gone*

*Because of this, we have a new hope in us
The enemy cannot stand against us any longer
We have won the victory because of Jesus
Against Him, no foe can stand; He is stronger*

*Thank God for His wonderful workings for us
Praises to Him for all that He has done
He has restored us to Himself through Jesus
His only begotten Son*

III. The Smoke of the City Ascended (verses 15-20)

15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.

The words “made as if” have to be inferred: *va'yinag'u Yehoshua v'kal Yisrael liphnehem* – “and were stricken Joshua and all Israel before their faces.” It is as if they truly were stricken and so these five thousand took off on the way to the wilderness. And as before...

¹⁶ So all the people who were in Ai were called together to pursue them.

More precisely, it reads, “And were called all the people who in the city to pursue after them.” Every able-bodied man was called to join in the rout of Israel. This would add safety through numbers and also bring the battle to a close more quickly. With all of them now out of the city...

¹⁶ (con’t) And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city.

Rather than “them” of the previous sentence, the focus is on Joshua. He is the leader and so he is the focus of the attention at this time.

Also, the same word used in verse 6, *nathaq*, is used again. Just as Joshua said would be the case, they were torn away from the city. They lost their stronghold because of it. Therefore...

¹⁷ There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel.

The city had a gate that could be shut, but without men guarding it, there would be little to stop an onslaught of battle-readied warriors. But notice that it is not just those of Ai, but those of Bethel, that went out after them.

The distance between the two cities was not great. Depending on the city identified as Ai, it could be between 1.5 and 3 miles. This verse would also explain the death of the King of Bethel recorded in Joshua 12:16.

There is no record of Bethel being overthrown until Judges 1. So the king must have joined with the men of his city in this battle and been killed. With the cities emptied and pursuing Joshua, it says...

¹⁸ Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Stretch out the spear that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.”

There is a new word here, *kidon*, or “javelin.” It says: *neteh ba’kidon asher b’yad’kha* – “stretch out in the javelin which in your hand.” It is probably a smaller spear that is used for thrusting. 1 Samuel 17 shows that it was worn between the soldiers’ shoulders, probably on the back. It could easily be grabbed in times of need. The word comes itself from the same as *kid*, signifying destruction, calamity, and so on.

Joshua was told to stretch it out somewhat like when Moses stood with the rod of God during the battle against Amalek in Exodus 17. It was to be a sign that the victory was assured.

18 (con't) And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city.

Again, we see the command/obedience to the command format of Joshua. What the Lord says, Joshua performs. He stretched out the javelin toward the city, and he will continue to do this until verse 26, which says –

“For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.”

It is probable that at this exact moment the retreating army would have come to a full stop in order to engage the enemy in battle. While this was going on, just at the sign of the javelin being held out, it says...

19 So *those in ambush* arose quickly out of their place;

v'ha'orev qam meherah mim'qomo – “And the liars in wait arose quickly from their place.” This is why they were told in verse 4, “Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready.” They were to be as close as possible to the city in order to be able to take it before those chasing them could turn back in hopes of an attack.

19 (con't) they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand,

va'yarusu kintot yado – “and they ran according to the stretching out his hand.” One can almost see it. Joshua stops, turns toward the city, raises his hand, and the people come flooding forward like a wave. With that in mind, the next words are filled with excitement...

19 (con't) and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire.

It is one short and precise clause after another: *va'yavou ha'ir va'yilk'duha vay'maharu va'yashitu eth ha'ir ba'esh* – “And enter, and took it, and hastened, and burn the city in the fire.” The very wording makes the process seem like one quick action after another with nothing stopping the process once it started.

As noted, there was some sort of large fire set, but the entire city is not yet burned down. Before it is, the spoil will be taken along with any animals. Only then will it be fully burned to the ground.

²⁰ And when the men of Ai looked behind them,

The words of this verse are as exciting and brief as the previous verse: *va'yiphnu anshe ha' Ai akharekhem* – “And turned men the Ai after them.” The sudden realization of what was transpiring must have been overwhelming. All of their families, all of their possessions, and all of their anticipations were suddenly gone from them...

^{20 (con't)} they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven.

va'yiru v'hineh alah ashan ha'ir ha'shamaymah – “and see, behold, ascended smoke the city the heavens.” Not only was the city captured from them, but it was also literally being consumed while they looked. Even if by a miracle they could prevail over the sudden ambush, there would be nothing to return to. As such...

^{20 (con't)} So they had no power to flee this way or that way,

v'lo hayah ba'hem yadayim lanus henah v'henah – “and no was in them hand to flee hither and hither. Here, the hand signifies power. In saying “no hand” it means they were simply drained. In other words, they were suddenly left without any will in them at all to even move. They just stood there aghast at what had befallen them. At the same time...

^{20 (fin)} and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.

Instead of being many (pl.) as before, the people who had been pursuing Israel are now turned into one force: *v'ha'am ha'nas ha'midbar nehpak el ha'rodeph* – “And the people, the fleers the wilderness turned unto the pursuer (sg.).”

In other words, all of those who had pretended to be fleeing from the enemy simply turned and flooded over them as a single entity.

This is a good place to finish the verses. The tables have been turned on Ai and their destruction is at hand. But none of this would have been necessary if Israel had been obedient to the word set before them. When Achan transgressed, it was a corporate failing that cost the nation.

Likewise, when Israel was exiled, it was as a nation. In their exile, they were treated as a nation, even though they were dispersed throughout the entire world. The calamities of the law continued to fall on them throughout the years, wherever they were.

Today, Israel is still facing this same national state wherever they are. The people that hate the Jews in Israel pretty much also hate the Jews in the US. And even when Jews attempt to side against one another, they are still considered as Jews.

The only hope for them individually is to come to Christ, and the only hope for them as a nation is to come to Christ. They have a collective burden set upon them. But that doesn't mean we don't have a burden on us. If we are not in Christ, we most certainly do.

We have the burden of sin that stands over the collective body of humanity. None are exempt from this, and the only thing we can do to be freed from it is to come to Christ. Someday, Israel will do this, and someday all the remaining people of the world will be joined as one to this commonwealth.

For those who are not, there is only one fate. For Jew or Gentile, that is a total separation from God. The way to avoid this is to call on Christ. The lesson of Israel is a lesson for us. Israel will prevail over Ai, and in Christ, we will prevail over the ruins of humanity. They will be swept away. A better day lies ahead for those who call on Christ, so I would implore you to do that today.

Closing Verse: *“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39*

Next Week: Joshua 8:21-29 *The enemy thinks they can win but they will die, it is true...* (The Fall of Ai, Part II) (16th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Fall of Ai, Part I

Now the LORD said to Joshua: “Do not be afraid
-----nor be dismayed

Take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai
See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai
His people, his city, and his land. To them you can say “Bye bye”

And you shall do to Ai and its king
As you did to Jericho and its king, as I submit
Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves
Lay an ambush for the city behind it

So Joshua arose, and all the people of war
To go up against Ai to fight
And Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor
And sent them away by night

And he commanded them, saying:
“Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, so hold steady
Behind the city
Do not go very far, but all of you be ready

Then I and all the people who are with me
Will approach the city; and it will come about
When they come out against us as at the first
That we shall flee before them, it’ll look like a rout

For they will come out after us
Till we have drawn them from the city
For they will say, ‘They are fleeing before us as at the first
Therefore we will flee before them; it won’t look pretty

Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city
-----so you are to understand
For the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand

And it will be, when you have taken the city
That you shall set the city on fire, so you shall do

According to the commandment of the LORD
See, I have commanded you”

Joshua therefore sent them out
And they went to lie in ambush, yes, out of sight
And stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai
But Joshua lodged among the people that night

Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered
-----the people, by and by
And went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai

And all the people of war who were with him
Went up and drew near; and they came before the city
And camped on the north side of Ai
Now between them and Ai lay a valley so pretty

So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush
-----hard men and gritty
Between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city

And when they had set the people
All the army that was on the north of the city
And its rear guard on the city’s west side
Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley so pretty

Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw it
That the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out
-----against Israel to battle
He and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain
But he did not know that there was an ambush against him
-----behind the city; no one did tattle

And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them
-----a great mess
And fled by the way of the wilderness

So all the people who were in Ai
Were called together to pursue them, soldiers hard and gritty

And they pursued Joshua
And were drawn away from the city

There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not
-----go out after Israel
So they left the city open and pursued Israel, 'cause things
-----were looking swell

Then the LORD said to Joshua
“Stretch out the spear that is in your hand toward Ai, show no pity
For I will give it into your hand”
And Joshua stretched out the spear that was in his hand
-----toward the city

So those in ambush arose quickly out of their place
They ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand
And they entered the city and took it
And hurried to set the city on fire just as planned

And when the men of Ai looked behind them
They saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven
-----from the attack
So they had no power to flee this way or that way
And the people who had fled to the wilderness, on the pursuers
-----they turned back

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 8:21-29 **(THE FALL OF AI, PART II)**

Israel faced a foe and was beaten back by it. That was because of a transgression of the law by one person. This was at a time when nothing was said of Joshua going out with the troops.

And so what is it that is the great foe of Israel? What is it that will bring them victory or defeat? This is what Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 of Joshua are revealing to us. I will be honest that in these first eight chapters of the book, there are probably a lot of pictures and types that I have gotten wrong.

None of this would have been intentional, but there has been – as you have seen – a lot going on. For sure, the overall message is correct, and the overall typology is as well. We can be certain of that. When I first read this sermon, some weeks after I typed it, I was actually amazed at what is presented. As stupid as that may sound, I type these things and am so tired when I finish that I often cannot even remember what passage I typed, much less the detail in it. I was overjoyed at how things came out when I first came back to it.

What I will present today follows in the same vein. I honestly believe the picture is accurate, and by the time we're done today, I think you will agree with that. If I am wrong in any of the smaller details, I apologize. I hope that is not the case at all though.

Text Verse: *“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19*

Apart from the devil, who is obviously our adversary, there is an enemy that has been working against man all along. It is the law. And it isn't that the law is bad. Rather, it is good (Romans 7:12), but when the first law was introduced, man didn't have the knowledge to understand that (Genesis 3:5).

Since then, it is man who has been corrupted. And so, despite the law being good, it is we who are bad. Thus, the law stands against us. It is contrary to us (Colossians 2:14). But the law has been given, and so something has to happen in order for us to be freed from its yoke.

Enter Jesus. He is the One who can, and who does, make things right once again. This is the story that we are repeatedly seeing. God has presented it to us in so many ways over the past ten years of sermons that it is incredible to imagine.

And yet, much of the world that sees this precious book remains in bondage to the very law Christ came to remove from us. Let us be wise and discerning and understand that when we work out the law in an attempt to be pleasing to God, we are actually doing exactly the opposite.

Let us rest in Christ's accomplishment of all things. That is what God finds pleasing. It is a central message to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Heap Forever (verses 21-29)

²¹ Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city

vihoshua v'kal Yis'rael rau ki lakhad ha'orev eth ha'ir – “And Joshua and all Israel see according to had taken the liers in wait the city.” The words here follow after what was last said in the previous sermon –

“Then the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Stretch out the spear that *is* in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand.’ And Joshua stretched out the spear that *was* in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹ So *those in* ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. ²⁰ And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.” Joshua 8:18-20

The fighting men of the cities of Bethel and Ai came out after Joshua. The Lord then directed Joshua to stretch out the spear in his hand. With that signal, the liers in wait captured Ai and set it on fire. Once that happened, the fighting men of Ai realized the trap that had been set and lost their will to continue or to even flee.

With that complete, Joshua and the army of Israel saw it had been taken at the same time as those from Ai, because...

21 (con't) **and that the smoke of the city ascended,**

v'ki alah ashan ha'ir – “and according to ascended smoke the city.” This was per the instructions of Joshua earlier –

“Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. ⁸ And it will be, when you have taken the city, *that* you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the LORD you shall do. See, I have commanded you.” Joshua 8:7, 8

This is the purpose of the liers in wait. They had been prepared and waited for the opportune moment to strike. At Joshua's command, they readied themselves, and at Joshua's signal, they acted. With the armies of Ai and Bethel brought out, and with the army of Israel seeing that they are hedged in, it next says...

21 (con't) **they turned back and struck down the men of Ai.**

va'yashuvu va'yaku eth anshe ha'ay – “And turned back and struck men the Ai.” This is speaking of those who purposefully fled from the battle to draw the men of Ai out –

“And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. ¹⁶ So all the people who *were* in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city.”

-Joshua 8:15, 16

It is these five thousand that were used to draw the men of Ai out that have turned and have begun to strike the enemy. At the same time...

22 **Then the others came out of the city against them;**

The words of this verse come in a rapid sequence expecting the hearer to pay attention as the various events are taking place. They show the precision of Israel's movements even in the chaos of battle. That begins with: *v'eleh yaseu min ha'ir liqratam* – “And these went out from the city to against them.”

The description is short and brief. Instead of taking time to say, “And the men who attacked the city came out to join the attack,” it simply calls them “these.” The hearer would have to mentally say, “Ok, this is speaking of Israel.” Next, the subject changes...

²² (con't) **so they were *caught* in the midst of Israel,**

va'yihyu l'Yis'rael batavek – “And were to Israel in the midst.” It is speaking of the men of Ai. Those of Israel who were fleeing had turned back. Those of Israel in the city had come out, and Ai was caught smack dab in the middle. With that, the subject returns again to Israel...

²² (con't) **some on this side and some on that side.**

eleh mizeh v'eleh mizeh – “these from this and these from this.” It is speaking of Israel hemming in the men of Ai. There was nowhere for them to go because of the rushing onslaught of Israel.

²² (con't) **And they struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape.**

It is incorrect. The words now speak of Israel and the enemy in the singular - *va'yaku otam ad bilti hish'ir lo sarid u-paliyt* – “And struck them until none he left to him survivor and escapee.”

There is the enemy, and there is Israel. Each is an entity, and he [Israel] left to him [Ai] no survivor and escapee. The victory over the people of Ai is total.

Here is a new word, *paliyt*. It signifies a fugitive, refugee, or escapee. It comes from *palat*, to escape. In this case, there are none who did. The entire army of fighting men was destroyed...

²³ **But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.**

A more precise translation would be, “And king the Ai they captured alive, and brought near him unto Joshua.” This would then explain the singular of the previous verse, “none he left to him.” The sides faced off under Joshua and the king of Ai, and Joshua has prevailed.

With that, the king of Ai is the only one of his people left alive at this point and he is then brought before his vanquisher.

²⁴ **And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field,**

Unlike the brevity and action of verse 22, the words of verse 24 are meticulously detailed, beginning with, “And it came to pass according to finishing Israel to slay all inhabitants the Ai in the field.” It tells us that the battle occurred in an open place where Ai was hemmed in from escaping. That is then further explained as...

24 (con't) in the wilderness where they pursued them,

ba'midbar asher r'daphum bo – “in the wilderness which pursued them in him.” The “him” is referring to the wilderness. It seems the purpose of adding this is to indicate that they had been drawn quite a distance from Ai.

They would have been tired from the running, caught in the open and far enough from Ai that they could not have easily made it back there to rescue anyone. Instead, they were all destroyed. As it next says...

24 (con't) and when they all had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed,

va'yip'lu kulam l'pi kherev ad tumam – “And fallen all them to mouth sword until finished.” It is a further explanation of the state of the warriors of Ai. They were, to the last one, finished off.

It should be noted that the *kherev*, or sword comes from *kharav* meaning to be dry or dried up. It is identical to the name of the mountain, Horeb (Sinai), where the Law of Moses was received, and which comes from the same root word, *kharav*.

24 (con't) that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword.

va'yashuvu kal Yis'rael ha'ay va'yaku otah l'pi kharev – “and returned all Israel the Ai and struck her to mouth sword.” The warriors of Israel, fighting on behalf of their tribes, are said to all have returned from the battle to Ai. With that, the city is completely emptied of life as the sword consumed all...

25 So it was that all who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand

v'hi kal ha'noph'lim ba'yom ha'hu me'ish v'ad ishah sh'nem asar aleph – “And it was all the fallers in the day the it from men and even to women two ten thousand.” This is the entire number of all in the city. The number, as it is recorded, asks us to consider its meaning.

Twelve thousand would be a multiple of 120 (3x40) and 100 (10x10). Bullinger provides the meaning of 120 saying it “is made up of three forties (3x40=120). Applied to time therefore it signifies a divinely appointed period of probation.” Of the number 10, he says –

“...ten is one of the perfect numbers, and signifies the perfection of Divine order, commencing, as it does, an altogether new series of numbers... Completeness of order, marking the entire round of anything, is, therefore, the ever-present signification of the number ten. It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.”

A time of a divinely appointed period of probation, a part of a cycle that is now complete, is what we can derive from the number provided in regard to the fall of Ai. It is inclusive of...

²⁵ (con't) —**all the people of Ai.**

kol anshe ha'ay – “all men the Ai.” The masculine reveals that as the men died, so their families – male and female – are reckoned under them. As it next says...

²⁶ **For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.**

The action of each verb is singular, he – “And Joshua no did draw back his hand which he stretched in the javelin until which he had anathematized all inhabitants the Ai.”

The entire battle is ultimately credited to Joshua. In typology then, Israel in the battle is being used as a type of Jesus in accomplishing the deeds which are being credited to Jesus. In other words, everything is picturing Him and what He has done.

²⁷ **Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves,**

This is what was allowed concerning the cities of Canaan unless there was a specific command or reason for not doing so. Every human was to be destroyed, but the spoil could be taken. Jericho was an exception as everything from it was to be wholly devoted to the Lord. The Lord determined the extent of the destruction and Israel was to comply.

For example, an exception concerning Amalek is found in 1 Samuel –

“Samuel also said to Saul, ‘The LORD sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the LORD. ² Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I will punish Amalek *for* what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. ³ Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”” 1 Samuel 15:1-3

For Ai, the spoil could be taken...

²⁷ (con’t) **according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua.**

This word was specifically given at the beginning of the chapter –

“Now the LORD said to Joshua: ‘Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. ² And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it.” Joshua 8:1, 2

The Lord allowed Joshua to keep and divide the spoil among the warriors of the battle, and this now confirms that took place. Once the spoil was taken, it next says...

²⁸ **So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day.**

The name Ai is certainly derived from the battle and destruction, maybe even from this verse: *v’yish’rophi Yehoshua eth ha’ay vay’simeha tel olam sh’mamah ad ha’yom ha’zeh* – “And burned Joshua the Ai and set her heap forever; desolation to the day the this.” Britannica says of the location –

“Biblical references agree in locating Ai (Hebrew: ha-‘Ay, “The Ruin”) just east of Bethel (modern Baytīn in the West Bank). This would make it identical with the large early Bronze Age site now called At-Tall.”

It is *ha’ay*, the Ruins, and it is simply a ruins: “the Tel.” There are many tells in Israel, some of them have other names assigned to them, such as Tel Aviv. However, as Canon Williams wrote, “the site of Ai has no other name ‘unto this day.’ It is simply *et-Tel = the Heap*, ‘par excellence.’”

It is further defined as “a desolation to this day.” The idea is that this city, whatever it was actually named, was given its name because of its state after the battle and it remained in a state of desolation from that time on.

In Nehemiah, a city called Ayyah is noted, and some believe it to be this same location. However, no article precedes it and the spelling, though having the same meaning, is different. With that noted, it next says...

29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening.

The words are specific: *v'eth melekh ha'ay talah al ha'ets ad eth ha'arev* – “And king the Ai hanged upon the tree until the evening.” It doesn't say “a tree,” but “the tree.” Also, it does not say how he died. It could have been from hanging, it could have been from the sword and then being hanged, and so on. The point of the words is to highlight his hanging on a specific tree...

29 (con't) And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree,

It reads, “And according to going the sun commanded Joshua and they take down his corpse from the tree.” This is specifically required according to the law –

“If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged *is* accursed of God.”

-Deuteronomy 21:22, 23

When that was evaluated, the explanation was that the person died in sin, a moral issue. It isn't the physical body that is being referred to, even though defilement does come to one who touches a dead body. And it is not a ceremonial defilement that is being referred to. It is a moral issue being addressed.

And more, this does not mean that the person who is hanged is accursed in the sense of not being saved. That would mean that any saved person who was hanged on a tree could not be saved. That is not the issue. What this means is that the person becomes a curse when hanged on a tree. Why?

Because sin is in all people. Anyone who is publicly displayed on a tree is dead. Death is the final penalty for sin. It is not the physical body, but the sin that is being focused on. *Sin* hangs on the tree and that sin is accursed of God.

Therefore, the hanging is a sign of being accursed. In leaving the body up overnight, the corpse would defile the land. Hence, Joshua complied with the precept of the law and...

²⁹ (con't) **cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city,**

va'yashliku otah el petakh shaar ha'ir – “And cast it to door gate the city.” The spot where the gate of the city opened was to be blocked by the corpse of the king. The gate is the place of judgment. Access is denied or granted at that point. Placing the body there means the way is blocked.

²⁹ (con't) **and raise over it a great heap of stones *that remains to this day.***

It is masculine: *va'yaqimu alav gal abanim gadol ad ha'yam ha'zeh* – “And raised over him heap stones great until the day, the this.” Also, the word translated as “corpse” is feminine. Hence, it is speaking of the person and not the corpse.

Also, the word translated as “heap” is a different one than used earlier. That was *tel*, a heap of ruin. This is *gal*, something rolled. Hence it is stones they cast on top of him forming a round mound over him.

*Who can defeat us with Christ as our Head?
We have nothing to fear as we continue on
Our sins are forgiven, placed on Him instead
He who knew no sin has taken them; they are long gone*

*Because of this, we have a new hope in us
The enemy cannot stand against us any longer
We have won the victory because of Jesus
Against Him, no foe can stand; He is stronger*

*Thank God for His wonderful workings for us
Praises to Him for all that He has done
He has restored us to Himself through Jesus
His only begotten Son*

II. Pictures of Christ

The same concept is seen again in this chapter as has been seen throughout Joshua so far. It is all pointing to what God in Christ has done. It is the same process for Jews and for Gentiles, but the Joshua sermons have shown that these things will finally be realized in Israel the nation someday as well.

As for this section of the typology, it is the final account recorded before the building of the altar and writing the law upon it on Mount Gerizim, and then reading it to the people. The law is clearly the focus of what is being dealt with in this passage about Ai before that happens.

In other words, to understand what is going on in these Joshua sermons we have been seeing the process of salvation in individual passages, but they all happen at once. *Moses, the law dies. Israel accepts Christ's fulfillment of the law. *Israel enters the Jordan (Christ); Israel is baptized into Christ's death (Chapter 3). *Israel, signified by the stones carried to Gilgal and which are then rested there, enters its rest (Chapter 4). *Two sets of stones are set up, signifying the heavenly government of Jews and Gentiles (Chapter 4). *Israel is circumcised; Israel has put off the body of sins of the flesh / The reproach of the past is taken away when believers are circumcised by the Lord (Chapter 5). *Believers partake of Christ as their Passover (Chapter 5). *The Lord is the Leader of the people, and they are brought into "holy ground." (Chapter 5). *Access to that holy ground is brought about by acceptance of Christ's work (Chapter 6). *Coming out of the state of anathema (*kherem*) is realized through the love of Jesus (1 Corinthians 16:22) and pursuing the true gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:8, 9) (Chapter 7). And now, *Christ's prevailing over the law is highlighted in this passage (Chapter 8). In Chapter 1, Joshua was given the charge –

"Only be strong and very courageous, that you (sg) may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you (sg)." Joshua 1:7

It is Joshua who is encouraged in verse 1 of this chapter with the words, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed." He, typical of Jesus, is given the charge. In this case, it is to take, *ha'ay*, "the Ruins." The Lord promises Joshua that it shall be given into his hand.

The name of the city is certainly given based on what took place in the account. Whatever its name was, it is now "the Ruins." Like Ai, the Law of Moses is the obstacle barring entry into a restored relationship with God.

As Ai is said to be east of Bethel (House of God), and east is the place of exile, it is a picture of being exiled from the House of God, meaning from His presence. In verse 2, it is noted that the city is a single entity, and it is also a feminine word in Hebrew. Hence it noted “to Ai and her king” and “to Jericho and her king.” The symbolism will be explained in a bit.

The city was to be ambushed or have a “lying in wait” behind it. This consisted of a force of thirty thousand. As noted, the number thirty thousand is a multiple of thirty.

Thirty in the Bible “denotes in a higher degree the perfection of Divine order, as marking the right moment” (Bullinger). There is a divinely appointed right moment when the city, the Ruins, will be overrun. This comes from God and is well explained by Paul in Galatians 4 –

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5

On the other side would be another force that would seemingly flee from the city during the attack. In this, they would “tear away,” *nathaq*, the warriors, leaving the city defenseless. It is at that time that the right moment comes.

As for verse 9, if you remember, it is a hard verse to pin down. Either this force of thirty thousand was said to be between Bethel and Ai (the House of God and the Ruins), or it is Joshua who spent the night in that location. I would go with the latter. Either way, as Ai is east of Bethel, being between the two means east of Bethel and west of Ai.

In verse 11, the main army of Israel camped on the north side of Ai with a valley between them. The north, *tsaphon*, is the dark side, coming from a word signifying hidden. In the northern hemisphere, the north receives the light later and less than the south. The word used to describe the valley, *gai*, comes from *gevah*, signifying pride or exaltation.

This group is not noted as being a part of the battle. Rather, Joshua and his two forces, all picturing Jesus, engage the battle. Israel is as a spectator who will be exalted if Joshua (Jesus) prevails.

In verse 12, Joshua went with the group of five thousand and set them between Bethel and Ai, west of Ai. Five thousand is a multiple of fifty, and thus it signifies jubilee or

deliverance. It ... “points to deliverance and rest following on as the result of the perfect consummation of time” (Bullinger).

The battle is one that will occur according to the Divine order of the right moment (thirty thousand) and it will be one that brings about deliverance for the people (five thousand). The law is the obstacle, meaning that in Christ’s fulfillment of the law, the people will receive their deliverance.

From there, it curiously mentioned that Joshua spent the night in the midst of the valley, using a different word, *emeq*, or depth. That comes from *amoq*, it is a word that gives the sense of great depth and also to seek deeply. The BDB Lexicon includes the note to “implore (earnestly; ‘from bottom of one’s soul’).” I would suggest that this anticipates Christ’s final night before the cross where it says –

“And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Luke 22:41-44

In verse 14, it noted the king of Ai coming out against Israel to an appointed place *liphne ha’aravah*, or “before the plain.” The word *aravah* is from verb *arav* which means to grow dark or become evening.

It is identical with the verb *arav* signifying to give in pledge. Therefore, typologically, this would read “at an appointed place before the pledge.” In type, the battle must be engaged at a particular time and place in order for the pledge of the Spirit to be given (Ephesians 1:13, 14).

It was at that time that Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten, fleeing by way of the wilderness with the army of Ai pursuing Joshua. The focus of the narrative was on him. They were just as planned, torn away from the city, leaving it totally exposed.

Jesus appeared defeated even as He was going to His cross. But the apparent defeat became the greatest of victories. It was then that the Lord told Joshua to stretch out the *kidon*, the javelin in his hand.

That comes from a word signifying destruction or calamity. Joshua did, and he remained with outstretched arm until the battle was complete. With the javelin stretched out, the liars in wait, the thirty thousand, entered the city and took it. The divinely perfect “right moment” had come.

The city was set on fire, the soldiers of Ai saw what had taken place, and they lost all power to continue. The strength of the law had been taken away. Paul speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 15 –

“The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

-1 Corinthians 15:56, 57

It is at this time that the five thousand turned. The time of jubilee and deliverance had come. With that, last week’s sermon ended and today’s began.

With the city burning and the smoke rising, the five thousand met up with the thirty thousand catching the men of Ai in the middle. At that time, the words went to the singular, “And struck them until none he left to him survivor and escapee.”

There was the enemy, and there was Israel under Joshua. Each is an entity, and he [Israel] left to him [Ai] no survivor and escapee. The victory over the people of Ai was total.

Despite this, the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua. Apart from him, it noted that every single one of the enemy fell by the mouth of the *kherev*, or sword. Ai has been a picture of the enemy, the one that stands against Israel, meaning the law.

It is the law that stands against grace. One cannot enter heaven by works of the law and the entire law must be fulfilled. As Jesus said to Israel –

“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.” Matthew 5:19

As long as heaven and earth stand, the law stands. Every single precept of the law is as an enemy that must be battled against. And man will always fail in the challenge. But Christ Jesus, who is God, could fulfill it and He did. Only through His fulfillment of the law can man then receive His grace.

Jesus was able to overcome the law given at Horeb (חרב), pictured by eliminating every foe with the sword, *kherev* (חרב). The law is dry and harsh, but grace is a water of life. In overcoming the law (that which is dried up), the grace can be offered.

Once the soldiers were eliminated, the city itself was destroyed to the last person, totaling twelve thousand. As noted, the number is derived from 120 and 100, “a divinely appointed period of probation,” and “that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.”

The time of the law is a period of probation. In its fulfillment nothing is wanting and the whole cycle is complete. That it is completed was seen in verse 26 where the entire campaign against Ai is credited to Joshua – “And Joshua no did draw back his hand which he stretched in the javelin until which he had anathematized all inhabitants the Ai.”

Think of Jesus in that and remember the meaning of the word translated as “javelin.” It comes from a root signifying destruction: “And Jesus no did draw back His hand which He stretched in the destruction until which He anathematized all of the law!”

The entire law was devoted to God through the work of Christ. As for the city itself, it was seen that it is noted as a female entity “her.” The city of Ai is being equated to the law. Paul explains the symbolism in Galatians –

“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. ²³ But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, ²⁴ which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— ²⁵ for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— ²⁶ but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

-Galatians 4:21-26

In the taking and destruction of Ai, that which destroyed Israel in Chapter 7 (when Joshua was not present with the army), is taken and destroyed. In Christ’s work, the law is ended. With that understood, it then said, “Only the livestock and the spoil [*shalal*] of that city Israel took as booty for themselves.”

Christ did the work, but His people share in the spoils. That is precisely reflected in Isaiah 53 where the same word is used –

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the **spoil** with the strong, [*shalal*]
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12

With that understood, it next said that Joshua burned Ai and set her as a heap forever, a desolation to this day. Again, the credit is given to Joshua as a type of Christ. The law is so set according to Hebrews. It is annulled (Hebrews 7:18), obsolete (Hebrews 8:13), and set aside (Hebrews 10:9).

In Christ, and because of Him, the law is a desolation to this day. With that noted, it then went to the hanging of the king of Ai. Like Joshua, who is a type of Christ, and like the armies under him, also typical of Christ, so this *king becomes a type of Christ*. Christ is the King of the law. He and no other. And He was *talah*, hung on a tree, becoming a curse for us. Paul explains that in Galatians as well –

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Galatians 3:13

The law, Horeb/Ai, is defeated but the curse of the law stands without this part of Christ’s work. The King of Ai, picturing the work of Christ, became a curse.

Sin is a moral, not a physical or ceremonial, issue. Sin infects all people. Christ became a curse under the law. He paid the final penalty for sin. Our sin, in His fulfillment and ending of the law, hung on the tree, becoming that curse of the law.

In His death, He was taken down from there and interred. The corpse of the king of Ai was taken down and it was “cast to door gate the city.” Christ is the Door. Those under law must come through him. Christ is the Judge, signified by the gate, the place of judgment.

Those under law cannot pass through. Those freed from the law can no longer be judged by the law. That was seen in our text verse today where 2 Corinthians 5:19 says

that in Christ God is not imputing our sins to us. The law is how sin is reckoned. When one is in Christ, sin is no longer imputed.

The death (the dead body) of Jesus goes in two directions. It keeps those under law from entering through the Door. It keeps those no longer under law from being returned to the law. This is seen in Colossians 2:13-15 –

“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

The heaping up of stones over the corpse at the door of the gate of Ai pictures this. The corpse (noun fem.) of the dead king pictures the law (noun fem.) One must come through the risen Christ, Jesus, in order to find salvation. It does no good to call on a dead person. Without the resurrection, there is no hope. Paul says –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

That is the first half of the equation. Christ died in fulfillment of the law, and He died bearing our sin. But He came out of that grave as well. If nothing else shows us the concept of potential atonement and actual atonement, this picture of the king of Ai buried at the door of the gate certainly does.

Christ died for all potentially, but He only died for some actually. The sin of all men was placed upon Jesus, but there is no passing His dead body and coming to the Father if He stayed in the grave. Rather, it is faith in the death, the burial, *and* the resurrection that brings believers all the way through.

Finally, this all occurred in Ai, east of Bethel. Access to the House of God is from the east. The meaning is obvious. Access to the House of God is only possible through the law, but that can only be accomplished through its fulfillment. As only Christ can fulfill the law, no man can enter the House of God apart from Jesus Christ.

This is the final part of the pictures from Joshua that began in Chapter 1. Each chapter has been a part of the series that is intended to reveal to us what God did for the people of the world, including the nation of Israel as a whole.

The final verses of this chapter, which we will look at next week, confirm that this is the end of this series of pictures. For now, think on everything that has been given since Chapter 1. It has been an amazing journey of typology and wonder – all pointing to the marvelous work of God in Christ.

The point of it all is that God has brought glory to Himself through the coming of Christ. He has revealed His love for the people of the world, He has demonstrated His faithfulness to His covenants, and we are shown that His word is both trustworthy and it is demanding.

When I say demanding, I mean He expects us to respond to it. The choice is ours, we can ignore it, we can misuse it, or we can rightly apply it. But there is no getting around what it says.

Let us learn the lesson of the law and place our trust and our hope in Christ's fulfillment of it. Anything else will lead to an unhappy end. Let us trust in Christ, rest in Christ, and be confident in what God has done in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:13-15*

Next Week: Joshua 8:30-35 *It is what God had from the law demanded...* (All that Moses Had Commanded) (17th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Fall of Ai, Part II

Now when Joshua and all Israel saw

That the ambush had taken the city, when that caught their eye
And that the smoke of the city ascended
They turned back and struck down the men of Ai

Then the others came out of the city against them
So they were caught in the midst of Israel, some on this side
-----and some on that side
And they struck them down without haw or hem
So Israel let none of them remain or escape; all of Ai died

But the king of Ai they took alive – ooh yah!
And brought him to Joshua

And it came to pass when Israel had made an end
Of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field
-----where death had bloomed
In the wilderness where they pursued them
And the people of Ai fell by the edge of the sword
-----until they were consumed

That all the Israelites returned to Ai
And struck it with the edge of the sword, every last girl and guy

So it was that all who fell that day, both men and women
----- (girl and guy)
Were twelve thousand—all the people of Ai

For Joshua did not draw back his hand
With which the spear he stretched out
Until he had utterly destroyed
All the inhabitants of Ai; it was a total rout

Only the livestock and the spoil of that city
Israel took as booty for themselves – hoorah!
According to the word of the LORD
Which He had commanded Joshua

So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever – it is that way
A desolation to this day

And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening
And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded
-----so he did say
That they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it
-----at the entrance of the gate of the city
And raise over it a great heap of stones that remains to this day.

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 8:30-35 **(ALL THAT MOSES HAD COMMANDED)**

Joshua 8 ends with a seemingly unrelated set of verses to what has been presented in the first 29 verses. But in understanding all that has happened in the past chapters of Joshua, it is not only related, but it is a beautiful finishing to what has been so methodically presented.

Salvation is something that happens all at once. We believe the gospel and we are saved. We die to law at that moment. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. We enter into God's rest. We are seated in the heavenlies with Christ. We are imputed God's righteousness. And so on. A lengthy list of things happens in a believer's life the moment he is saved.

Innumerable books and sermons have been written on each of these individual topics. In the final Deuteronomy sermon and in these early Joshua sermons, the Lord has been taking us through a snapshot of various events that will occur in the life of national Israel someday.

Some of those things overlap with individual salvation. And one picture (in chapter 4) explicitly showed that there would be another government formed during the time that Israel is not right with God because of their rejection of Christ.

It is amazing to see how all of this has been presented, and today's passage will complete the picture of salvation that has been so carefully presented. In their comments on verse 33, the Jamison-Faucet-Brown commentary said –

“they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings—This had been done when the covenant was established (Ex 24:5); and by the observance of these rites (De 27:6), the covenant was solemnly renewed—the people were reconciled to God by the burnt offering, and this feast accompanying the peace or thank offering, a happy communion with God was enjoyed by all the families in Israel.” JFB

In not grasping the symbolism and the anticipation of Christ, they only saw a literal rendering of the verses. But this is not anticipating a renewed covenant at all. Everything has been anticipating the fulfillment of Moses and the introduction of the New Covenant. That will be clearly seen today.

Text Verse: *“In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:13*

The Mosaic covenant is still in effect for Israel. Someday, it will be done forever in them when they come to Christ. May that day be soon. The covenant was not even renewed at the time of Joshua. It was in effect during all of the wilderness wanderings. This is why they wandered in the wilderness.

And it is why since Christ's coming Israel has been under the curse of the law. There will be no "renewing" of the covenant for them. There will only be a setting aside of that which is annulled in Christ. For today's sermon, it is right that we reread Deuteronomy 27. In doing so, it will help us see a little more clearly what is going on in Joshua. (Read Deuteronomy 27).

With that noted, let's get going. Great, great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. That They Should Bless the People of Israel (verses 30-35)

Chapter 8 has been concerned with the fall of Ai. The details were meticulous even if difficult at times to understand exactly what was being conveyed. But after the fall of Ai, instead of recording more conquests or other affairs dealing with the settling of the nation, it immediately goes to this account.

It is something that was explicitly referred to by Moses in Deuteronomy 11 –

“Now it shall be, when the LORD your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. ³⁰ Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, toward the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the plain opposite Gilgal, beside the terebinth trees of Moreh? ³¹ For you will cross over the Jordan and go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you will possess it and dwell in it. ³² And you shall be careful to observe all the statutes and judgments which I set before you today.” Deuteronomy 11:29-32

This was also seen in Deuteronomy 27:1-8 which was read a moment ago. From there, Chapter 27 went into more detail about what was to be done at the time of the building of the altar. The words now in Joshua are given to show compliance to the command. Therefore...

³⁰ **Now Joshua built an altar**

az yivneh Yehoshua mizbeakh – “Then built Joshua altar.” The word *az* is a demonstrative adverb that generally signifies “at that time” or “thereupon.” It can refer to a point in the future when a prophecy or a statement of fact is given, such as “At that time, the Lord will do such and such.”

At first, it appears the word is being used to indicate that as soon as the city of Ai was destroyed this was the next order of business for Israel. However, this does not logically follow. First, the next word, *yivneh*, is an imperfect verb and thus carries the sense of ongoing or even the future. The same form is used in 2 Samuel 7, saying –

“He **shall build** a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” 2 Samuel 7:13

This is especially so when considering the details of Chapter 9. The opening statement itself calls the timeline into question –

“And it came to pass when all the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard *about it*,² that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.” Joshua 9:1, 2

Although not known until it was discovered in 1980, the altar to be built is rather massive and was thus both time-consuming to erect and took many people to construct.

The ceremony to be conducted by the people will be loud. Its surrounding location was certainly occupied by people, and it is quite some distance north and west of Ai in the middle of Canaan. As such, they would have to go through lots of land (about 20-30 miles) in order to go there and erect it.

Also, the ceremony to be conducted includes the entire congregation, including women and children. It would seem unlikely, at best, that at this time Israel would bring all of these people into the midst of the nations who desired to destroy them. And more, Joshua 9:6 returns the narrative with the entire camp to Gilgal where they have been since crossing the Jordan. Noting Israel remaining in Gilgal will continue after Chapter 9.

Understanding this, and noting that Israel has already been through battles in the land, we can see that the words of Deuteronomy 27:2, “on the day when you cross over the Jordan,” do not mean literally “on the day.”

Rather, it said, “in the day,” not “on the day.” It was referring to the timeframe, not a specific day. And more, it would have to be at a time when the command could actually be carried out. It would be unreasonable to think that Israel just marched through the breadth of the land and built this altar with all their enemies just watching from a distance.

As this is so, it can be assumed that the words now, “Then built Joshua altar,” are not necessarily chronological but are categorical and expressive. Everything up to this point in Joshua has been centered on national Israel’s salvation and it also has detailed the process of salvation as it is centered on Jesus.

Now that process has been expressed and this account is given. Historically, it is given to demonstrate the fulfillment of the command, regardless as to when it actually occurred.

The narrative is highlighting the fulfillment early in the record to show this. But more importantly, it is to close out the typology that has been so carefully revealed in the opening chapters. As for the altar, it is built...

30 (con’t) to the LORD God of Israel

l’Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “to Yehovah, God Israel.” This is just what Deuteronomy 27:5 said, “And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God.” They are His people, Israel, and He is their God. The altar is built to Him...

30 (con’t) in Mount Ebal,

It is exactly translated: *b’har eval* – “in Mount Ebal.” As noted when in Deuteronomy, the name Ebal comes from an unused root meaning to be bald. Probably signifying the bald appearance of the mountain. Thus, it means something like Bare or Heap of Barrenness. The building of the altar, and the location where it is built, as well as the means by which it is built, are just...

31 as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel,

ka’asher tsivah Mosheh eved Yehovah eth bene Yisrael – “according to which commanded Moses, servant Yehovah, sons Israel.” This specifically is a reference to the book of Deuteronomy cited above. Moses commanded this to be done, and the fulfillment of the command is now being referred to in Joshua’s accomplishment of the matter. It was...

³¹ (con't) **as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses:**

ka'katuv b'sepher torath Mosheh – “according to written in Torah (the Law) Moses.” The specificity of the words is to show that not only was the matter accomplished, but that it was accomplished exactly as the law itself had demanded. Not a jot or tittle of what was spoken forth by Moses was allowed to fall to the ground. A portion of that law included...

³¹ (con't) **“an altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron *tool*.”**

mizbakh avanim sh'lemot asher lo heniph alehen barzel – “altar stones whole which no moved upon them iron.” That was stated, without the reason for it, in Deuteronomy 27:5 –

“And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron *tool* on them.”

The reason for Moses' instruction goes back to the first command after the giving of the Ten Commandments. In Exodus 20, it said –

“And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it.” Exodus 20:25

Just as the Lord had commanded Moses, and just as Moses had commanded the people, so Joshua complied with the command...

³¹ (con't) **And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.**

va'yaalu alav olat l'Yehovah va'yizbekhu shelamim – “And they ascended burnt offerings to Yehovah and sacrificed peace offerings.” Burnt offerings are animals completely burnt on an altar to the Lord. The peace offerings were shared between the Lord and the offeror. The peace offering is one of only two offerings made to the Lord where leavened bread was offered (Leviticus 7:13).

³² **And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written.**

The clauses are out of order in the translation. It literally reads: “And wrote (sg.) there upon the stone second Torah Moses which had written (sg.) to face (meaning in the presence of) sons Israel.” In Deuteronomy 27:3, it said, “You (sg.) shall write on them all the words of this law.”

That was written to the people as a whole, and thus it meant “you, Israel.” Now, it is referring to Joshua as noted in verse 1. He represents Israel, and so whether he actually wrote it or not, it is he who is credited with having written it on behalf of Israel.

But what exactly was written out by Israel? In Deuteronomy 27, several options were noted by commentators, such as –

“i.e. all the purely legislative parts of the Mosaic institute.” Cambridge

“i. e. all the laws revealed from God to the people by Moses, regarded by the Jews as 613.” Barnes

“It might be, as some think, the Decalogue; but a greater probability is that it was ‘the blessings and curses,’ which comprised in fact an epitome of the law (Jos 8:34).” JFB

“Not the whole book of Deuteronomy, as some think, at least not the historical part of it, only what concerns the laws of God; and it may be only a summary or abstract of them, and perhaps only the ten commandments.” Gill

“I am fully of opinion that the (תורה torah) law or ordinance in question simply means the blessings and curses mentioned in this and in the following chapter; and indeed these contained a very good epitome of the whole law in all its promises and threatenings, in reference to the whole of its grand moral design.” Clarke

Added to that, Ellicott’s commentary in Joshua says, “Not certainly the whole five books of Moses, for what stones or time would have sufficed for this? but the most weighty parts of the law, and especially the law of the ten commandments.”

Ellicott assumes that the altar is not huge, but recent archeological finds show that it is actually massive. It also assumed the account is chronological, which I argue it is not. There were certainly sufficient stones, and there would have been plenty of time.

As for the word *torah*, or “Law,” it can be construed in various ways. The Ten Commandments are a short summary of the Law. The term “Book Law Moses” was just

used in the previous verse. However, “the Law,” is a phrase that includes all five books of Moses at times. This is perfectly evident from Paul’s words –

“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.” Galatians 4:21, 22

What Paul refers to is found in Genesis, and yet he calls it “the law.” I would personally favor the meaning to be “The five books of Moses,” but that does not mean this is correct. However, without understanding what is said in Genesis and Exodus, the rest of the law lacks cohesion.

In understanding how sin was introduced, the consequences of a world living in wickedness, the grace of God towards Noah, the call of Abraham, and so on, one can only then begin to understand what the law was intended to do, at least in the short term.

No matter what, it is said that Joshua writes the law upon the stones and that it was Moses who had first written them down.

³³ Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges,

Here, Israel is referred to as the man from whom the people are identified: *v’kal Yisrael u-z’qenav v’shoterim v’shophtav* – “And all Israel, and his elders and scribes, and his judges.” It is the nation who is the man and who is comprised of the people that is being referred to here.

^{33 (con’t)} stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD,

om’dim mizeh u-mizeh la’aron neged ha’kohanim ha’levim nos’e aron berith Yehovah – “standers from this and from this to the ark facing the priests the Levites bearing ark covenant Yehovah.” The meaning will be more fully expressed in a minute, but the ark of the covenant being borne by the priests is between the people on each side. This includes...

^{33 (con’t)} the stranger as well as he who was born among them.

ka'ger ka'ezrakh – “According to the stranger; according to the native-born.” This doesn’t mean the two were separated as if the strangers were shoved off in a corner. Rather, it means that the two are equally represented before the Lord, whether stranger or native-born. Any who are present are deemed on the same level during this rite, and thus at all times hence. Also...

³³ (con’t) **Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal,**

Again, it refers to the man from whom the people find their origin: *khetsyo el mul har g'rizim v'ha'khetsyo el mul har eval* – “His half toward front Mount Gerizim and his half toward front Mount Ebal.” This is referring to the division of the tribes according to the word of Moses in Deuteronomy 27 –

“And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying, ¹² ‘These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; ¹³ and these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.’”
-Deuteronomy 27:11-13

³³ (con’t) **as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.**

It does not say, “that they should.” It simply reads: *ka'asher tsivah Mosheh eved Yehovah l'barekh eth ha'am Yisrael ba'rishonah* – “According to which commanded Moses, servant Yehovah to bless the people Israel in the first.” Moses commanded at first, and now that command is being brought to completion. However, there is a distinct difference in what was said by Moses in Deuteronomy 27 and what is said about the account now –

Deuteronomy: “These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people...and these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse.”

Joshua: to bless the people of Israel.

³⁴ **And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings,**

It is singular: *v'akhare ken qara eth kal divre ha'torah ha'berakha v'ha'q'lalah* – “And after, thus, read (sg.) all words the Torah, the blessing and the cursing.” The law in its

entirety, with all the blessing and cursing is on full display in what is being presented to the people. The singular indicates that Joshua did the reading. Even if others read, the credit for the action is assigned solely to him.

The rite would have been performed just as was recorded in Deuteronomy, but now it is considered as a blessing upon the people as just noted in the previous verse.

³⁴ (con't) **according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.**

The translation is close enough to get the full sense of what is written. Everything was conducted exactly in accord with what is written in the Book of the Torah. That is noted with the words...

³⁵ **There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel,**

The Hebrew is a bit more precise than the translation: “No there was word from all which had commanded Moses which no read Joshua in front all assembly Israel.” Exactly as he was told to read, so he read.

As it was the Levites who were to call the blessings and the curses which were then responded to with “Amen” by the people, one must wonder what Joshua read. The answer seems to be what is recorded in Deuteronomy 31 –

“So Moses wrote this law and delivered it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰ And Moses commanded them, saying: “At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. ¹² Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, ¹³ and *that* their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess.” Deuteronomy 31:9-13

If this is so, then it would be a certainty that the account now is not chronological. Rather, this account would be after the land was subdued and the Feast of Tabernacles

was proclaimed. At the same time, the law would have been read by Joshua with all Israel in attendance. This certainly seems likely based on the final words of the chapter...

^{35 (fin)} **with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.**

v'hanashim v'hataph v'ha'ger ha'holekh b'qirbam – “and the women and the little one, and the stranger – the goer in their midst.” In Deuteronomy 27, it does say, “all Israel,” but that often means less than “all Israel.” It can refer to a portion of the nation and the context explains the meaning.

However, in Deuteronomy 27, the only mention beyond that is in verse 14 which says, “And the Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel.” As such, there was no requirement explicitly stated for the women, little ones, and others noted there. But the requirement to hear the entire law read is explicit in Deuteronomy 31.

Therefore, to close out the verses, I would suggest that this account is not chronological, that the events occurred after the subduing of the land of Canaan recorded in Joshua 14:15, and that this altar was dedicated at the time of Tabernacles.

As such, the reason for the placement of the verses here now is twofold. First, it is to show obedience to the command early in Joshua, simply to have it recorded and out of the way. But second, it is to complete the typology that has been so carefully and meticulously detailed in the first chapters of the book. That will be seen next.

*An altar of stone you shall make for Me
You shall make it according to My word
Large stones and plaster, so shall it be
Follow the instructions just as you have heard*

*Make it on the mountain of the curse
And set it up just as I have commanded you
Not a point I have stated shall you miss, that would be perverse
Everything I have said, you are certainly to do*

*The typology must be maintained carefully
So that what it anticipates will be clearly understood
Do just what you have been instructed by Me
And you will have done just as you should*

II. Pictures of Christ

As we have seen, and to again understand what is going on in these Joshua sermons, we have been seeing the process of salvation in individual passages, but they all happen at once. *Moses, the law dies. Israel accepts Christ's fulfillment of the law. *Israel enters the Jordan (Christ); Israel is baptized into Christ's death (Chapter 3). *Israel, signified by the stones carried to Gilgal and which are then rested there, enters its rest (Chapter 4). *Two sets of stones are set up, signifying the heavenly government of Jews and Gentiles (Chapter 4). *Israel is circumcised; Israel has put off the body of sins of the flesh / The reproach of the past is taken away when believers are circumcised by the Lord (Chapter 5). *Believers partake of Christ as their Passover (Chapter 5). *The Lord is the Leader of the people, and they are brought into "holy ground." (Chapter 5). *Access to that holy ground is brought about by acceptance of Christ's work (Chapter 6). *Coming out of the state of anathema (*kherem*) is realized through the love of Jesus (1 Corinthians 16:22) and pursuing the true gospel of Jesus Christ seen in Galatians 1:8, 9 (Chapter 7). *Christ's prevailing over the law is highlighted (Chapter 8). And now, Christ, the embodiment and fulfillment of the law is detailed here.

If you remember the sermons from Deuteronomy 27, everything about the construction of the altar anticipated Christ Jesus. The reason for building this altar without any iron tool is because the unhewn stone is something that God created.

If man were to shape the stone, then it would include man's efforts in it. Thus, it would lead to either idolatry of the altar that man had made in order to fellowship with God, or it would lead to idolatry of self because man had erected the place where God and man fellowshiped.

Either way, that would indicate works-based salvation. It is man attempting to reconcile himself to God by his efforts rather than accepting God's provision in the process of reconciliation.

Obviously, Israel had to build the altar, or no altar would be built. But not hewing the stones provides the typology – it is God's work, not man's effort, that is the basis for the altar.

God made the stones. For man to add his effort into what He had made would then be contrary to the premise of the Bible. Man is saved by grace, not by works.

The erection of the altar itself cannot be equated to a work any more than the compilation of the Bible. God gave the words, man recorded the words, and through the words man meets with God. Likewise, God made the earth and the stones, man simply arranges them into an altar, and God then meets with man.

And more, that altar anticipates Christ in that God made man (the building block of humanity) without any human effort, and humanity has then moved itself around in order to reproduce, eventually leading to Christ. The fact that Israel assembled the stones does not in any way damage the picture of Christ. Rather, it enhances it.

Using *even*, or stone, provides its own picture of Christ's humanity. He is the fulfillment of this altar where man comes to fellowship with God. Stone is used to speak of the Lord and of the Messiah in Scripture, such as –

“I will praise You,
For You have answered me,
And have become my salvation.
²² The **stone** *which* the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
²³ This was the LORD's doing;
It *is* marvelous in our eyes.
²⁴ This *is* the day the LORD has made;
We will rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:21-24

That is then cited six times in the New Testament when speaking of the Messiah by Jesus, or by Peter when referring to Jesus as the Messiah. In Isaiah 28:16, Isaiah says –

“Behold, I lay in Zion a **stone** for a foundation,
A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;
Whoever believes will not act hastily.” Isaiah 28:16

That is cited by both Paul and Peter when referring to Christ as well. It is God who fashioned Christ's humanity. Thus, to shape a stone for this altar would typologically be to fashion a false “christ” of one's own choosing. This is the reason for the specificity in the command. The earthen altar, or one of stone, pictures Christ who was alone fashioned by God.

To hew the stones would then say that *the people* were fashioning their own salvation, rejecting the only true Lord who is willing to meet with man. In these verses, the credit

is given solely to Joshua as the builder of the altar. It anticipates Christ being the One who is the focal point of fellowshiping with God.

The noting of the altar being built “to the LORD God of Israel” meant that these are His people, and that He is their God. The typology, gives a clear reference to Paul’s words of Romans 11 that “all Israel will be saved.” As he says –

“And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷ For this *is* My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.’” Romans 11:26, 27

The people will someday cross through Christ as a nation, and they will be there before Christ, the embodiment of the law, pictured by this altar. It is said to be on Mount Ebal.

As a refresher from Deuteronomy, Ebal is to the north. Or, in reference to the layout of directions in the Bible, Gerizim is to the right, and Ebal is to the left. Thus, it matches the scriptural pattern of the right hand of blessing and the left hand of cursing. For example–

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.” Matthew 25:31-33

Ebal is the mountain of curse, the bald mountain. Thus, there is metaphor being conveyed. The altar pictures Christ, but so does the location and designation of the mountain, just as Paul details in Galatians 3 –

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’ ¹¹ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’ ¹² Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”
¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’), ¹⁴ that the blessing of

Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:10-14

Christ became the curse so that His people could be freed from the curse of the law. The Gentiles got it and have continued to get it for two thousand years. Israel will get it someday, probably not too long from now, as well. With that noted, verse 31 said that everything was done in accord with all that Moses commanded and of the things written in the Book of the Law.

Joshua doing these things is typical of Christ who has completed everything the law details. Exactly as it is written, Jesus accomplished without allowing a jot or tittle of the law to fall to the ground. In Israel’s coming to Christ, the next words concerning Israel offering burnt offerings and sacrificing peace offerings are then fulfilled.

To fully understand these offerings would take a review of Leviticus. But for those who were here during those sermons, every single detail of these pictured Christ. For the whole burnt offering, that can be summed up with Paul’s words of Ephesians –

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” Ephesians 5:1, 2

As noted, the peace offerings are offerings that are shared between the offeror and God. It is an offering that is accompanied by leavened bread. That signifies God’s acceptance of man, despite his sin because of the sacrifice of Christ. Of this, Paul says –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:19

Christ is our offering, and He is our sacrifice, and it is through Him that we can now fellowship, or have peace, with God. Together, these two are also seen in Hebrews –

“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.

⁶In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin
You had no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, “Behold, I have come—

In the volume of the book it is written of Me—
To do Your will, O God.”” Hebrews 10:5-7

The sacrifices and offerings of the law only anticipated what is perfectly realized in Christ.

The act of Joshua writing the “second Torah Moses” on the stone is an obvious picture of Jesus being the embodiment, the *mishneh torath*, or second Torah of Moses. The word *mishneh* signifies a copy, a double, a repetition. The point is that Jesus is the repetition of the law. He gave it to Israel through Moses, and He presented Himself as the fulfillment of it to them –

“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.”

-John 5:46

Just as Joshua wrote the words of the law on the altar “in the presence of the sons of Israel,” Jesus – the embodiment of the law – came to dwell in the presence of the sons of Israel.

In verse 33, it was noted that all Israel with all his elders and scribes, and his judges stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord. The priests picture Christ in His priestly duties and the term “ark covenant Yehovah” pictures the sacrifice of Christ that fulfilled the Old and then issued in the New Covenant.

The elders and scribes and judges are the seat of power in Israel. Thus, the words are emblematic of Jesus’ words to Israel concerning Jerusalem, Israel’s seat of power –

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁵ See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” Luke 13:34, 35

Israel will call out to the Lord Jesus, and He will return to them with mercy, grace, and salvation. But more, it also noted in verse 33, that this included the stranger (*ger*) as well as the native-born (*ezrakh*).

When Israel comes to Christ, there will be those in the land who are not of Israel, but they will receive the same salvation and blessing as the native-born. Ezekiel explicitly speaks of that day following the tribulation period, meaning the millennium –

“It shall be that you will divide it by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the **strangers** [ger] who dwell among you and who bear children among you. They shall be to you as **native-born** [ezrakh] among the children of Israel; they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.” Ezekiel 47:22

With that noted, verse 33 then referred to the people standing half toward Mount Gerizim and half toward Mount Ebal. This comprises the blessings and the curses for or against Israel. Christ is the Source of both for the people, but He was willing to take the curses upon Himself for them. That is certainly why the verse said, “to bless the people Israel in the first.”

In coming to Christ, there is no longer a curse. Rather there is only blessing. The substance of the text in Joshua clearly indicates this. The intent was for Christ to come, fulfill the law, and to bless Israel in their acceptance of that. They rejected Him, and they fell under the curse of the law. However, some great day they will come to Him, and they shall be blessed.

Verse 34 indicated that Joshua read all the words of the law. As noted, that is something only required at the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus is the fulfillment, embodiment, and ending of the Law of Moses. Joshua’s reading of the law is an anticipation of Israel’s acceptance of Jesus who the law anticipates.

As such, verse 35 noted the complete and total compliance of Joshua in reading the law before all the assembly of Israel. It is an exacting note that Jesus did just what He said needed to be done when speaking to Israel –

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

-Matthew 5:18-20

The meaning of the “kingdom of heaven” must be determined from the context. In the case of Israel the nation, it is referring to entry into the millennium by coming through Christ’s fulfillment of the law. Until Israel accepts that, they are bound to the law.

But, like each individual today, the nation will someday exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees when they come to Christ and are imputed His righteousness. With this understood, the chapter ended with the words, “with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.”

As noted, it is a definite hint that the rite was conducted at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. That is more certain when understanding that it is the only feast mandated during the millennium. Israel will have Christ Jesus dwelling among them, and they will observe this as a memorial year by year. That is recorded in Zechariah 14, and which we will see before we close today.

The lesson we can learn, once again, from today’s passage is that we need Christ. Be it individually or Israel as a nation, we cannot do without what He offers. One is either under law (whatever law that may be) and he will stand condemned before God, or he is under grace – the grace of God in Christ – and he will stand approved before God.

This is the great and often repeated picture that we are being presented with in Scripture. Hold fast to Jesus, forget the nonsense that people tell you about observing the law, and forget about working your way to heaven.

Christ has done the work. Christ has made the way available. Christ is the Door through which we can enter. Rest in Christ, trust in Christ, and be reconciled to God through the wonderous workings of God in Christ. Amen.

Closing Verse: *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” Zechariah 14:16*

Next Week: Joshua 9:1-18 *It’s plain to all who are observants, yes to everyone...* (We are Your Servants, Part I) (18th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

All that Moses Had Commanded

Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel
-----in Mount Ebal

As Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded
-----the children of Israel (in his Torah school)

As it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses:

“An altar of whole stones over which no man
-----has wielded an iron tool

And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD
-----and sacrificed peace offerings

And there, in the presence of the children of Israel
He wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses
Which he had written, according to all Moses did tell

Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges
On either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites stood
Who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD
The stranger as well as he who was born among them
-----all lookin’ good

Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim
And half of them in front of Mount Ebal as well
As Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before
That they should bless the people of Israel

And afterward he read all the words of the law
The blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written
-----in the Book of the Law, as it does tell
There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded
Which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel

With the women, the little ones too
And the strangers who were living among them, so he did do

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 9:1-18 **(WE ARE YOUR SERVANTS, PART I)**

The week before typing this sermon, it was my birthday. For my birthday, some special folks gave me a copy of the movie Leap of Faith. The main character is played by the comedian and actor Steve Martin.

The basic plot is that of a touring evangelistic ministry that exists pretty much for the sake of ripping people off through false miracles, false healings, and outright deceit. And yet, the evangelist, Jonas Nightengale, openly admits this to those who ask about it. Most don't, simply because they want to believe in the miraculous.

The ministry is so obviously pointing to the false healing ministries in the world today that one cannot help but identify one or more of them even if you have only watched a few minutes of Christian TV. They have a whole crew out doing what Jonas Nightengale's crew was doing. They are slick, they are showy, and they are sharks.

Text Verse: *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."*

-2 Corinthians 11:13-15

As I watched the movie, I was literally upset at what I was watching. Not because Steve Martin was inaccurately portraying these people, but because he was accurately portraying them. They are shameless people who exploit the name of Jesus in order to get rich and famous.

What makes me even more upset is that the movie accurately portrayed the people who went to his revivals. Like those who fall for the false teachers of the church, they are just dumb, ignorant sheep that are taken in by such people. And the reason for this comes down to one thing: a lack of knowledge about the word.

Hosea, quoting the Lord, said of Israel, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." People are ripped off, led down the heresy highway, never given the truth about ten thousand points of proper doctrine, and lead miserable lives simply because they lack proper knowledge of the word.

Told to tithe? You've been duped. Mormon? You're following a false Christ. Accepting of homosexuality or some other perversion in your church? You are accepting what Christ openly and strongly condemns. Believe you can lose your salvation? You haven't been properly instructed on what the word "grace" means. Told you must be circumcised? Paul says that is anathema. You have fallen from grace, and you are (or will be) a debtor to the entire law.

We could go on and on and on. But instead, we will go on. Learn your Bible. Have discernment and forget "trust but verify." Rather, trust no one until verified. In today's passage, Israel will trust without full verification, even though they thought they had it. Why? Because they didn't ask the Lord.

Be sure to ask the Lord about stuff. Great lessons such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Perhaps You Dwell Among Us (verses 1-8)

¹ And it came to pass when all the kings who *were* on this side of the Jordan,

Though obvious, the reference as to which side of the Jordan it is speaking of must be inferred: *vayhi kishmoa kal ham'lakhim asher b'ever ha'yarden* – "And it came to pass according to hearing all the kings who in side the Jordan." It simply says, "in side the Jordan." From there, one must know that it is speaking of Canaan proper.

The word got out very quickly that first Jericho and now Ai had been destroyed. Because of this, it is understood that a slow and methodical chipping away at the cities of the land is starting to take place. Unless something is done about this, each city stood on its own, and as such, could not stand. This included those kings...

^{1 (con't)} in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon

All of the locations are stated in the singular: in *the* hill-country, in the lowland, and in all *the* coastland *of* the Sea, the Great, toward against the Lebanon. The three areas mentioned would be the hill-country, meaning the mountains of Ephraim and Judah, but probably not the mountains of the northeastern area. Those will be dealt with later in Joshua.

Next is the *sh'felah* or lowland which is the plain area to the west of Jerusalem. It is also known as the Judean foothills. It comprises an area somewhat between Joppa and Gaza. The *khoph*, or coastland, probably would be the area in the north from Joppa to Tyre due to the words "toward against the Lebanon." Of these locations, the people groups are...

¹ (con't) —**the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard *about it*,**

It is correct. Each is identified in the singular. Thus, each is set in opposition to the nation of Israel. Hence, taken together, they are six nations against one. Hittite means Terror, Terrible, Fearsome. Amorite means Talkers (active) or Renown (passive). Canaanite means Humiliated, or Humbled, or even Subdued. Perizzite comes from *perazi*, a hamlet dweller. Thus, it means something like Villager or Dweller in an Open Country.

Hivite means Villagers, or more specifically Tent Villagers. Jebusite means Treading Down (active) or Trodden Underfoot (passive). It is when these groups heard...

² **that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.**

va'yitqabtsu yakhdav l'hilakhem im Yehoshua v'im Yisrael pe ekhad – "And gathered together to battle with Joshua and with Israel – mouth one." The expression "one mouth" means that instead of placing the interests of their individual clan above the others, they united as if one person, speaking with one thought and expressing it with one voice. John Gill presents the thought well –

"...were unanimous in their councils and resolutions; they all confederated together, and agreed as one man to make a common cause of it, and oppose Israel with their united forces." John Gill

However, in contrast to these people groups, there is a portion of them that understands the gravity of the situation. Despite the magnificent force that could be mustered, if God was not on their side, they could not prevail. And because of their understanding about what the Lord had done to Egypt, including the crossing of the Red Sea, as well as the parting of the Jordan, it was clearly evident that He was with Israel. Therefore, it next says...

³ **But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai,**

v'yosheve giv'on shameu eth asher asah Yehoshua lirikho v'la'ay – “And dwellers Gibeon heard what had done Joshua to Jericho and to the Ai.” The name Gibeon, or *Giv'on*, comes from *gavia*, meaning a cup or a bowl. When upside down, it looks like a hill. As such, it means Hill Town or Hilly.

These are of the Hivite people group. Their city will eventually be granted to the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18:25), and it will become a Levitical city within Benjamin (Joshua 21:17). At this point, they have heard of the destruction that was brought against both Jericho and Ai, and they knew they would not be long for this world if they didn't act. Therefore...

⁴ they worked craftily,

va'yaasu gam hemah b'ar'mah – “And did also in cunning.” Here, the word *gam*, or also, is referring to Joshua of the previous verse where the same word, *asah* or “to do,” is used –

Asher asah [had done] *Yehoshua*
Va'yaasu [did] *gam hemah*

Joshua did this, and so they did that. And the “that” they have done is to act in a cunning or crafty way. That craftiness led them to...

^{4 (con't)} and went and pretended to be ambassadors.

The words “pretended to be” are not correct. Being ambassadors is exactly what they are: *va'yel'khu va'yitstayaru* – “and went as ambassadors.” It is a word found only here in the Bible, *tsayar*. It signifies acting as an envoy, coming from *tsiyr*, an envoy.

These men were, in fact, sent out as envoys. Hence, the craftiness is not in who they are but in what they will do. If your Bible reads differently, such as, “and they took along provisions,” the change comes from substituting a single consonant in the Hebrew.

This is how the Greek and some other ancient translations make it. Thus, it would agree with the “moldy bread” that will be mentioned in verse 12. But that is dealt with in verse 5, so that seems less likely. Either way, as for the craftiness itself, that begins to be explained with the next words...

^{4 (con't)} And they took old sacks on their donkeys,

va'yiqhu saqim balim la'khamorehem – “And took sacks worn out to their donkeys.” Here is a new word, *baleh*, or worn out. It will be seen four times in verses 9:4 and 9:5 and then only one more time in Ezekiel 23:43. At this point, we have no idea what the old sacks are for. But they are placed on the donkeys.

The word *khamor*, or donkey, comes from *khamar*, meaning to ferment or boil. The idea is that as a pot boils, it glows from redness. Therefore, the donkey gets its name from its red dun color. Next, it mentions...

⁴ (con't) **old wineskins torn and mended,**

v'nodoth yayin balim um'buqaim um'tsorarim – “and skins wine old, and burst, and bound up.” The word *nod*, or wineskin, is used here for the first of six times. It is a bag made of skin and used for fluids. In this case, it is for fermented wine.

It does not say the place where the skins burst is sewn. Rather, they are just bound up. The surest way to repair such a skin would be to put a patch on it and sew it. Instead, this gives the sense of them grabbing the skin to close the hole and then winding a string around it to tie it off as people would do on a journey.

It still isn't known what the items are used for, but it is getting intriguing as the narrative continues. One can see that whatever is coming, it is a deception given in contrast to Israel's warfare against Ai. Israel had set out a diversionary attack against the city which was then overtaken by the main force.

Now, we are seeing the inhabitants of Gibeon using their own trickery in order to overtake Israel in some unusual way. As such it explains the contrasting expression which began the verse, “And did also in cunning.” Israel was cunning against Ai, now Gibeon is being cunning against Israel. This crafty plan continues with...

⁵ **old and patched sandals on their feet,**

un'aloth baloth um'tulaoth b'raglehem – “And shoes old and spotted in their feet.” The word *tala* is elsewhere translated as “spotted.” As such, the idea is that they had shoes that needed patches, and the patches made them look mottled, or it could be that they were worn through or stained and thus they looked spotted. The word translated as “shoe” can mean sandal, but one patches a shoe while one mends a sandal. Also...

⁵ (con't) **and old garments on themselves;**

u-s'lamoth baloth alehem – “and garments old upon them.” We still haven’t been told what is coming, but it’s starting to sound like a hobo convention in a Roger Miller song. Also...

⁵ (con’t) **and all the bread of their provision was dry *and* moldy.**

v’kol lekhem tsedam yavesh hayah niqudim – “and all bread provision dry had become speckled.” Here is another new word, *niqud*. It comes from an unused word meaning to mark by puncturing or branding. And so this means it is either 1) crumbly, thus falling apart and making speckles, 2) pierced by vermin that ate holes in it, or 3) moldy because it has spots.

The only other time it is used outside of this chapter is in 1 Kings 14:3 where it cannot mean moldy. Rather, there it speaks of a type of bread probably for dipping, as in honey. Hence, pierced or crumbly bread is surely what is meant here.

⁶ **And they went to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel,**

The translation is close enough to get the full sense. These Gibeonites have left with all of their old stuff and traveled a short distance from their city to the Gilgal by the Jordan. It is a distance that can be traveled in a single night as is seen in Joshua 10:9.

⁶ (con’t) **“We have come from a far country;**

me’erets r’khoqah banu – “From land far we have come.” This isn’t just a lie, but a blatant one. The word far can mean a lot of things, maybe even if they were from the border by Lebanon, but it cannot mean a distance of what is reckoned as 15 to 20 miles.

That might be a long walk for someone whose donkey is broken down on the side of the road, but not for a group of ambassadors who are coming to meet with another group of people about an important matter. The craftiness of the preparations has not yet been explained, but their cunning is perfectly evident from the lie.

⁶ (con’t) **now therefore, make a covenant with us.”**

v’atah kirtu lanu berit – “and now cut to us covenant.” The meaning is that a sacrifice is made and those who make it invoke their God or gods, swearing allegiance to be faithful to the covenant that is made in connection with the cutting of the sacrifice.

It was, at times, accompanied by dividing the sacrificed animals in half and those who agreed to the stipulations would pass through the pieces. In this, it was a way of stating that the same end should come upon those who violate the covenant as that of the animal. In other words, it is an irrevocable matter.

Such a covenant can be fulfilled, but it cannot be arbitrarily revoked. Hence, when Jesus spoke of the Law of Moses, He said –

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”

-Matthew 5:17, 18

In the case of Israel, even to this day, it is an indication that they are still bound to the terms of the Mosaic covenant until they accept the terms of the New Covenant. As for the meeting between Israel and the Gibeonites...

⁷ Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites,

The Hebrew spoken form (sg.) is different from the written (pl.) to avoid a confusion in what is conveyed, but the subject and the object are singular. The written form is: *va'yomeru ish Yisrael el ha'khivi* – “And said (pl.) man (sg.) Israel unto the Hivite (sg).”

Though confusing, it is essentially all of the men speaking with one voice. To make it a bit more understandable, it could be rendered, “And they said, the man of Israel, unto the Hivite.” This would take us in thought back to verse 1 where all of the people groups spoke with one mouth. The same is being conveyed here.

There is a united voice that is being portrayed as the words of a single man (Israel) and it is conveying words to a single entity, the Hivite. As noted, the name Hivite means Tent Villager, but it is identical to *khavah* or “Life,” the name of Adam’s wife (Eve).

Abarim notes that the verb form *khavah* “means to lay out in order to live collectively, and describes investing one’s personal sovereignty into a living collective like a symbiont. It’s mostly translated as to prostrate, which is to submit oneself wholly and bodily to a collective or to the leader of that collective.” That is, surprisingly, what they are now doing. The response to them by Israel is...

⁷ (con’t) “Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?”

ulay b'qirbi atah yoshev v'ek ekhroth l'kha berith – “Perhaps in my (sg.) midst you (sg.) dwell, and how I (sg.) make to you (sg.) covenant?” The entire point of what is being conveyed is that Israel has already made claim on the land of Canaan – “my midst.”

As this is so, the question is obvious – “How can I, Israel, make a covenant with you (people group) if you live in my midst?” Added to that would be the implied thought, “Because you do not belong here any longer!”

Of these confusing words, and specifically the term “in my midst,” Keil says, “which is to be explained on the ground that only one of the Israelites (viz., Joshua) was speaking as the mouthpiece of all the rest. The plural ויאמרו [*va'yomeru* – “and they said”] is used, because Joshua spoke in the name of the people.”

I would argue it is exactly the opposite. The people are speaking as a single entity in the previous clause (“Then said (pl.) the men of Israel ... perhaps in my (sg.) midst you dwell”) rather than Joshua being referred to in the plural.

Israel is saying that anyone in the land does not belong there any longer because Israel, the single entity comprised of many, has moved in. Obviously, such could not be the case and so Israel could never agree to such a thing. Hence, the Gibeonites continue...

⁸ But they said to Joshua, “We are your servants.”

The translation is now correct. It is plural, and they are addressing the leader of Israel alone. But more, it completely blows off the people’s questions as if they were never asked. Instead, they masterfully speak in the customary way found elsewhere in Scripture to indicate courteous fellowship with a hint of subordination – “We are your servants.”

They have come to make a covenant, and thus, they are – at this time – subordinating themselves to Joshua in order to secure it, showing that they are willing to accept reasonable terms. Despite this, Joshua remains unsatisfied...

^{8 (con't)} And Joshua said to them,

Again, it is correct. Joshua alone speaks now to them all. The people have spoken, they have conveyed the fact that they are united and that the land belongs to Israel. Joshua now prods further to determine their people group and their land with direct questions...

8 (con't) **“Who are you, and where do you come from?”**

The verb is imperfect: *mi atem u-me'ayin tabou* – “who you and from where you coming.” They represent a people group. As such, for them to come means that the people group is coming and will continue to come.

In other words, if a group of emissaries was to go from Israel to Iran today, they would be representing Israel. If they form an alliance by cutting a covenant, then it would be that from then on, Israel could come to Iran and Iran would come to Israel. The new bond would be formed.

With that understood, the Gibeonites will now speak out their answers to his questions, and as Adam Clarke says, they will “do it very artfully by a mixture of truth, falsehood, and hypocrisy.”

*For sure we are telling the truth
We wouldn't deceive you and that's no lie
We are honest Injun, even since our youth
And we shall be that way till the day we die*

*Here is the proof that we are honest men
These things will validate our story is true
If we have to, we will repeat it again and again
We would never do anything to deceive you*

*Trust in us, we are faithful to our word
We are the straightest of shooters, that is for sure
You can trust every word you have heard
We are honest, upright, clean, and pure*

II. Make a Covenant with Us (verses 9-18)

⁹So they said to him: “From a very far country your servants have come,

In full crafty mode, they completely ignore the first question which would ruin any chance of an agreement. Instead, they launch directly into answering the second question while using a perfect verb: *me'erets rekhoqah meod bau avdekha* – “from land far very have come your servants.”

The “your servants” is singular. They are emissaries who have arrived to make an alliance with Joshua on behalf of their people. The perfect verb in essence means, they are not “coming;” they “have come.” They are here to make a covenant, and to them, it is a done deal in regard to their submission to it. Hence, they subordinate themselves to him. And this is...

^{9 (con't)} **because of the name of the LORD your God;**

I'shem Yehovah elohekha – “to name Yehovah your God.” The meaning of “to” equates to “for.” They acknowledge that Yehovah, Joshua’s God (because Joshua stands as representative of all Israel), is the reason for their coming. And more...

^{9 (con't)} **for we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt,**

The same word, translated as “His fame,” is used of the Lord now which was used in verse 6:27 when referring to Joshua. It signifies a report and thus fame. They have heard the report of the Lord based on all that He had done in Egypt. But more...

¹⁰ **and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan—**

It is singular: *ha'emori* – “the Amorite.” They speak of the two kings as one people implicitly in opposition to Israel, the people under the Lord. They then continue by stating their specific knowledge of these two kings.

As such, it implies that they were great kings to have been renowned even in a land “very far” away. Therefore, it conveys the idea of the greatness of the Lord on behalf of Israel concerning what He did...

^{10 (con't)} **to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth.**

The battle against these two foes was recorded in Numbers 21. The name Ashtaroth, however, has only been seen in Deuteronomy 1. It is believed to signify Union of Instructions, and thus One Law. The emissaries openly speak about these as obviously great victories. Thus the report, or fame, of the Lord had come to their knowledge because of these.

What is notable is that this is where they stop their words on this line of thought. They prudently mention nothing about the crossing of the Jordan or of the battles of Jericho and Ai.

This would give the sense that these recent deeds had not yet reached their ears. And yet, ironically, they might possibly have even heard the sounds of battle and smelled the smoke of the burning if the wind was in the right direction.

With that large gap in their supposed understanding of recent events, they then bolster this as they continue speaking...

11 Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying,

All the pronouns in the verse are plural. The superlative nature of the statement is given to add icing to the cake they have already baked up. They note the elders but mention no king. Thus, they are a people that is small and without power, or they are a people that would not have a threatening system of power under a single ruler.

As such, mentioning the elders would be expected, but they add in, “all the inhabitants of our country.” Their unity of thought is the great, mutually agreed upon idea in this non-threatening country.

It is as if the nation was stirred up with the success of the Lord working on Israel’s behalf, and so they came flooding forward agreeing that something needed to be done. And so...

11 (con’t) ‘Take provisions with you for the journey,

The word “provision” is singular: *qehu b’yedkhem tsedah la’derek* – “take in your hands provision to the way.” Everything they loaded up is taken as a single provision. The reason for this is that it was all comprised of things that were supposedly suitable for sustaining them as a single group as they departed. “You have a load of provision. Everything you need is provided, head out...”

11 (con’t) and go to meet them, and say to them, “We are your servants;

The plural of the pronouns continues. The whole nation of people told them to go, and they are to meet the whole nation of people in Israel. “You are great! We are your servants.” The appeal is from people group to people group, one subordinating themselves to the other. And so...

11 (con’t) now therefore, make a covenant with us.””

v'atah kirtu lanu berit – “and now cut (you all) with us covenant.” They are a friendly people that agree among one another, they don't have a king over them, and they are awed by the fame of the Lord over Israel. They have subordinated themselves to the people they desire to covenant with. There are no negatives to raise doubts as to what should be done.

And, certainly, their story must be true. The evidence of it is right in front of them...

¹² This bread of ours we took hot *for* our provision from our houses on the day we departed to come to you.

The translation is close enough. They pull out their old bread that was either crumbled or insect eaten and show it to them, claiming that it was hot the day they left. The word *kham*, or hot, is introduced here. It will only be seen again in Job 37:17. It signifies warm or hot, just as one would expect with bread that is freshly made and handed to the travelers...

¹² (con't) But now look, it is dry and moldy.

v'atah hineh yabesh v'hayah niqudim – “And now, behold! Dry and become crumbled (or insect eaten).” It is a nice touch if you think about it. Like in a Columbo movie, there is always some small thing that the bad guy overlooks. Well, in this case, it sure isn't the bread.

One can see them having gone out behind the local baker's place and picking up pieces of bread that had been gnawed on by rats or that had been stepped on by the feet of passersby. It was a totally convincing argument because bread is what sustains. Who would travel without food that was satisfactory for a trip? And more...

¹³ And these wineskins which we filled *were* new, and see, they are torn;

This is not an improbable thing. Wineskins that are filled have weight. When they rub long enough, they will split. If they are pulled out at a stop and the people drink, they may get put down on a rock that will puncture them.

If the travelers do a bit of extra drinking after a long day, they are bound to be handled even a bit more roughly. A bit more drinking and... you get the point. Hence, after a while, they would bear the marks of their overuse. However, it still takes a lot to wear

through skins, and so a long journey easily explains the matter. Columbo hasn't found a clue yet...

13 (con't) and these our garments and our sandals have become old because of the very long journey.”

The words should more appropriately read “from the exceeding greatness of the way” (YLT). It refers to the route itself and the distance that was traversed.

Again, this is what one would expect, especially in the dry, rocky area of the Mideast. A donkey would get tired if ridden too long, and so there would be plenty of walking next to it. If it was heavily loaded for a long journey, walking would be all that occurred. Everything is satisfactorily straight in this regard.

And more, everything here is given in complete contrast to Israel since they had left Egypt –

“And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. ⁶You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or *similar* drink, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.” Deuteronomy 29:5, 6

Israel would have heard their words, considered their own situation in light of that, and concluded that the Lord's miraculous provision for them was in complete contrast to these people now coming to seek the fame of the Lord. Everything passed the Columbo test in their eyes, thus far...

14 Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions;

It's obvious that the NKJV translator of this passage simply copied someone else. The words “of Israel” are not in the text and yet they are not italicized: *va'yiqhu ha'anashim mitsedam* – “And took the men from their provision.” Maybe the translator was too busy sampling the “provision” himself.

Despite that, it is debated whether “the men” are the emissaries who simply take out their provisions to show Israel (which has already been noted above), or if it is Israel who took of them, meaning tried them. The answer is obvious based on the next clause. The men of Israel took and sampled.

The verse reveals a careful attention to detail by Israel. They tried whatever was packed to see if it was fresh or not, and what they tried obviously passed the smell test. That is the last note of their inquiry into the matter...

¹⁴ (con't) **but they did not ask counsel of the LORD.**

v'eth pi Yehovah lo shaalu – “And mouth Yehovah no they did ask.” This shows that the previous clause was referring to those of Israel. It also obviously shows a great failing on behalf of the people. But the text is careful to remove Joshua from the overall responsibility for the matter by leaving out his name.

It is an indication that there is typology being conveyed for us to consider. Israel did not do the one thing that is most important of all in this matter.

And yet, we have to consider it from both directions. Not only did Israel not seek the counsel of the Lord, but the Lord did not speak to Joshua as He has already done at least a dozen times so far in the book.

This pretty certainly tells us that the Lord was willing to allow them to make their own mistakes, but they are mistakes that are 1) not going to lead to a permanent disability in the plan of redemption, 2) will (hopefully) teach Israel a lesson, 3) will actually have some benefit in the redemptive narrative, and 4) will typologically show us something concerning the future.

Some find this an actual violation of the Mosaic law –

“And the LORD said to Moses: ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; ¹⁹ set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. ²⁰ And you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. ²¹ He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation.” Numbers 27:18-21

There is nothing to say that Joshua was required to go before the Lord in all instances. It simply notes that this was something that was available for him to do. And there are already recorded times where the Lord clearly speaks directly to Joshua. Hence, this cannot be considered a violation of the law.

15 So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live;

Joshua is the one highlighted here. “So made (sg.) with them, Joshua, peace and cut (sg.) to them covenant to live - them.” It isn’t just that Israel wouldn’t kill them, but that they are covenanted to preserve them as when nations are attacked by other nations. This is an important point that is not long in being brought forth. They made the appropriate sacrifices, and the covenant is cut...

15 (con’t) and the rulers of the congregation swore to them.

Not only did Joshua make peace with them and cut a covenant with them, but it is acknowledged by the rulers in an oath as well. With this now done, it cannot be undone. And yet...

16 And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbors who dwelt near them.

Rather than “made a covenant,” it more precisely reads, “cut a covenant.” Other than that, the translation is fine. Nothing is said about how Israel found this out. It could be as simple as the men getting back on their donkeys, going back to Gibeon and telling them the news, and then Gibeon sending the men, or others, back to Israel to tell them the truth.

Whatever the situation was, it was enough to cause Israel to respond with a display of their displeasure...

17 Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day.

In using the term, “the children of Israel,” it appears that the entire army went out, just in case there was any trouble to arise. Hence, it took till the third day to reach them. With that noted, it next says...

17 (con’t) Now their cities *were* Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim.

This shows that it was no small number of people involved in the treaty. For reference, Gibeon means Hill Town or Hilly. Chephirah means Village. Beeroth means Wells. Kirjath Jearim means City of Forests or City of Honeycombs.

The first three cities will eventually be allotted to the land grant of Benjamin. The last will be allotted to Judah. It explains why there will be trouble with something that Saul will do in the future which will cause great distress for Israel. Saul will kill many of the Gibeonites, thus breaking this treaty.

Despite showing up in force, the text notes how Israel's hands are tied in the next words...

18 But the children of Israel did not attack them,

v'lo hikkum bene Yisrael – “And no did strike them sons Israel.” There is a never-ending supply of speculation as to why they did not strike them, as if the entire text has no meaning and people need to try to discover some unintelligible reason.

But the answer has already been given, and it will be given again in the next clause. A covenant was cut, an oath was made, and that is the end of it. There is no need to speculate beyond that. As it next clearly says...

18 (con't) because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel.

ki nishbeu lahem n'sie ha'edah b'Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “for had sworn to them rulers the congregation in Yehovah God Israel.” As just noted, a covenant was cut, and the elders of Israel had sworn an oath. This was in the name of the Lord, and it was absolutely binding. Despite this...

18 (fin) And all the congregation complained against the rulers.

The word *lun* signifies to lodge, as in staying overnight. However, it also means to complain or murmur. It is possible that our term “to lodge a complaint” is derived from this thought. For now, one can see that Israel is upset at what has transpired.

They see four cities that would increase their own wealth through plundering, and they care less about their agreement than they do about enriching themselves. But the agreement has been made, so all they can do is moan about it against the rulers.

Unfortunately, it is time to end the verses for the day. We'll have to finish things up next Sunday. A few simple lessons to learn from the account are obvious. Even though there

is nothing prescriptive in here for us today, it is always wise to consult the Lord before making any type of binding agreement.

Our means of consulting the Lord is two-fold. One is to read, know, contemplate, meditate on, and apply the word. If we do this, then we will not do what is contrary to the word. That is obvious. The second is to not neglect what Israel neglected, which is to speak to the Lord.

Not everything we do or want to do is laid out in Scripture. As such, we have decisions that must be made that are up to us. But it is the imprudent soul who will fail to talk to the Lord about the important things, and – indeed – even the minor things that we encounter in our daily lives.

When we tell him what our plans are, we should then ask Him to favor the decision if it is in His will, and to keep them from coming about if it is not. We can then assume that even if catastrophe results from our decision, that the Lord determined that it was the right thing to happen.

The other thing we can learn from today's passage is that not everything people present to us is as it appears. Even those who seem convincingly honest often have an ulterior motive. Hence, I would ask you to consider who you believe and why you do so.

Have you checked out the facts to the fullest extent possible? There is always a Jonas Nightengale ready to pull the wool over your eyes. So watch out concerning what you accept.

Closing Verse: *“till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”*

-Ephesians 4:13, 14

Next Week: Joshua 9:19-27 *Being slaves is what they deserveants, yes it is true...* (We Are Your Servants, Part II) (19th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

We Are Your Servants, Part I

And it came to pass when all the kings
Who were on this side of the Jordan, as the line is drawn
In the hills and in the lowland
And in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon

The Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite
The Hivite, and the Jebusite heard about it – yes, that word
That they gathered together to fight
With Joshua and Israel with one accord

But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard
What Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai
They worked craftily
And went and pretended to be ambassadors – gee, I wonder why

And they took old sacks on their donkeys
Old wineskins torn and mended
Old and patched sandals on their feet
And old garments on themselves, but the story isn't ended

And all the bread of their provision
Was dry and moldy. Being sneaky was their decision

And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal
And said to him and to the men of Israel
“We have come from a far country
Now therefore, make a covenant with us so that things go well

Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites
“Perhaps you dwell among us
So how can we make a covenant with you?”
That would be a big minus and not a plus

But they said to Joshua
“We are your servants. Come, come!”
And Joshua said to them
“Who are you, and where do you come from?”

So they said to him: "From a very far country
-----your servants have come
We walked and walked but happily no one tripped
Because of the name of the LORD your God
For we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt

And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites
Who were beyond the Jordan. Yes, we heard that note
To Sihon king of Heshbon
And Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth

Therefore, our elders and all the inhabitants of our country
Spoke to us, saying, (and making a bit of a fuss)
'Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them and say
"We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us"'

This bread of ours we took hot
For our provision from our houses on the day
We departed to come to you
But now look, it is dry and moldy. See how it has gotten that way!

And these wineskins which we filled were new
And look, they are torn – see the proof! No need for an attorney
And these our garments and our sandals have become old
Because of the very long journey

Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions
-----according to their word
But they did not ask counsel of the LORD

So Joshua made peace with them
And made a covenant with them to let them live
And the rulers of the congregation swore to them
Their vow to them they did give

And it happened at the end of three days
After they had made a covenant with them
That they heard that they were their neighbors
Who dwelt near them, those rascally men

Then the children of Israel journeyed
And came to their cities on the third day
Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth
-----and Kirjath Jearim
To them, they had strong words to say

But the children of Israel did not attack them
Because the rulers of the congregation
Had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel
And all the congregation complained against the rulers
-----of the nation

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 9:19-27 **(WE ARE YOUR SERVANTS, PART II)**

Of the Gibeonites, Adam Clarke said, “Had they come to the Israelites, and simply submitted themselves without opposition and without fraud, they had certainly fared much better. Lying and hypocrisy always defeat their own purpose, and at best can succeed only for a short season. Truth and honesty never wear out.”

Again, as he summed up his commentary on chapter 9, he said –

1. The Gibeonites told lies, in order to save their lives. No expediency can justify this, nor are we called to attempt it. The Gibeonites were heathens, and we can expect nothing better from them.
2. They did not profit by their falsity: had they come in fairly, sought peace, and renounced their idolatry, they would have had life on honorable terms. As it was, they barely escaped with their lives, and were utterly deprived of their political liberty. Even the good that is sought by unlawful means has God's curse on it.
3. We need not be solicitous for the character of the Gibeonites here; they are neither our models, nor believers in the true God, and therefore pure religion is not concerned in their prevarication and falsity.

For someone whose commentary I so enjoy, he can get very far afield at times. He said, “Had they come to the Israelites, and simply submitted themselves without opposition and without fraud, they had certainly fared much better.”

Rather, they would have all been killed. This was the command of the Lord. The people were devoted to God, and they could not spare them. We already saw what happened when Achan broke the law of *kherem*.

Next, he said of their lying, “No expediency can justify this.” Actually, the saving of their lives did justify it, just as was the case with Rahab. After that, he said, “They did not profit by their falsity.” Actually, the result of their falsity was one hundred percent profit. They would have lost everything otherwise.

They did escape with their lives. And even if they did not possess all the rights of Israel, they were given the political liberty of Israel because they were granted protection under the covenant of Israel.

Finally, he said that the Gibeonites were not “believers in the true God.” Actually, they were. This is exactly why they came to Joshua, just as Rahab already had done.

Text Verse: *“I create the fruit of the lips:*

Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near,’

Says the LORD,

‘And I will heal him.’

²⁰ *But the wicked are like the troubled sea,*

When it cannot rest,

Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

²¹ *‘There is no peace,’*

Says my God, “for the wicked.”” *Isaiah 57:19-21*

The Lord offers peace to those who are far off, and he says there is no peace for the wicked. In last week’s passage, Joshua was said to have made *shalom*, or peace, with the Gibeonites. Did the Lord take a nap during the events that transpired, or are we being shown something else than what Adam Clarke has noted?

From the text itself, we can see that the Gibeonites profited off of their lies. That may have upset Israel, but the Gibeonites were not under the Law of Moses. They were, however, under the law of conscience. They weighed out their options, saw that only one may possibly preserve their lives, and they did what any rational person would do who was in a similar circumstance.

For Christians, this is not a note condoning lying, but neither are we under the law. Consider the Jews in Nazi Germany. They have been marked for extermination. If we hide one in our basement and then lie about it, we have evaluated the circumstance, made a moral decision, and weighed out the positives and negatives. Even if our lives are forfeit for what we have done, it is surely the proper course to take.

Try not to sit too high on your bench of supposed moral superiority. You may find out that when you fall, it will be a painful experience. It is right and proper to tell the truth, but it can be right and proper to not do so at times. It is certain that Corrie ten Boom and many like her would agree.

Seek the highest moral principle at all times, and the way you can know which is right is to study the word of God. In it, you will find the proper standard of all morality by which you can then rightly conduct your affairs.

For now, we will continue on with the story of the Gibeonites. It is a marvelous part of God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Woodcutters and Water Carriers (verses 19-27)

¹⁹ Then all the rulers said to all the congregation,

The words of the rulers now are given in response to what was said in the final verse of the previous sermon –

“But the children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation complained against the rulers.” Joshua 9:18

The people complained against the rulers because they were not allowed to attack and plunder the Gibeonites. In response, the rulers now speak to all the congregation, saying...

¹⁹ (con't) “We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel;

anakhnu nishbanu lahem b'Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “We have sworn to them in Yehovah, God of Israel.” It is true that the Gibeonites entered into the covenant under false pretenses, but it is also true that Israel did not do their due diligence in searching out the matter before agreeing and entering into the covenant.

When they did search it out, it was already confirmed “in Yehovah, God of Israel.” It was thus binding upon them. The thought is reflected in a list of traits the Lord expects of His people found in Psalm 15. A couple of them are –

“In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
But he honors those who fear the LORD;
He who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
⁵ He *who* does not put out his money at usury,
Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.” Psalm 15:4, 5

The people feared the Lord in whose name the oath was made. This was true for both the Gibeonites and those of Israel. The people had sworn, even to their own hurt, and now they had to stand by their words. Because of this...

19 (con't) now therefore, we may not touch them.

In this case, the general word *naga*, or touch, carries with it the sense of striking or harming them. They must keep their hands off them because of the covenant that had been cut. The fact that this is correct is validated hundreds of years later when Saul violated the terms of the covenant –

“Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, “*It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites.*” 2 Samuel 21:1

The words had been spoken, and Israel was bound to them. But this does not mean that they didn't have other options at their disposal while still remaining faithful to their oath...

20 This we will do to them:

There is no profit that can be gained from the Gibeonites through their death and the plundering of their goods. That is established through the oath. However, they can be profited off through their lives, and so...

20 (con't) We will let them live,

There is a strong emphasis through the use of an infinitive absolute verb: *v'hakhayeh otam* – “And letting live them.” This sets the parameters as required by the covenant. Without complying, the leaders knew there would be consequences...

20 (con't) lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them.”

v'lo yihyeh alenu qetseph al ha'shevuah asher nishbanu lahem – “And no become upon us wrath upon the oath which we swore to them.” They directly tie the Lord's wrath to the cutting of the covenant. As noted, this is exactly what came upon Israel when Saul violated it many generations later.

As one can see, there is now a conflict between the precept of the law that demanded Israel kill every living person in Canaan and being obedient to the covenant that was made. Both are explicitly addressed in the law, and yet one precept now must trump the other (see Numbers 30:2 and Deuteronomy 20:16).

But this has already happened in the oath the two spies made with Rahab. That can be seen as nothing but a violation of the precept of the law, and yet, they were obligated to preserve her after the oath was made. For the Gibeonites, the covenant stands. However, nothing was said about any of the finer details. Israel will now use that to their advantage...

²¹ And the rulers said to them, “Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them.”

There is a particular emphasis in the words that even the English displays pretty well: *yikhyu va’yihyu* – “Let them live, and let them be...” It was the Gibeonites who came to Israel to make a covenant. Israel agreed, but the covenant itself was based on falsity.

Therefore, there was nothing to limit them beyond the basic words of the covenant. They were to be subjected to the lowest form of servile labor. In this, they use a proverbial expression first stated in Deuteronomy –

“All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, ¹¹ your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who *is* in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water— ¹² that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, ¹³ that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Deuteronomy 29:10-13

It will be seen later that this specifically includes a job tied to the service of the Lord. The designation for this service eventually became known as *Nethinim*, or those given to the service of the Temple. They are mentioned mostly in Ezra and Nehemiah, and some of those people are possibly descendants of these Gibeonites.

²² Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, “Why have you deceived us, saying, ‘We *are* very far from you,’ when you dwell near us?”

Whether Joshua realizes it or not, the fingers are actually pointing in both directions at the same time – “Why have **you** deceived **us**?” It is true that the Gibeonites deceived Israel, but the reason for it is as obvious as the nose on one’s face. They wanted to live.

The Gibeonites could just as easily have said, “And why didn’t you do a better job of checking things out?” Joshua could have said, “We will send ambassadors with you to your people and consult with them first.” That would have resolved the matter immediately.

One can see that the Gibeonites knew, without a doubt, that Israel would hold fast to the covenant if it was made. This is what they were counting on, and that has been proven true. The subterfuge worked, the lie obtained its purpose, and Israel was limited in what it could do. But they were not completely hand-tied...

²³ Now therefore, you *are* cursed,

v’atah arurim atem – “And now cursed you.” This is actually nothing new. These people descended from Canaan, the son of Ham and the grandson of Noah –

“Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; ¹⁶ the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; ¹⁷ the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; ¹⁸ the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.” Genesis 10:15-18

Canaan, meaning him and all who issued from him, had been cursed by their ancestor Noah in Genesis 9 –

“So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. ²⁵ Then he said:

‘Cursed *be* Canaan;

A servant of servants

He shall be to his brethren.’” Genesis 9:24, 25

From one curse to another, the Gibeonites were still blessed enough to have saved their lives through cunning. However...

²³ (con’t) and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—

v’lo yikareth mikhem eved – “and no shall be cut (sg.) from you (pl.) servant.” This follows after the curse of Noah. They were slaves (servants – the word is the same), and

they were to remain that way forever. With that stated, Joshua clarifies the words of verse 21...

²³ (con't) **woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."**

Not only are they to be woodcutters and water carriers, but they are to do so *l'beit elohay* – "to house my God." The meaning of this is actually twofold. First, they were to supply wood and water continuously for the maintenance of the tabernacle. This would be for burning of the sacrifices and offerings and for the required washings mandated by the law.

However, this surely would have also included service in the building of the temple at the time of Solomon –

"All the people *who were* left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who *were* not of Israel— ⁸that is, their descendants who were left in the land after them, whom the children of Israel did not destroy—from these Solomon raised forced labor, as it is to this day. ⁹But Solomon did not make the children of Israel servants for his work. Some *were* men of war, captains of his officers, captains of his chariots, and his cavalry. ¹⁰And others *were* chiefs of the officials of King Solomon: two hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people."

-2 Chronicles 8:7-10

One can see that the Gibeonites (Hivites) were not the only ones who were not destroyed by Israel. Rather, Israel generally failed to comply with the words of the law in utterly exterminating many people in the land.

Despite this, the forced labor went beyond the temple even to the building of Solomon's house, the storage cities, and so on. With the burdensome mandate levied upon the Gibeonites by Joshua, they next respond as to why they chose this path...

²⁴ **So they answered Joshua and said,**

Joshua is obviously speaking to the rulers of the people, and they together respond with the motivating issue behind their scheme...

²⁴ (con't) **"Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you;**

The words are emphatic: *ki huged hugad la'avadekha* – “for declaring *it was* declared to your servants.” They knew without any question that the law had been set forth and that all in Canaan were to be exterminated. But more, they note that it was a command from Yehovah through Moses...

²⁴ (con't) **therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing.**

va'nira meod l'napshotenu mipenekhem va'naaseh eth ha'davar ha'zeh – “And feared greatly to our souls from your presence and did the word, the this.” Of this, Cambridge incorrectly states, “Fear had been their sole motive in seeking an alliance with Israel. Theirs was not the faith, which had prompted Rahab to save the spies.” Rather, fear is exactly what made Rahab do what she did –

“Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹ and said to the men: ‘I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.’”

-Joshua 2:8, 9

It was faith in the Lord that drove both Rahab and the Gibeonites to fear the Lord. If they didn't believe in the Lord, they would have been like everyone else. But they believed the word concerning the Lord and they believed the word of the Lord spoken to Moses. Thus, they acted in faith which was spurred on by fear.

This is no different than Cornelius in Acts 10:2 who was “a devout *man* and one who feared God.” The Lord saw his faith, his fear, and his deeds. And so, He led him to Himself.

And again, Albert Barnes misses the scope of the matter, saying, “They sought for union with God's people, not for its own sake, but to save their lives. Rahab's motives were higher. ... Hence, she was adopted into Israel; the Gibeonites remained forever bondsmen of Israel.”

This is not entirely correct. We don't know what happened to the family of Rahab other than that they dwelt among Israel, just as the Gibeonites did (Joshua 6:25). Also, Ishmaiah the Gibeonite is specifically noted as a chief man among David's warriors in 1 Chronicles 12:4. As for the Gibeonites at the time of Joshua...

²⁵ **And now, here we are, in your hands;**

v'atah hinu b'yadekha – “And now behold us in your (sg.) hand.” They have placed themselves solely at the mercy of Joshua and his power – “in your hand.” They know their lives will be spared. This is all they could have hoped for. If their plan failed, they would have died, which is exactly what they knew lay ahead for them anyway. Anything beyond execution is, therefore, grace. And so...

²⁵ (con't) **do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.”**

The words are solely to Joshua in the singular: *katov v'khayashar b'enekha la'asoth lanu aseh* – “According to the good and according to the straight in your eyes to do to us, do.” He is the leader of Israel, he has made his judgment, and they have agreed without any protest at all, acknowledging that his determination is good – meaning it is fair – and that it is straight – meaning that it is in accord with the words of the covenant that was already cut.

²⁶ **So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them.**

Here is righteousness. It cannot be said that this is so much an act of mercy. Mercy would be if these people came and said, “We are Gibeonites and we submit ourselves to you. Please do not kill us,” and that was then followed by an agreement to not kill them. However, that would have been unrighteous mercy because they were already commanded to utterly kill the inhabitants.

Instead, it is the Gibeonites who acted with subterfuge and Israel cut the covenant without properly checking the necessary facts. Despite this, the covenant was cut. As such, Joshua is displaying righteousness in his upholding of the covenant. Along with that...

²⁷ **And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation**

It is more personal and precise: *va'yitenem Yehoshua ba'yom ha'hu khot've etsim v'shoave mayim la'edah* – “And gave them, Joshua, in the day, the it, hewers wood and drawers water to the congregation.” They have placed themselves in Joshua’s hand, and Joshua now gives them as a gift to the congregation.

This is justice. The people were denied the plunder of the cities, and the Gibeonites were given to the people to replace the failing of cutting the covenant which deprived

the people of their spoil. The people would be happy, the Gibeonites would be alive, and Joshua has resolved the matter without violating the covenant that had been cut. Also...

²⁷ (fin) **and for the altar of the LORD, in the place which He would choose, even to this day.**

u-l'mizbakh Yehovah ad ha'yom ha'zeh el ha'maqom asher yivkhar – “and to altar Yehovah until the day, the this, to the place which He would choose.”

This is grace. Despite being a lowly job, it is a service to the Lord, and thus it is the highest service one could perform. It is reminiscent of the words of Psalm 84 –

“For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
¹¹ For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;
No good *thing* will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.
¹² O LORD of hosts,
Blessed *is* the man who trusts in You!” Psalm 84:10-12

Despite not being a part of the congregation, the Gibeonites were spared in order to serve the Lord’s people and the altar of the Lord. Hence, despite their situation, they fared better than those of other nations who had not yet even heard of the Lord. It is better to share in the Lord as a servant than to have no share in the Lord.

*Better a slave of Christ than to be the richest king
To have Jesus is more wonderful than the finest gold
Sharing in His goodness, we shall forever sing
And revel in the greatest story ever told*

*Better to have Jesus than gems galore
To have all the world’s silver is to be rejected
Such things will never get a sinner through the Door
That will only happen when right faith is detected*

*If you possessed Satan’s signet ring
And you had all the world’s authority and power*

*Such things would not mean a thing
When finally came your dying hour*

*Rejoice in the Lord and rest in Jesus always
Only He can give life and bestow eternal days*

II. Pictures of Christ

The first chapters of Joshua showed the process of Israel coming to Christ. Chapter 8 revealed the ending of the Old Covenant and the acceptance of the New in the account of building the altar at Mount Ebal. That is something still in Israel's future.

The New Covenant was made not with the Gentiles, but with Israel. That is clearly stated in Jeremiah 31 –

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— ³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. ³³ But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” Jeremiah 31:31-34

That is clear and unambiguous. It is also addressed to the people of Israel long before the coming of Christ. Hence, it is impossible for it to be referring to anyone but Israel. That is confirmed in Hebrews 8:7-13, much of which is a direct citation from Jeremiah.

The author of Hebrews is addressing the Hebrew people, not the church, even if aspects of the letter apply to all believers. When Jesus established the New Covenant as recorded in the gospels, He did so in accordance with the words of Jeremiah, meaning, it was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Nothing He said could lead anyone to any other conclusion. And yet, Paul refers to the New Covenant in 1 and 2 Corinthians. First, he cites Jesus' words from the gospels –

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.’

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Next, he speaks of those who administer this New Covenant –

“And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, ⁶ who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3:4-6

Paul is clearly writing to Gentiles as the Apostle to the Gentiles. But this doesn’t explain how Gentiles are included in the New Covenant if it was given to Israel and Judah. The account of the Gibeonites in this passage reveals how that occurs.

Obviously, there is a real account that is being dealt with, and so there is a lot that has to be stripped out of it to get to the basics. The reason this is so is that the Gibeonites were real people who really served Israel in their history. And so what happens includes details concerning their state as servants of Israel.

But the point is that they were brought into a covenant standing with Israel who is in a covenant (or a New Covenant) standing with the Lord. And so this account is presented.

If you noticed, there were lots of people groups mentioned as serving as laborers in Israel in the account from 2 Chronicles 8, including Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. With the exception of the Canaanites, these same groups were mentioned in verse 1 of this chapter. There is no need to mention the Canaanites because other than the Perizzites, they are Canaanite people groups.

But it is the Gibeonites who are highlighted here in order to set the typology. All the people groups formed an alliance in order to fight against Israel, but the Gibeonites want to be allied with Israel.

In verse 4, we saw that the Gibeonites were as cunning against Israel as Israel had been against Ai. Israel defeated the law, overcoming it through Christ. Now, the Gibeonites (those who want to join Israel) act in cunning to join with them.

To do this, they have old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, old and patched shoes, old garments, and bread that is dry and crumbly. In this state, in verse 6, it said that they went to Joshua and spoke to him and to all the men of Israel, noting they were from a land far away, and ask for a covenant to be made with them.

Although this isn't true, it still reflects their state. If they were from Haijima, Japan, for all intents and purposes, they wouldn't be any closer to Israel concerning their rights than being from Gibeon which is geographically just down the road a bit. They truly are far off from Israel, at least in that sense.

In verse 7, Joshua is not mentioned, just the men of Israel who respond with, "And said (pl.) man (sg.) Israel unto the Hivite (sg.)." As noted, the name probably means Tent Villager, but it is identical to *khavah* or "Life," the name of Adam's wife (Eve).

Abarim notes that the verb form *khavah* "means to lay out in order to live collectively, and describes investing one's personal sovereignty into a living collective like a symbiont. It's mostly translated as to prostrate, which is to submit oneself wholly and bodily to a collective or to the leader of that collective." That is essentially what they are doing, submitting themselves to a collective. But more, they are doing it to find... life.

In the next verses, they speak to Joshua, noting they are his servants and have come because of the name of Yehovah and they had heard of His fame and of all He did in Egypt. Also what He had done to Sihon and Og. Israel had been brought out of bondage and the Gibeonites wanted to share in that.

It must be noted that Israel had been brought out of Egypt and into the law. Nothing was said by the Gibeonites about Israel crossing the Jordan as they did. In other words, the typology of crossing through Christ was supposedly unknown to them, even though they knew perfectly well that Israel had passed through the Jordan.

After this, and for a second time, the account focused on the bread, the wineskins, the garments and the sandals. It is then that we noted the contrast to Israel –

"And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. ⁶You have not eaten

bread, nor have you drunk wine or *similar* drink, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.” Deuteronomy 29:5, 6

That all occurred while Israel was under the law. The typology is obvious: these people were not under the law. No need to worry in this regard. Israel is under the New Covenant and these people are not under the law. In other words, typologically, these are not Judaizers trying to get Israel to return to the law.

To more fully understand that you could go back and review those verses in the Deuteronomy 29 sermon, but suffice it to say that Israel, while under the punishment of the law, lacked the things that would normally keep people alive and united – food, wine, and strong drink. And yet, they remained a people.

They are now united in Christ under the New Covenant. These Gibeonites are not law observers, they are not members of the New Covenant, and they are far off from Israel.

With that noted, Israel accepted that they were who they said they were, and they were willing to cut a covenant with them, even without inquiring of the Lord.

As such, it says Joshua made peace with them and cut a covenant with them to let them live. It also noted that the rulers swore to them. In typology, Joshua represents Jesus, and the elders represent the rulers. That can be established based on Jesus’ words of Matthew 19:28 –

“So Jesus said to them, ‘Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”

One who sits on a throne is a ruler. The apostles were in agreement concerning the conversion of Gentiles as noted in Acts 15 and elsewhere.

After the subterfuge was discovered, it said that Israel journeyed to their cities and four cities were named. I couldn’t identify anything in the names that gives additional typology, but the number four is the world number. Hence, it is surely indicating that there is Israel, and there is the agreement made with the world beyond Israel.

With that, the final verse from last week noted that Israel did not attack them because they had sworn by the Lord God of Israel. Because of this, the congregation complained

against the rulers. That seems obvious enough. Israel wants it to be all about them, but there are others that are brought into the covenant relationship as well.

The verses for today show the actual response of Israel to the cunningness of the Gibeonites, but the point of those verses is that there was nothing they could do. The covenant had been cut and nothing could be done to them.

But what Israel saw as a loss turned out to be a benefit for them. They may not have been able to plunder their spoil, but they were able to use the productivity of these Gentiles for their benefit. This was to be literally true in Israel. And typologically it has been true as well.

It is the Gentiles who have done the work of expanding the kingdom, building the church, and searching out God's word. Thus, Israel has benefitted, even if they were unhappy about the situation at first. The Gentiles were granted life through the covenant cut with Jesus, and they have been productive for the kingdom ever since.

In short, this story is given to reveal how the Gentiles ended up under the New Covenant even though that covenant was promised to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

The name Gibeon, as we saw, means Hill Town or Hilly. But the name comes from *gavia*, which is derived from a root word conveying the sense of elevation or roundness, hence it means a cup or a bowl. When upside down, it looks like a hill.

I would surmise that they were chosen because the name is etymologically akin to the Aramaic word Gabbatha which means an elevated place, a knoll – hence a rounded area like a goblet.

Jesus submitted Himself to the Roman authority in order to establish the New Covenant in His blood. The Gibeonites submitted themselves to Joshua in order to enter into the covenant relationship that had been established with Israel.

And actual distance aside, they were as far from the nation of Israel as they could have been. Hence, there was the strong focus on the word far. It was used three times in the passage, and twice it was joined to the superlative *meod*, or very. That perfectly fits with Paul's words of Ephesians –

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by

hands— ¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:11-13

The Gibeonites submitted themselves to Joshua (verse 9:8) and it said in verse 15, “So made (sg.) with them, Joshua, peace and cut (sg.) to them covenant to live them.” It practically mirrors the words of Isaiah from our text verse –

“Peace, peace to *him who is far off* and to *him who is near,*
Says the LORD,
‘And I will heal him.’” Isaiah 57:19

That is also exactly stated by Paul in Ephesians 2, and that will be cited in our closing verse today. As far as the idea of being woodcutters and water bearers, that is not given in typology, but as a poetic idea of providing for the altar of the Lord. It is something we have all participated in if you think about it.

Christ died on the cross for our sins. If we can put ourselves into that picture, we can see that with our sins we actually helped cut the wood, that of His cross, our altar before God. And what do we do with the salvation that comes from it? Isaiah says –

“And in that day you will say:
‘O LORD, I will praise You;
Though You were angry with me,
Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.
²Behold, God *is* my salvation,
I will trust and not be afraid;
‘For YAH, the LORD, *is* my strength and song;
He also has become my salvation.’
³Therefore with joy you will draw water [*shaav*]
From the wells of salvation.” Isaiah 12:1-3

Isaiah uses the same word to describe drawing of waters from the wells of salvation that is used of the Gibeonites drawing water for Israel. As noted, it is the Gentiles that have carried the banner of the church, and it is from those efforts that Israel will someday realize they need Jesus. When that comes about, the water from those wells will truly be used to minister to Israel.

The typology in the passage here, and of which I have failingly presented to you because of so much that has surely been missed, is given to show us several things. First and foremost, it is to again let us know that the church has not replaced Israel.

Rather the church is a body made up of both Jews and Gentiles and it is based on the New Covenant, the Christ Covenant. Israel as a nation today has not yet entered into that New Covenant, but we have been shown in the previous chapters that they will do so someday.

Until they do, there needed to be an explanation provided as to how the Gentiles are brought into this New Covenant, and thus into the commonwealth of Israel. This passage has addressed that. The Gibeonites were never under the law or the sustaining hand of Israel during their time of punishment under the law.

Further, Gentiles have been far off from the promises to Israel. There was no hope; rather, there was only the promise of being destroyed. But those Gentiles who come to Jesus in faith, just as the Gibeonites came to Joshua in faith, will be saved. They will be given life. The typology tells us this, even if I may have failed to present some of the finer points.

For you today, it is your duty to come to Christ, believe the gospel, and receive the salvation He offers to those who will.

Closing Verse: *“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”*

-Ephesians 2:14-18

Next Week: Joshua 10:1-15 *The fighting will go on and on, until the battle is done...* (The Battle for Gibeon, Part I) (20th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

We Are Your Servants, Part II

Then all the rulers said to all the congregation
“We have sworn to them by the LORD God of Israel
Now therefore, we may not touch them
Shoot, darn, dangitall, and oh well

“This we will do to them:
We will let them live, no haw or hem
Lest wrath be upon us
Because of the oath which we swore to them”

And the rulers said to them, “Let them live
But let them woodcutters be
And water carriers for all the congregation
As the rulers had promised them after their trickery

Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying
“Why have you deceived us
Saying ‘We are very far from you,’ when you dwell near us?
This is not so kosher and not “plus, plus, plus”

Now therefore, you are cursed
And none of you shall from being slaves be freed
Woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God
Because of your sneaky deed

So they answered Joshua and said
“Because your servants were clearly told words not so grand
That the LORD your God commanded
His servant Moses to give you all the land

“And to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you
Therefore we were very much afraid; yes, our ears did ring
For our lives because of you
And so we have done this thing

“And now, here we are, in your hands, for us it is a plus
Do with us as it seems good and right to do to us”

So he did to them
And delivered them out of the hand
Of the children of Israel
So that they did not kill them as they planned

And that day Joshua made them woodcutters
And water carriers for the congregation, so it was that way
And for the altar of the LORD
In the place which He would choose, even to this day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 10:1-15 (THE BATTLE FOR GIBEON, PART I)

The passage before us in Joshua 10 is an exceedingly exciting set of verses. But you may not be overly excited about my evaluation of them. I have read the account many times and have had a presupposition about their meaning because I have trusted the words of the translators.

After setting those presuppositions aside, I have a completely different view of what these verses are saying. For those who don't accept my evaluation, there will be the usual disappointment that comes from being steered away from the sensational, like when finding out that Nephilim are not the product of angels who sleep with human women. But that is so much more dramatic.

However, we must go where the text leads. I sent this to my good old friend who reads and understands Hebrew to look over my comments because I didn't want to be wrong in the evaluation. He came back saying, "...if one completely removes the previous knowledge of this account, then yes, that's the way to read it." Thanks, Sergio.

The words of the Lord in Job help explain the sensational nature of the work of the Lord as described in the passage today. How is it that the Lord intervenes in this passage? We will find out. Job 38 gives us a hint...

Text Verse: *"Have you entered the treasury of snow,
Or have you seen the treasury of hail,
²³ Which I have reserved for the time of trouble,
For the day of battle and war?" Job 38:22, 23*

A portion of our verses today is poetical. Thus, by its very nature, it is not necessarily to be taken as it may at first appear. Translating poetry is complicated. We saw that in the Song of Moses.

As for the Book of Jasher which is referenced in this passage, that takes us down another avenue of sensational teaching. It is a book mentioned only twice in Scripture. And, of course, there are teachers out there that claim they have the book of Jasher and will sell you a copy of it. Ooooh, ahhh!

The problem with that is that it is a forgery. But, but, but it is sensational, and so people would rather spend money on that than read the Bible. We see it all the time. The book of Enoch. The book of Jubilees. People will read any of these before the Bible.

It is a terrible waste of time, but sensation sells. Be wise, spend your time in the word, and be content that it is sensational enough in what it tells us because it tells us about Jesus. Such wonderful things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Not a Man Shall Stand Before You (verses 1-11)

¹ Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard

With the destruction of both Jericho and Ai, along with the treaty made by the Gibeonites, there is a stir arising in the land. This will all be brought forth in the clauses and verses ahead, but the beginning of the matter rests with *Adoni-Tsedeq melekh Yerushalaim*, or Adoni-Zedek, king Jerusalem.

His name means Lord of Righteousness or My Lord is Righteous. The name Jerusalem is now introduced into Scripture. Despite its fame as a city, the meaning of the name is debated. It may mean Foundation of Peace, Rain of Peace, Teaching Peace, Possession of Peace, Vision of Peace, He Shall See Peace, In Awe of Peace, or some other variant. Any of these may be correct based on the surrounding context.

The name itself carries with it the sense of a plural word as it ends with a dual termination sound – Yerushalaim. That might signify that the city has two areas, an upper and a lower half. But that is debated as well. The complicated meaning of the name of the city is almost as great as is the historical fame of it.

The name Adoni-Zedek, Lord of Righteousness, is not unlike Melchizedek, or King of Righteousness, who reigned in this same place at the time of Abram. Thus, it may be an official title that was given to the king of the city like Pharaoh is given to the king of Egypt. Of this king, it next describes what he heard. It was...

^{1 (con't)} **how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it—**

ki lakhad Yehoshua eth ha'ai va'yakharimah – “that had taken Joshua the Ai and anathematized her.” It wasn't just that Joshua had taken Ai and subdued it, making the

people subject to Israel. Nor was it that they took Ai captive. Rather, the city was taken, and it was utterly devoted to the Lord, meaning every living being was destroyed. This was...

¹ (con't) **as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king—**

ka'asher lirikho u-l'malkah ken asah la'ay u-l'malkah – “According to which to Jericho and to her king, thus he has done to Ai and to her king.” The highlight is on the act of anathema waged against the cities. In other words, it isn't just that they devoted one city and then began to show mercy. Rather, they utterly destroyed Jericho, and then they utterly destroyed Ai.

But more, it says “and to her king” for both Jericho and Ai. It is the king of Jerusalem who is the subject of the verse. He fully understands that not only were the cities overrun and destroyed, but the kings of the cities were shown no mercy. He knows he will not be able to buy his way out of whatever pickle he finds himself in when Israel comes to his city. And more...

¹ (con't) **and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them,**

v'ki hishlimu yosh've giv'on eth Yis'rael va'yihyu b'qir'bam – “And that had acquiesced inhabitants Gibeon toward Israel and were in their midst.” The word is *shalam*, signifying the completion of something. In this case, there was a state of enmity that is now becoming an alliance by covenant.

Gibeon, after having seen the total destruction of Jericho and Ai, had simply made peace without even attempting to defend themselves. They had voluntarily become totally subservient to Israel. This is especially problematic because Israel has a foothold in a strategic location in the heart of the land. The entire southern region of Canaan would be more exposed to the incursions of Israel. Hence, the king wanted to recapture this location if possible.

As a reminder, Jericho means Place of Fragrance. Ai means Heap of Ruins. Gibeon means Hilly or Hill Town. Concerning the events that took place among these three cities, it next says...

² **that they feared greatly,**

The translation is correct: *va'yir'u meod* – “And they feared greatly.” Verse 1 spoke only of the king of Jerusalem. The text switches to the plural, they, here. This could be referring to him and his subjects within Jerusalem, but it may be anticipatory of the kings that will be mentioned in the next verse. Either way, there is a great fear of what had happened...

^{2 (con't)} **because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities,**

The word “royal” is an adjective, but the Hebrew has a noun: *ki ir gedolah giv'on k'akhat are ha'mamlakha* – “for city whopping, Gibeon, according to cities the kingdom.” Hence, I would speculate that Gibeon actually had its own king, but when they went to make the treaty with Israel, he abdicated his throne.

This would explain why it never mentions any leader when the covenant was cut in Chapter 9. It is possible they never had a king, but based on the listing of cities, each with its own king, in Joshua 12, it seems unlikely that they were without a formal leader. This seems especially so based on the next words...

^{2 (con't)} **and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty.**

v'ki hi gedolah min ha'ay v'kal anasheha giborim – “and for she whopping from the Ai and all her men – heroes.” Ai had its own king and men of war. If Gibeon was greater than Ai and its men are all described as great men, then it would logically follow that they also had a king. Again, this is personal speculation, but it would explain why the account continues as it does...

³ **Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying,**

Some of these names have various meanings, but essentially they are: 1) Hoham – whom Yehovah impels. Hebron – Alliance. 2) Piram – Indomitable. Jarmuth – Elevation. 3) Japhia – Illuminous. Lachish – Obstinate. 4) Debir – Place of the Word. Eglon – Heifer-like.

It should be remembered from Numbers and Deuteronomy that the great and tall people known as the Anakim dwelt in Hebron. They are also noted in Joshua 11 as being elsewhere. Hence, they would probably be a part of the alliance to be made.

Each of these four named cities was in the area eventually granted to Judah. It is to these kings that Adoni-Zedek said...

⁴“Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon,

The planned attack is not against Joshua and Israel but against Gibeon. Throughout the book, Joshua will always be on the offensive against the nations it wars with. As for Gibeon, there are probably several reasons for attacking it.

First, it would set an example for any other Canaanite cities that they were not to make a treaty with Israel. Second, being strategically located, it would be good to have the area recaptured in order to regain command of the surrounding area.

And, third, it was probable that Gibeon would have been either disarmed or mostly disarmed by Israel once it was discovered that they were close by. As such, they could only lightly defend the city, but probably not much more than that. Each of these could be considered in the next words...

^{4 (con't)} for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.”

Although Jerusalem is the city nearest to Gibeon, the loss of Gibeon would eventually be a threat to all of them. Therefore, to act quickly and decisively against Gibeon would be the desirable option to take.

By aligning with the other kings, it would also strengthen their ties into the future, making it more likely one would come to the aid of another if any was attacked by Israel. Obviously, this plan was well received as it next says...

⁵Therefore the five kings of the Amorites,

It is singular, showing the united nature of the people: *va'yees'phu va'yaalu khameshet malkhe ha'emori* – “And gathered together and went up five kings the Amorite.” It is five kings, but one people, even though they were not all Amorites.

Rather, they included Hittites, Jebusites, etc. But they are lumped together as being a part of “the Amorite.” To further unite them in thought, the next words include no definite articles in the Hebrew...

^{5 (con't)} **the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up,**

Rather, it simply reads: “king Jerusalem, king Hebron, king Jarmuth, king Lachish, king Eglon.” It is five kings united as one...

^{5 (con't)} **they and all their armies,**

Rather than armies, it says: *hem v'kal makhanehem* – “they and all their camps.” The kings went forward to besiege the city and then to make war against it. Hence, they are called camps. They set up in an array in order to hem the city in. As it next says...

^{5 (con't)} **and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.**

It isn't just that their armies went up and began a full-on assault. Rather, Gibeon is besieged and attacked according to a set plan, probably figuring that word could not make it to Joshua if they had them surrounded. However...

⁶ **And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal,**

Despite being besieged, they were able to get word out to Joshua. Several possibilities exist. It could be the word was sent while the armies were gathering. If so, then the message was sent prior to the city being besieged (i.e. “had sent to Joshua”). Maybe some were working in the fields and saw the camps setting up. Maybe some broke through the lines at night. Whatever the case, the fact is that some of the men were able to get word to Joshua at Gilgal...

^{6 (con't)} **saying, “Do not forsake your servants;**

The words contain a jussive: *al tereph yadekha m'avadekha* – “Not [might you] relax your (sg.) hand from your (sg.) servants.” The words are spoken to Joshua, and they are certainly an appeal to the covenant that was cut, but without directly commanding anything. In essence, “You are (hopefully) not to relax your hand from your servants according to our agreement.” Instead...

^{6 (con't)} **come up to us quickly, save us and help us,**

There is a sort of play on the name of Joshua here: *aleh elenu m'herah v'hovoshiah lanu* – “Come up to us quickly and save us and help us.” The word translated as “save” is the

word, *yasha*, from which Joshua's name is derived. They are calling out for Joshua to be their savior and their helper in their time of need. The reason is...

⁶ (con't) **for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us."**

Again, it is singular – "all kings the Amorite." They are contrasting themselves to the people group of Canaan and have indicated their alliance with Joshua. Also, the word "mountains" is singular. It is "the mountain."

This is said even though some of the kings dwelt in the low country. Hence, "the mountain," is certainly referring to Jerusalem as the main identity in the alliance. The kings of the Amorite who dwell in the mountain have gathered (or were gathering) together against Gibeon...

⁷ **So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor.**

The words at first seem to give two classes – *va'yaal Yehoshua min ha'gilgal hu v'kal am ha'milkhamah imo v'kol gibore he'khayil* – "And ascended Joshua from the Gilgal, he, and all people the war with him, and all mighty the valor."

The structure of the words, however, is a way of the second clause describing those of the first clause, such as, "All the people of war, even all the mighty men of valor." Joshua responded immediately according to the terms of the covenant that had been cut, and he set out with his best soldiers. And more...

⁸ **And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand;**

The word *nathan*, give, is used – "I have given them into your hand." The enemy is as a present to Joshua, and so he is not to be afraid as he faces the foe in battle. And more...

⁸ (con't) **not a man of them shall stand before you."**

lo yaamod ish mehem b'phan'ekha – "No shall stand man from them in your (sg.) presence." The meaning is that despite there being five kings with their combined forces, they will be so utterly defeated that all will either be killed or will flee away. But none shall be left to stand before him.

⁹ Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.

The words are more precise, and they speak only of Joshua: “And came unto them Joshua suddenly (all the night ascended (sg.) from the Gilgal).” What was a march that took until the third day to be complete in verse 9:17 has been completed in a single night.

And more, it was an ascent all the way from Gilgal to Gibeon. In this, they would have been completely undetected as they approached the camps surrounding the city...

¹⁰ So the LORD routed them before Israel,

v’humem Yehovah liphne Yisrael – “And confused (sg.) them, Yehovah, before Israel.” It is the same word, *hamam*, that the Lord used when He promised just this in Exodus 23 –

“I will send My fear before you, I will **cause confusion** [*hamam*] among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn *their* backs to you. ²⁸ And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you.” Exodus 23:27, 28

The word signifies to make a noise or move noisily, and thus to cause confusion. This is ascribed to the Lord, and it very well could be because of a thundering storm that came at the time of the battle. Whatever threw them into confusion, it is exactly what the promise from Exodus 23 said would happen. Also...

¹⁰ (con’t) killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon,

The words are most forceful, and they give the credit to the Lord: *va’yakem makah gedolah b’giv’on* – “And struck (sg.) them blow whopping in Gibeon.”

The people were obviously unprepared for an external attack and had set up their forces for a siege on the city. When Joshua showed up, they were completely confused and decisively struck. From there they...

¹⁰ (con’t) chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon,

Again, the action is credited to the Lord: *va’yird’phem derek maaleh beith horon* – “and chased (sg.) them way ascent Beth Horon.” Beth Horon means House of the Hollow and

also House of Freedom. Even if it is Israel who was engaged in the battle, the Lord is who is spoken of.

It was His assurances of victory that impelled the men to march all night, to attack without sleep, and to sustain them throughout the day. The singular nature of the battle's description next says...

¹⁰ (con't) **and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.**

va'yakem ad azeqah v'ad maqedah – “and struck (sg.) them unto Azekah and unto Makkedah.” The action of the Lord will be more fully described in the next verse. For now, Azekah means “Tilled Over.” Makkedah means “Place of Shepherds.”

¹¹ **And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon,**

The translation is close enough. We are being given an exacting description of the events: who, where, and so on. The details are particular to give the reader the mental ability to follow along as if it is happening before his eyes. While these men are running down the slope in Beth Horon, it was...

¹¹ (con't) **that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died.**

It says, “and Yehovah cast upon them stones whopping from the heavens until Azekah, and they died.” This cannot simply be a rockslide, but an actual atmospheric event that came from the skies.

If the previous confusion was caused by a storm and thundering, this would then fit well with hailstones coming down upon the people. The carnage from these was so great that...

¹¹ (con't) **There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.**

rabbim asher metu b'avne ha'barad m'asher hargu bene Yisrael b'kharev – “more who died in stones the hail from who killed sons Israel in the sword.” This word for hail, *barad*, hasn't been noted since the time of the Exodus when the Lord sent hail upon Egypt.

It is the same word used in our text verse today where the Lord claims to use it in exactly this circumstance, meaning the day of battle and war. Throughout the Bible, the Lord uses the elements according to His wisdom and in order to demonstrate his greatness.

The Canaanites had various gods, including the god of the storm, Hadad. That is also the Hebrew word for “thunder.” The Bible does not ascribe deity to the storm, but it shows that God is above the storm, using it according to His purposes.

Hence, while the Canaanites were worshipping the elements, Yehovah is using the elements to gain victory over them and to gain glory for Himself. With that noted, the next account is given...

*The Lord will fight the battle for you
Watch and behold the greatness of His splendid hand
All that is necessary to win the victory, He will do
Trust in Him and He will accomplish what He has planned*

*He will fight for you and bring the victory
Upon the enemy He will work out His plan
What He purposes will come about, you will see
When He responds to the voice of a Man*

*It will all be accomplished before the day's end
And the enemy will be defeated on that day
Upon him the Lord many woes will send
At that time, “Hallelujah to our God” our voices will say*

II. Then Joshua Spoke to the Lord (verses 12-15)

¹² Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel,

az y'daber Yehoshua Yehovah b'yom teth Yehovah eth ha'emori liph'ne bene Yisrael –
“At that time, spoke Joshua, Yehovah, in day gave Yehovah the Amorite before sons Israel.” The word *az* is a demonstrative adverb signifying the beginning of something. Hence, what is said is at the beginning of the matter.

Using the word “then” here gives a false sense of the intent of the words. Rather, just when the battle was getting started, Joshua spoke. The reason this is important is because it sets the tone for the day of battle and of what will occur.

Also, as before, it says, “the Amorite.” The collective nature of the people is highlighted. They are the Renowned, and yet they are delivered to the children of Israel. In their being delivered, it is the Lord who gains renown for Himself. To increase the victory of the Lord, Joshua spoke to Him...

12 (con’t) **and he said in the sight of Israel:**

va’yomer l’ene Yisrael – “and he said to eyes Israel.” Rather than, “in the ears of Israel,” it says, “to the eyes of Israel.” This is key to understanding the nature of the words to come. It is the same expression used in Numbers 20:8 where Moses and Aaron were to speak to the rocks “to their eyes,” meaning the eyes of Israel.

They were to see the event based on the words. Joshua made a request of the Lord in the sight of Israel. Should the Lord accept his words as a request, it would be a sure sign to them that the Lord was fully satisfied with the people and willing to act on their behalf when they were living in accord with His will. As for his words, Joshua next says...

12 (con’t) **“Sun, stand still over Gibeon;**

The words here are poetical in nature and must be taken that way: *shemesh b’giv’on dom* – “Sun, in Gibeon, *be* silent.” There is no article before sun or moon. Rather, the words are spoken to the sun and the moon as Moses and Aaron were to speak to the rock. But the rock was not going to respond. The Lord was.

Likewise, the sun and moon are not going to respond. The Lord will. The word is *damam*. Depending on the context, it means to wait (1 Samuel 14:9); to be still, such as lying on one’s bed and being still (Psalm 4:4); be silent (Psalm 31:7); to cease as in ending something (Psalm 35:5); to be cut off, such as in men of war being cut off (Jeremiah 50:30); and so on.

There is no reason to assume that Joshua is actually asking for the sun to stop where it is in the sky. Rather, it is a poetic wish for the sun to tarry in the sky until the task is complete. Psalm 19 notes that the voice of the heavens goes forth. This includes the sun–

“In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
5 Which *is* like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race.
6 Its rising *is* from one end of heaven,
And its circuit to the other end;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.” Psalm 19:4-6

Instead of the sun speaking its voice as it runs its race, Joshua is asking it to be silent. As such, Joshua is certainly conveying to the Lord his great desire is that the sun would not go down before he had a chance to completely destroy his enemies.

This would then be a petition for his actions *to complete the job in a timely manner*, rather than for the sun *to delay its actions*. The poetic action is for the sun to belay its setting, but the actual action is for Joshua to complete the battle before the sun sets, as verse 13 will clearly indicate.

12 (con't) **And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.”**

v'yareakh b'emeq Ayalon – “And moon in depth Aijalon.” The *emeq* is a deep valley. The name Aijalon comes from *ayyal* or deer. Hence, it signifies Place of the Deer. However, that comes from the same as *ayil*, or ram, which is derived from a word indicating strength. Hence, I would think Place of Strength is not out of line.

At this time, the moon is west. This is often the case when the sun rises, and the descending moon is to the west. This is certain because if the sun is over Gibeon at this point and the moon is over Aijalon, it means that the sun is still eastward, and the day is not yet half-spent. And more likely, it is just beginning.

The battle began early in the morning, and Joshua is poetically asking that he can accomplish the battle before the day ends. There is nothing here to suggest that he is asking for the day to stop, but that his mission will be accomplished before the day ends. With this, the poetic nature of the words continues...

13 **So the sun stood still,**

The verb is imperfect: *va'yidom ha'shemesh* – “And *is* silent the sun.” This is a poetic response to Joshua noting that the sun remained silent, not rushing to run its course while Joshua continued the battle...

13 (con't) And the moon stopped,

Rather: *v'yareakh amad* – “And moon stood.” The word *amad* means to stand. It can mean stopped, such as when Leah stopped bearing children. But it can also mean to endure, as in continuing in a matter. These are clearly poetic words.

If we want a job done before nightfall, we might say, “I hope the sun stands long enough for us to complete this task.” Being poetic lines, this is surely all that this means. It does not mean that a great thing isn't taking place, but we must allow the word to define what the great thing is, and it will...

**13 (con't) Till the people had revenge
Upon their enemies.**

The verb translated as “had revenge” is imperfect – *avenges*. Also, the word nation is singular, thus contrasting Israel with the Amorite: *ad yiqom go oy'vah* – “Until avenges nation upon his enemies.” The sun did not go down until the task was complete.

To this point, there is nothing to ascribe the miraculous to the suspension of the sun and moon in the heavens. To understand, we could go back to the previous example. “It was great! The sun stood in the sky until our job was complete.” Even if that is not so miraculous, the earlier verses have spoken of the miraculous, and the account will continue to do so as well.

13 (con't) Is this not written in the Book of Jasher?

ha'lo hi ketuvah al sepher ha'yashar – “Not it written upon scroll the Upright (One)?” The book of Jasher is noted twice in the Bible, here and in 2 Samuel 1:18. From the two uses, it appears likely that it is a poetical book of the heroic deeds of the people.

It very well may be the same book called “the Book of the Wars” in Numbers 21:14. The poetic verses cited in that passage are said to have been written there. At that time, we noted that it was probably a collection of songs or psalms that celebrated the great acts of the powerful deliverances the Lord's people experienced through His personal action.

With the use of the name Jeshurun, or Upright, by Moses to describe Israel in Deuteronomy, it very well may be that the Book of the Wars was renamed the Book of the Upright One to indicate the wars of Israel under the Lord. It is all speculation, but it

does fit with the ongoing narrative. Putting them side by side, one can see from the Hebrew that each is a play upon the name Israel –

Israel - Yisrael: יִשְׂרָאֵל

Jeshurun - Yeshurun: יֵשׁוּרֻן

The Upright (One) - ha'Yashar: הַיָּשָׁר

¹³ (con't) **So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day.**

One will naturally translate the words as they presuppose the meaning to be. Until I studied them, I presupposed that this was a literal occurrence of the sun not moving for a whole day. But when evaluating Scripture, we must do our best to drop all presuppositions and simply read the words as they are given.

It does not necessarily say “stood still.” It does not necessarily say “midst.” It does not say “about.” And one must presuppose the word “whole.” It says: *va'yaamod ha'shemesh ba'khatsi ha'shamayim v'lo az la'bo ke'yom tamim* – “And stood the sun in the half of the heaven's and no hasten to go, according to day complete.”

The word *tamam* signifies that which is blameless, complete, sound, without blemish, perfect, entire, and so on. The meaning is simply that the sun didn't rush to its setting before things were done. It went at its usual pace, standing in the heavens as it would on any complete (perfect) day.

Also, notice the important words that have been excluded. This verse, which is the completion of the action, says nothing of the moon remaining in the sky. It does say earlier in the verse *ad*, or until, but that is referring to the completion of taking vengeance. It did stand, during the battle, even if it eventually slipped below the horizon. It was the sun that continued, and it remained until the requested action was complete. If both had stopped, it surely would have said so.

Going back to our example from before, the words can simply mean, “It was the perfect day. We completed everything before the sun rushed off and set, disappearing below the horizon.”

In this, we are talking in poetic fashion and demonstrating gratefulness that the job was complete. With that noted, the miraculous is seen in the next words and they tell us that it is not that the sun and the moon stopped. Rather...

14 And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man;

v'lo hayah ka'yom ha'hu l'panav v'akharav lishmoa Yehovah b'qol ish – “And no has been according to day, the it, before it or after it, to hearken Yehovah in voice man.” The meaning is that Joshua spoke, and his words were answered by the Lord in a manner that had not been done before or after that day.

What is the miracle? First, it is based upon the words of verse 12 which anticipate the battle. If Joshua said the words in the eyes of Israel, it means that he said them before the battle started.

He petitioned the Lord to allow the day to not end before the nation had avenged itself upon his enemy. As such, the battle was engaged, and to ensure that it would be successfully completed according to Joshua's words the Lord personally intervened...

14 (con't) for the LORD fought for Israel.

This is the miracle. The battle was engaged by men who had marched all night. They began the battle immediately, and as they were set to battle, Joshua had asked the Lord to allow the task to be complete before the sun went down.

In order for that to come about, the Lord personally engaged the enemies of Israel, confusing the people and casting down whopping hailstones upon them as was recorded in verses 10 & 11. The “heeding the voice of a man” is answered by the words *ki Yehovah nilkham l'Yisrael* – “for Yehovah fought to Israel.”

The word *ki*, or “for” is an explanatory conjunction. With that noted, it next says...

15 (fin) Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

va'yashav Yehoshua v'kal Yisrael imo el ha'makhaneh ha'gilgalah – “And returned Joshua, and all Israel with him, to the camp, the Gilgal.” The words are a part of the quotation concerning the book of Jasher that began in verse 12, demonstrating that the sequence of events as I outlined is correct.

Verses 12-15 go back and speak of the events detailed in verses 9-11 that confirm the words of Joshua. The Lord fought the battle for Israel, something that had not happened

in such a manner before that day or after it, at least until the time that the words were inscribed in the Book of Jasher.

We know this is correct concerning this verse because in verse 21 (in next week's passage) the people will return to Makkedah, not Gilgal. The men then continued the conquest of these five kings and their cities after that and only then did they return to Gilgal, as is recorded in verse 43.

To assume anything else would be to assume that the sun did not set during the entire campaign over the five cities, something that would have taken an extended period of time, meaning days, weeks, or even months. It is also something contrary to the narrative itself based on the timeline provided in verses 28-43.

Rather, Joshua petitioned the Lord that the battle of that day would not be complete before the sun set, and to ensure that it was accomplished according to his desire, the Lord worked on behalf of Israel for it to come about.

That alone is miraculous because the words were spoken before the entire band of fighting men. Each could testify to what he saw, exactly as would have been the case if Moses and Aaron had obeyed the Lord's word while at the Rock in Numbers 20.

Hearing my evaluation of these verses may leave you either a little miffed or a little disappointed if you want to accept that the sun actually stood still in the sky for an extended period of time. But it shouldn't be so. The Lord is said to have brought the sun backward on the sundial of Ahaz ten degrees in Isaiah 38.

Other events in the Bible demonstrate the miraculous in nature, such as the parting of the Red Sea and the parting of the Jordan. Signs are given and prophecies are fulfilled, but this section of Joshua is a poetic look into the Lord's response to a need stated by Joshua. Even if the sun moved as it always did, the miraculous is in the story, nonetheless.

An army traveling all night, engaging an enemy comprised of five kings and their armies, and who then defeats that enemy before the sunset, stands as its own miracle. It truly demonstrates that the Lord fought for Israel. I can only go where I believe the text leads, and that speaks of the Lord's response to Joshua's call as outlined in a body of poetry –

“At that time, spoke Joshua, Yehovah, in day gave Yehovah the Amorite before sons Israel and he said to eyes Israel:

'Sun, in Gibeon, be silent.
And moon in depth Aijalon.'

And is silent the sun.
And moon stood.
Until avenges nation upon his enemies.

Not it written upon scroll the Upright (One)? And stood the sun in the half of the
heaven's and no hasten to go, according to day complete.

And no has been according to day the it, before it or after it, to hearken Yehovah in
voice man, for Yehovah fought to Israel. And returned Joshua, and all Israel with Him, to
the camp, the Gilgal."

Notice the structure:

V.12 - At that time, spoke Joshua, Yehovah, in day gave Yehovah the Amorite before
sons Israel and he said to eyes Israel.

V.13 Until avenges nation upon his [Israel's] enemies.

V.15 - And no has been **according to day, the it**, before it or after it, to hearken Yehovah
in voice man, for Yehovah fought to Israel.

The bracketing thoughts explain what the miracle was. And isn't that enough? We
needed a Savior, and the Lord has fought for us. He has brought about the victory. Do
we need something more to satisfy our sensations? Rather, what the Lord did is so far
beyond our comprehension that we have a literal eternity ahead of us to discover all it
actually means.

Let us be thankful to the Lord that He has responded to the voice of a Man, and that He
now responds to the voice of men. Christ spoke out our salvation, and now we simply
need to speak out the word of faith. Thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord who has fought
for us.

Closing Verse: *"Lift up your heads, O you gates!*

And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!

And the King of glory shall come in.

⁸ *Who is this King of glory?*

*The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle.” Psalm 24:7,8*

Next Week: Joshua 10:16-27 *The battle went on and on until it was through...* (The Battle for Gibeon, Part II) (21st Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Battle for Gibeon, Part I

Now it came to pass
When Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard (his ears did ring)
How Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it
As he had done to Jericho and its king

So he had done to Ai and its king
And how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace
With Israel and were among them
That they feared greatly their knee knocking wouldn't cease

Because Gibeon was a great city
Like one of the royal cities all-righty
And because it was greater than Ai
And all its men were mighty

Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem
Sent to Hoham king of Hebron, words he was relaying
And Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish
And Debir king of Eglon, saying

“Come up to me and help me
That we may attack Gibeon,” to them he did tell
For it has made peace with Joshua
And with the children of Israel

Therefore the five kings of the Amorites
The king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron also

The king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish
And the king of Eglon all joined the show

And gathered together and went up
They and all their armies, a mighty corps
And camped before Gibeon
And against it made war

And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal
Saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly
----- (that would be a major plus)
Save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites
Who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us"

So Joshua ascended from Gilgal
Up they did go
He and all the people of war with him
And all the mighty men of valor also

And the LORD said to Joshua
"Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand
Not a man of them shall stand before you
Your victory will be grand

Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, like a storming wall
Having marched all night from Gilgal

So the LORD routed them before Israel
Killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon – oorah!
Chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon
And struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah

And it happened, as they fled before Israel
And were on the descent of Beth Horon
That the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them
As far as Azekah, and they died, death from a large stone

There were more who died from the hailstones, a great horde
Than the children of Israel killed with the sword

Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day
When the LORD delivered up the Amorite
Before the children of Israel
And he said in Israel's sight:

"Sun, stand still over Gibeon
And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon"

So the sun stood still
And the moon stopped
Till the people had revenge upon their enemies
Up they were chopped

Is this not written in the Book of Jasher?
So the sun in the midst of heaven stood still
And did not hasten to go down
For about a whole day, saving on the lighting bill

And there has been no day like that
Before it or after it, for sure we can tell
That the LORD heeded the voice of a man
For the LORD fought for Israel

Then Joshua returned, probably having a ball
And all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 10:16-27 **(THE BATTLE FOR GIBEON, PART II)**

After typing last week's sermon, it took several days of mulling over the meaning before I finally got my first hint of what is being pictured in this passage around 2:30 one night. I fell asleep after that and got up at 3:30 feeling relieved.

Without knowing the typology, you get a sermon with a lot of details, but nothing to explain why the words are there. A good life application sermon on verses like this is simple and quick.

Reading Matthew Henry's commentaries will fill you with all kinds of ideas about such things. They have less to do with the substance of the verses, and more to energize you to do your best to achieve whatever point he is making.

Without knowing the typology and pictures being revealed, you are really no further along the path of knowing what God is actually trying to convey to you. Verse 18 confirmed the typology, and it fit the conclusion of last week's sermon and expanded on it. Relief!

Text Verse: *"And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. ²² You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.'" Deuteronomy 3:21, 22*

In Deuteronomy, Moses encouraged Joshua concerning the battles ahead. He had seen the victories over Sihon and Og and was assured that things would go well for him in Canaan, too. The victory in today's passage is proof to him that what Moses had said remains true.

You might be wondering already what the passage is about. Well, what is the Bible about? Yes, you in the third row. You are correct. It is about Jesus. And what is it that Jesus offers us? Yes, you in the back, that is correct, grace – God's grace.

See you've already got it figured out. Let's finish with that and go home for a nap. Or not. Please sit back down. You have to first find out how the grace is to be given. What do five kings attacking Gibeon have to do with what has already been seen?

What does hanging five kings on five trees and then casting them into a cave have to do with Jesus? Stay tuned and we'll go over it together. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Hidden in the Cave at Makkedah (verses 16-21)

¹⁶ But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

With the poetic insert about the sun and moon standing over Israel until Joshua had avenged his enemies complete, the narrative continues with these words: *va'yanasu khamashet ham'lakhim ha'eleh va'yekhaveu bam'arah b'maqedah* – “And fled five the kings, the these, and are hidden in the cave in Makkedah.”

The word *mearah*, or cave, comes from *ur*, meaning to be exposed, bare, or made naked. They had gone into the cave to be hidden, but instead, they have been exposed. In this case, it is a specific cave as identified by the definite article – “the cave in Makkedah.”

Further, the words “in Makkedah” are disputed by some to mean “the area of Makkedah” and not the immediate city because it isn't until verse 28 that the city is said to have been taken. But that verse doesn't give the timing of the event. It only says, “in that day.”

Therefore, for all we know, it could have been during the battle itself that someone came to Joshua and said, “We have the five kings cornered in a cave in Makkedah.” The timeline of Chapter 10 has not been chronological. In the earlier verses, we can see that. There is no reason to assume it is here as well.

Hence, the words “in Makkedah” could be referring to the immediate area of the city. It may have been fortified, and that would explain the reason why the kings would go there to hide. With that understood, it next says...

¹⁷ And it was told Joshua, saying, “The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah.”

The matter is conveyed to Joshua, certainly to find out what he wanted done with them, and the words are similar to what was said in the previous verse: *nim'seu khameshet*

ham'lakhim nekh'beim bam'arah b'maqedah – “Have been found five, the kings, hidden in the cave in Makkedah.”

It again says, “in the cave in Makkedah,” and the words form a sort of pun when the root meaning is understood. The place of hiding, the cave, is where they are exposed. As noted last week, the name Makkedah means Place of Shepherds. In response to this knowledge, Joshua issues his order...

18 So Joshua said, “Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave,

The order from Joshua is: *golu avanim g'doloth el pi ham'arah* – “roll stones whopping into mouth the cave.” With enough men, really large stones could be manhandled to fill the mouth of the cave. For those inside, it would be a great chore to undo such a blockade, but just in case, he also says...

18 (con't) and set men by it to guard them.

v'haph'qidu aleha anashim l'shameram – “And appoint over her men to watch them.” A cave, like a city, is a feminine noun. Saying “it” is fine, but simply to identify it as feminine, I used the word her. Joshua has ordered men to be appointed to watch over it until these kings can be dealt with. In the meantime, a battle continues that must be attended to...

19 And do not stay *there* yourselves,

v'atem al ta'amodu – “And you, not do stand.” It was appointed for certain men to watch over the cave hiding the kings, but those appointed to continue the battle were not to simply stand there. Instead, they were to continue on...

19 (con't) *but* pursue your enemies, and attack their rear *guard*.

rid'phu akhare oyevekhem v'zinavtem – “Pursue your enemies and tail them.” Here is a word that is found for the second and last time in the Bible, *zinev*. It means to extend or to tail out, coming from *zanav*, a tail.

The only other use was in Deuteronomy 25:18 when Moses spoke of Amalek attacking the rear of Israel when they were tired and weary. Joshua instructs the main army to continue on and complete the task of destroying the enemy, and...

19 (con't) Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand."

The words read: *al tit'num lavo el arehem* – "no give them to enter into their cities." It would be like a present to the enemy if they failed to cut them off. And Joshua was not going to gift them such a thing. They are already defeated: *ki nathanam Yehovah elohekhem b'yedkhem* – "for has given them Yehovah your God in your (pl.) hand."

The Lord has gifted the enemy to Israel, and so Israel is not to give them an inch by allowing them to enter into their cities.

20 Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished,

Vayhi k'khaloth Yehoshua u-bene Yisrael l'hakotam makah gedolah meod ad tumam – "And it came to pass according to Joshua and sons Israel to strike them – stroke whopping, very – until they finished."

The meaning here is referring to the entire battle, not just the cutting off of the tail. In other words, these words initiate the summary of what began in verses 10:7-10 –

"So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. ⁸ And the LORD said to Joshua, 'Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you.' ⁹ Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. ¹⁰ So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah."

"Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter..."

The day of battle is complete before the day's end, the people had avenged their enemies (v. 13), and there was only a few remaining to be dealt with. As it next notes...

20 (con't) that those who escaped entered fortified cities.

The word "that" gives a false sense of what is being said, as if it is an action based on what was just said. Rather, it is simply a statement of fact concerning the battle:

v'has'ridim sar'du mehem va'yavou el are ha'miv'tsar – “and the survivors survived of them and entered into cities fortified.”

It is these who will be dealt with when the five cities are engaged and destroyed in verses 28-42. The battle of the kings and their armies is effectively ended at this time. Destroying the cities filled with noncombatants and those few soldiers who fled to their cities would not be a great chore but rather a mopping-up operation.

²¹ And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace.

With the battle sufficiently complete the people returned to Makkedah where Joshua was. The obvious but unsaid meaning is that during the battle the people were told that Makkedah would be the place where the troops settled after the battle.

The meaning of *b'shalom*, or “in peace,” is that there was no more war to be waged against the enemy at this time because the armies of the five kings had been defeated. Hence...

²¹ (con't) No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

lo kharats liv'ne Yis'rael l'ish eth l'shono – “no sharpened to sons Israel to man tongue.” It is a proverbial saying going back to Exodus 11 –

“But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” Exodus 11:7

Some translations make this an action of Israel – “none of the house of Israel harmed a man with his tongue.” But the context here is that not one of the enemies of Israel sharpened his tongue against any man of Israel. The idea of the Gentiles being dogs would be understood from the proverb. As a dog wags its tongue, so would the Gentiles, if they could. But none dared or were able.

*These five will never bother you again
They are finished up and have seen their last
They have been the downfall of many men
But they are dead, and their time is past*

A new Leader has taken control

*And a new direction is laid out ahead
On Him we can every care and worry roll
Because those five are strung up and dead*

*Now, the enemy can no longer afflict us
We have a new hope because they are dead
Thank God for our Lord, our precious Jesus
Thank God that He is there as our Head*

II. Large Stones Against the Cave's Mouth (verses 22-27)

22 Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave."

The leader of the people will now have the leaders of the enemy brought out for the purpose of a public humiliation and execution. It is not said when this occurred. If it was on the day of the battle, then the day would be on its way to ending. If it was the next day, it would mean a prolonged humiliation for these kings.

Either way, they are now brought forth. The cave that was supposed to hide them is the beginning of their exposure...

23 And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

Reading the Hebrew, the naming of the kings is almost rhythmic – *melekh Yerushalaim eth melekh Khevron eth melekh Yarmuth eth melekh Lakhish eth melekh Eglon* – "king Jerusalem, king Hebron, king Jarmuth, king Lachish, king Eglon." They are named as if they are being brought out in order to be presented to the victorious leader...

24 So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua,

Here, the kings are presented to Joshua as vanquished enemies. Their power is entirely removed, and soon their presence will be removed as well. It is at the time of bringing them out...

24 (con't) that Joshua called for all the men of Israel,

Rather, it is singular: *va'yiqra Yehoshua kal ish Yis'rael* – “and called Joshua unto every man Israel.” It is as if he is personally addressing each person before him. Each should take heed and understand the importance of the event to take place.

²⁴ (con't) **and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him,**

va'yomer el qetsine anshe ha'milkhamah hehalekhu ito – “and said unto the rulers men the war the goers with him.” With all of the men heeding Joshua, he then speaks to their rulers.

Here is a new word, *qatsin*, or ruler. It comes from *qatsah* meaning to scrape off. Hence, it is one who determines or decides a matter, as if scraping off the superfluous in order to come to a conclusion or a resolution. It is not a common word in Scripture, being used just twelve times, but a good verse to get the sense of it is –

“By long forbearance a **ruler** is persuaded,
And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.” Proverbs 25:15

They will be making decisions in the future, and so they are to be given an object lesson concerning the state of the enemies they will face in the future based on the enemies they will now humiliate. As such...

²⁴ (con't) **“Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings.” And they drew near and put their feet on their necks.**

Though still alive, the kings are utterly powerless. In this state, they will be perfectly humiliated. The foot upon the neck demonstrates possession. They possess the authority over these kings, and thus over their domains.

The *tsavar*, or back of the neck, is the spot that signifies the settling of a matter, either by the individual or externally. The word comes from *tsur*, an adversary.

If one turns the back of his neck toward the Lord, he has made himself an adversary of the Lord. If one is pursued by an enemy, he will turn his neck to find out how close he is. One can have a yoke on his neck, being brought under external control. If one puts his neck to the work, it means he has set himself to do the job diligently.

These men are setting themselves upon the enemy while demonstrating total possession, and thus authority, over them. What is happening here is well reflected by the words of David –

“For You have armed me with strength for the battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose against me.
⁴¹ You have also given me the necks of my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who hated me.” 2 Samuel 22:40, 41

²⁵ Then Joshua said to them, “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage,

The words closely match words already spoken by Moses to Joshua, to the people, by the Lord to Joshua, and to Joshua from the people. Joshua speaks in like manner to these men...

²⁵ (con’t) for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.”

The word “against” isn’t in the Hebrew. Also, the word “you” is emphatic. It says, “to all your enemies whom **you** fight.” Any enemies they face in battle will be totally vanquished just as these kings under their feet will be.

With this promise to the people made, and with the humiliation of the enemies brought upon them while they are alive, they will next become another type of humiliation before all the people...

²⁶ And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them,

More precisely, it reads, “And struck them, Joshua, thus, and put them to death.” The kings were brought into total subordination, they were humiliated, and then they were put to death – all by Joshua...

²⁶ (con’t) and hanged them on five trees;

Again, it is credited as the action of Joshua: *va’yitlem al khamishah etsim* – “and hanged (sg.) them upon five trees.” One tree for each of the kings. The word *etsim* means “wood.” It could be trees, stakes, poles, or so on made from the tree.

As for the act itself, Matthew Poole rightly says, “to their shame and disgrace, and the terror of others.” It is well stated. It is a note of shame upon the enemy, and it is a note of warning and terror upon those who understood its significance. Next, in accord with the law of Moses, it says...

²⁶ (con’t) **and they were hanging on the trees until evening.**

The Hebrew is more precise – “until the evening.” It is on the same day that they were hung. On that very same day at evening, which is directed in the law...

²⁷ **So it was at the time of the going down of the sun *that* Joshua commanded,**

vayhi l’eth bo ha’shemesh tsivah Yehoshua – “And it came to pass to time go the sun, commanded Joshua.” It is the end of the day and just before the beginning of the new day that Joshua instructs the men to accomplish the word of the law...

²⁷ (con’t) **and they took them down from the trees,**

va’yoridum me’al ha’etsim – “and they took them from upon the trees.” This is in accord with Moses’ words –

“If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance; for he who is hanged *is* accursed of God.”

-Deuteronomy 21:22, 23

It is the same symbolism as when the king of Ai was hanged. These men died in sin, a moral issue. It isn’t the physical body that is being referred to, even though defilement does come to one who touches a dead body. And it is not a ceremonial defilement that is being referred to. A moral issue is being addressed.

And more, it does not mean that a person who is hanged is accursed in the sense of not being saved. That would mean that any saved person who was hanged on a tree could not be saved. That is not the issue. The meaning is that the person becomes a curse when hanged on a tree. Why?

Because sin is in all people. Anyone who is publicly displayed on a tree is dead. Death is the final penalty for sin. It is not the physical body, but the sin that is being focused on. *Sin* hangs on the tree and that sin is accursed of God.

Therefore, the hanging is a sign of being accursed. In leaving the bodies up overnight, the corpses would defile the land. Hence, Joshua instructs compliance with the precept of the law. They...

27 (con't) **cast them into the cave where they had been hidden,**

The bodies were returned to the cave. Remember that the word cave comes from *ur*, to be exposed. If you dig a cave, it exposes what was once not seen. It is like a mental pun where they hid in this place that was exposed. Now, they are being returned to that place...

27 (con't) **and laid large stones against the cave's mouth,**

va'yasimu avanim gedoloth al pi ham'arah – “And placed stones whopping upon mouth the cave.” In verse 18, they rolled stones into the cave's mouth. In verse 22, they opened the cave's mouth. Now they place stones upon the cave's mouth. It is shut and covered over. With that, it next says a most unusual phrase...

27 (fin) **which remain until this very day.**

ad etsem ha'yom ha'zeh – “Until bone, the day, the this.” The meaning is the exact same day, as in “bone of my bones.” The writer is penning the narrative, and he says, “until this very same day.” The same as what?

This same term, “the very same day,” is used in Genesis 7:13, Genesis 17:23, Exodus 12:17, and Joshua 5:11. Each time, it is referring to something that happened on the same day that something else has happened.

But when the word “until” is used along with “this day,” it refers to the day the author writes the passage. And so there is a conundrum. Keil attempts to reconcile the words by saying –

“If, therefore, it has any meaning at all in the present instance, we must connect the whole clause with the one preceding, and even construe it as a relative clause: ‘where they (the kings) had hidden themselves, and they (the Israelites) had placed large stones

at the mouth of the cave until that very day' (on which the kings were fetched out and executed)." Keil

But what would be the point of saying this? Rather, it appears that the author is either saying, "Until this very same day," meaning the day he is writing, which would be forced and not have any real meaning, or personally, I think he is extending the thought beyond his day of writing to the day when his words are read, whenever that may be.

The meaning would then be that the kings are buried in that cave forever. As unusual as that may be, it is what I propose.

*Their bodies have been cast away
And the mouth of the cave is covered over forever
Before us stands a brand-new day
We shall never return to the past, no, not ever!*

*What marvelous things has our God done
When He sent us Jesus Christ our Lord
In Him is the victory, God's own Son
He has slain the enemy with His glorious sword*

*We shall go forth in the strength of Jesus
And we shall do it for eternal days
Great and wonderful things God has done for us
And so, forever and ever we shall sing His praise*

III. Pictures of Christ

In Chapter 9, the Gibeonites were brought into a covenant relationship with Israel. Now, they are being attacked by five kings, led by the king of Jerusalem and who are said in verse 5 to be of the Amorites, even though they are not actually all Amorites. Amorite means Renown.

Verse 1 of Chapter 10 notes the name Adoni-zedek and says he is the king of Jerusalem. He had heard of the destruction of Ai. That was typologically the ending of the law for Israel. It also noted the destruction of Jericho. That was typologically given as coming out of the state of anathema, being restored to access to God.

Still in verse 1, it noted the king had heard that Gibeon had made peace with Israel. They were brought into the covenant protections. Gibeon is etymologically tied to the name Gabbatha, the knoll where Christ was judged.

Jesus submitted Himself to the Roman authority in order to establish the New Covenant in His blood. The Gibeonites submitted themselves to Joshua in order to enter into the covenant relationship that had been established with Israel.

Now, this covenant relationship is in jeopardy because of five kings who I suggest are representative of Israel's depiction in the books of Moses.

They are of Jerusalem/Foundation of Peace – Genesis (the Lord establishes Israel). Hebron/Alliance – Exodus (an alliance between Israel and the Lord). Jarmuth/Elevation – Leviticus (the priestly class who interacts with the Lord). Lachish/Obstinate – Numbers (Israel's rejection of the Lord). Eglon/Heifer-like – Deuteronomy (Moses reminds Israel of their apostasy with the calf in Deuteronomy 9).

Jerusalem being the head of this alliance would then represent the law itself, it being the city from which the law is administered as Paul notes in Galatians 4:25.

Because of this, the contents of this passage are not unlike those of Genesis 34. These kings, representing the law, have come to destroy Gibeon just as Judaizers of the past and the Hebrew Roots movement today attempt to destroy the faith of the Gentiles who have come to Christ.

As Matthew Henry says of this passage, not tying it in with the law, but seeing it as revenge against Gibeon, "As Satan, so wicked men, cannot abide to lose any of their communitie." This is exactly what Judaizers and Hebrew Roots folks do.

Verse 4 noted the call to attack Gibeon "for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel." This is just what the Gentiles did with Christ and what the Judaizers in Acts and Galatians did against those same Gentiles. They are not of Israel because they are not of Christ (Romans 9:6). Instead, they are of the law which was fulfilled and ended by Christ.

Verse 5 noted that they are the five kings of the Amorites, or Renown, even though they are not actually Amorites. It is they who are self-exalted because of their adherence to the law. "We are the Renown!" There it notes who they are kings of, but not their

names, just where they ruled. Their rule is the law, the five books of Moses, and they have camped before Gibeon (think of Gabbatha) to wage war against it.

Verse 6. The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua (Jesus) at Gilgal (Liberty) pleading for help. This is exactly the substance of the council at Jerusalem in Acts 15. The Judaizers wanted to bring the Gentiles under the bondage of the law. An appeal was made to clarify that matter. It was clarified beautifully in the letter penned by the council.

As for the attack by the Judaizers, it is an attempt to destroy the grace of God in these people. But Gibeon calls out with a pun on the name of Joshua, “come up to us quickly, save us and help us.” The word translated as “save” is the word, *yasha*, from which Joshua’s (and Jesus’) name is derived. The call is well reflected by the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2. The people have asked for Joshua’s salvation. They need grace, not the law –

“We then, *as workers together with Him* also plead with *you* not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says:

‘In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you.’

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.”

Verse 6 also said that all the kings of the Amorite (sg.) who dwell in the mountain (sg.) had gathered against Gibeon. It is the mountain (the government) of the law. With that, verse 7 noted that Joshua ascended from Gilgal (Liberty) to help the Gibeonites. One cannot help but see the words of Paul in this –

“Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴ And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), ⁵ to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Galatians 2:3-5

The Lord said to Joshua that He had delivered the enemy into his hand. The Judaizers and Hebrew Roots people will not prevail. They will all be swept away. The credit of the march from Gilgal was in the singular – Jesus ascended from Liberty to aid Gibeon.

It then noted in verse 10 that the Lord (Yehovah) routed the enemy before Israel and “killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon” (think of Gabbatha). From there, they were chased to Beth Horon, the House of Freedom.

It is reflective of the words of Jesus, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). It is through Christ’s fulfillment of the law, not ours, that one is set free. He has defeated the law. Verse 10 also noted Azekah and Makkedah. The enemy is defeated before a field properly Tilled for the seed and in a Place of Shepherds that watch over the flock.

It is in this area that it said the Lord destroyed the enemy. He will never forsake His people and He will destroy the enemy before them.

Verses 12-14 were the poetic insert concerning the work of the Lord on behalf of Israel. It is the Lord who defeated the enemy. The sun standing over Gibeon would be reflective of Gabbatha. The moon over *emeq Ayalon* or the Depth of Aijalon would then be where Christ derived His strength on the same day before He went to the cross – “Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him” (Luke 22:43).

The point is that in a single day according to Hebrew reckoning (evening to evening) the enemies of Israel had been defeated. The poetic nature of the words highlights the fact. The avenging of the people Israel over their enemies (verse 13) means that they have done this through Christ, not on their own.

The note concerning the Book of Jasher tells us that Jesus, the Upright One (the Lord) fights for Israel. As the Gibeonites have become a part of the commonwealth of Israel, it is inclusive of them as well. The account also noted that the entire battle was won on a single, finished (perfect) day.

Verses 13 and 14 summed this up noting that the Lord heeded the voice of a man. It is reflective of the words of Psalm 66, a messianic psalm –

“If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.

¹⁹ *But* certainly God has heard *me*;

He has attended to the voice of my prayer.” Psalm 66:18, 19

Verse 15 curiously ended with Joshua and all Israel returning to the camp at Gilgal. That actually doesn’t happen until the end of the chapter, but it is placed there to indicate the Liberty that is found in Christ’s finished work, not the law.

With that, this week's passage opened with the five kings hiding in the cave in Makkedah. They tried to hide in a place that has been exposed at the Place of Shepherds. It tells us that in the church, the law is exposed to reveal Christ, not itself.

Joshua then said to roll large stones into its mouth. The law is shut up by Christ –

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” Romans 3:19

It is the law by which we stand guilty before God. It is Christ who takes that guilt away. With that, it said to “appoint over her men to watch them.” The cave is the Torah (both feminine nouns) where the law, meaning the five books of Moses, is. That is appointed to be watched over until Joshua (Jesus) directs.

While they are hidden there, Israel continued to pursue the enemies, tailing them. Every remnant of law observance must be dealt with and eliminated. Grace cannot be earned. Jesus is the true Israel who fulfills every aspect of the law, thus defeating each for His people.

With the entire law vanquished (verse 20), leaving only those who escaped into fortified cities (who will be dealt with later) the power of the law is effectively ended. Israel returned to Makkedah in peace. Not a word could be spoken against Israel. Those who have trusted in Christ have prevailed. The symbolism of His victory is then given when the mouth of the cave was opened.

The Law is opened, exposing what is hidden there. The five kings, the five books of Moses, are brought out and are named again: king Jerusalem, king Hebron, king Jarmuth, king Lachish, and king Eglon. They had come against the people and now they will be ended.

Every man of Israel is called forward and the rulers, the *qatsin*, those who scrape off or determine a matter, are told to place their feet on the necks of the kings. They now possess them in their entirety, signified by the foot. Making it on the neck signifies the settling of the matter. The law was an adversary, and now it is defeated.

With this, Joshua encouraged them to not be afraid or dismayed, but to be strong and of good courage. Further, it said, “for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you fight.” As it says in Hebrews 13 –

“The LORD *is* my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

Holding on to Christ’s victory means that there is complete victory. The teachings of the Judaizers cannot harm when one holds to Christ’s fulfillment of the law. That is then seen in verse 26 where Joshua (Jesus) struck the five kings, putting them to death.

It is in Christ’s death that the law died. This is the typology being seen. The victory over the law is complete, but the picture of it is not yet finished. That is seen in the five kings being hung on five trees. Their place of reign was mentioned three times in this passage, but their names were only mentioned once. Each looks to Christ and His work –

Adoni Zedek – Lord of Righteousness
Hoham – Whom Yehovah impels
Piram – Indomitable
Japhia – Illuminous
Debir – Place of the Word

What is being seen here is the same typology as with Ai. Charles Ellicott was close to seeing this. He said, “Upon the cross of the true Joshua, the enemies of the Israel of God are exhibited. ‘He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (Colossians 2:15).’”

This is just what is being seen. Christ is the King of the law. He and no other. And He was *talah*, hung on a tree, becoming a curse for us. Paul explains that in Galatians –

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Galatians 3:13

The five books of Moses, known as the law, are defeated, but the curse of the law stands without this part of Christ’s work. Jesus became a curse so that His people could be freed from the law’s demands.

Sin is a moral, not a physical or ceremonial, issue. It infects all people. Christ became a curse under the law. He paid the final penalty for sin. Our sin, in His fulfillment and ending of the law, hung on the tree, becoming that curse of the law.

This picture goes beyond that of the hanging of the king of Ai. It lets us know that it isn't just a part of the law, such as Deuteronomy, that Christ fulfilled, but He is the embodiment of the entire law. The hanging of these five kings reveals this.

Once taken down from the trees, in accordance with the law, it then says that the kings' bodies were cast into the cave. The place of being exposed will now hide the law. But more, it says that whopping stones were placed "upon" the mouth of the cave. Not only is the law hidden away, it is completely covered up, being entirely removed from sight through the work of Christ.

With that, the verses ended with the highly unusual phrase that this remained so "until this very same day." The only explanation I can find for these words is what I already gave. The words extend to any time that they are read, forever. The power of the law, found in the five books of Moses, is removed forever in Christ.

Matthew Poole was cited earlier concerning these five kings, saying, "to their shame and disgrace, and the terror of others." The law is ashamed before Christ. It has no power against Him because He has prevailed over it.

But this fact is also a note of warning and what should rightfully be terror upon those who hear and fail to understand the significance of what occurred. To throw oneself back under the law is a self-condemning act.

The Bible ends with the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen." The law is diametrically opposed to grace. If one chooses the law, he has nowhere else to go but to fulfill the law. Paul says as much using circumcision as a benchmark of the law, "And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law" (Galatians 5:3).

The Lord has shown us this same theme so many times since Genesis 1:1 that we simply cannot overlook or ignore it. The question for all people is, "Where do you want to hang your hat?" You can trust in the law and be judged by the law, meaning every single precept found in the law, or you can trust in Christ's fulfillment of it and be freed from its power.

This was one purpose of the law. It was to show us what God expects in order to be right with Him. In seeing the enormity of the burden the law carries, it was to then lead us to Jesus.

Hence, to say that we will live according to the law's standard is to claim a self-righteousness equal to God. It is self-deceiving and it can only lead to condemnation. To trust in Jesus is to trust in God's provision, thus giving all glory to God, not to self. Be wise, be discerning, and yield yourself to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. And please, do so today.

Closing Verse: *"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."* Colossians 2:13-15

Next Week: Joshua 10:28-43 *His victory is complete and it is grand...* (So Joshua Conquered All the Land) (22nd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Battle for Gibeon, Part II

But these five kings had fled
And hidden themselves at Makkedah in a cave
And it was told Joshua, saying
"The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah
-----all trembly and not so brave"

So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave
And set men by it to guard them like a prison yard
And do not stay there yourselves
But pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard

"Do not allow them to enter their cities, please understand
For the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand"

Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel
Made an end of slaying them, not showing any pities
With a very great slaughter, till they had finished

That those who escaped entered fortified cities

And all the people returned to the camp
To Joshua at Makkedah, in peace – all was well
No one moved his tongue
Against any of the children of Israel

Then Joshua said, “Open the cave’s mouth, so let it be
And bring out those five kings from the cave to me”

And they did so
And brought out those five kings to him from the cave:
The king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth
The king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon
-----for them, things were looking grave

So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua
That Joshua called for all the men of Israel
And said to the captains of the men of war
Those who went with him, to them he did tell...

“Come near, put on the necks of these kings your feet”
And they drew near and put their feet on their necks
-----a sign of their defeat

Then Joshua said to them
“Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, that wouldn’t be right
Be strong and of good courage
For thus the LORD will do to all your enemies
-----against whom you fight”

And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them
And hanged them on five trees
And they were hanging on the trees until evening
Attracting lots of flies and fleas

So it was at the time of the going down of the sun
That Joshua commanded
And they took them down from the trees

Cast them into the cave where they had been hidden
-----as the situation demanded

And laid large stones against the cave's mouth
-----big stones on display
Which remain until this very day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 10:28-43 **(SO JOSHUA CONQUERED ALL THE LAND)**

As we read through the Bible, it's hard to keep track of everything going on. There are so many names of people and places, so many repetitions and variations on things that it gets overwhelming at times.

People will ask me about something I have preached or taught on, and I will say, "Oh man, I don't remember. I'll have to go back and read my notes." That usually results in the look that says I must not know what I'm talking about.

Try memorizing 30,000 pages of notes with some things that are so complex that they took hours of study to figure out. It's not possible. For example, the book of Acts is 28 chapters long. The morning I typed this sermon, I posted a commentary on Acts 10:23. So, we're not halfway through the book. And yet, that was page 792 in the ongoing commentary.

When someone gives me the look as if I don't know what I'm talking about, it's pretty certain they have overestimated my abilities. I write things down so that I don't have to remember them. There is no other way to handle the load.

Text Verse: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

For this sermon alone, I referred to many previous sermons to make sure I was following the typology consistently. Even then, I wonder what I have missed or erred in. But one thing I know, even if I am wrong about a point, it is not the word's fault. Listen to what the Pulpit Commentary says about a part of our passage today –

"... in spite of the alleged carelessness of our compiler, who is credited with having put together shreds of the various narratives in the most perfunctory manner, he takes care to add (Joshua 16:10) that the inhabitants of Gezer were not driven out. In like manner, with the single exception of Hebron, the people of which must have at once chosen another king, he carefully omits the mention of the king in the cities which had lost their kings in the battle before Gibeon. ... Thus a careful examination of the narrative puts the care and accuracy of the history very carefully before us." Pulpit Commentary

In other words, where people are alleging that the Bible is haphazardly put together and forms its own internal errors and contradictions, just the opposite is true. The word is precise, perfectly detailed, and minutely exacting in its presentation.

The only reason why we might suppose there is an error is because we have failed to fully check things out. Yes, it can be tiresome and tedious, but it will also be rewarding. Be sure that if this is God's word, then He has carefully set things in His word with purpose and intent which prove it to be His word.

That truth continues to be seen and expanded upon in today's passage. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Then Joshua Returned (verses 28-43)

²⁸ On that day Joshua took Makkedah,

v'eth maqedah lakhad Yehoshua ba'yom ha'hu – “And Makkedah took Joshua in the day, the it.” The meaning seems clear. The battle described in the previous verses included the defeat of Makkedah. The first hint of this was seen in verse 10 –

“So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.” Joshua 10:10

Then in verse 16, it noted that the five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave in Makkedah. Having the kings pinned down in Makkedah implies control over the area. And finally, in verse 21, it said, “And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace.”

This again implies total control over the area. It is true that the term *ba'yom ha'hu*, or “in the day, the it,” can mean a general period of time. That is seen, for example, in Deuteronomy –

“And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.” Deuteronomy 31:18

However, it seems that we are being told that Makkedah was totally subdued during the single day of fighting recorded earlier. As a reminder, Makkedah means “Place of Shepherds.” The city will fall within Judah’s inheritance but will never be mentioned again after Joshua 15.

²⁸ (con’t) **and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword.**

va’yakeha l’pi kherev v’eth malkhah – “And struck her to mouth sword, and her king.” It is referring to the entire city. She was as a mother to the people with a king reigning in her, but both were consumed. Essentially, the same thought will be seen four times in this passage. As for the destruction, it is next more fully described as...

²⁸ (con’t) **He utterly destroyed them—all the people who were in it.**

hekherim otam v’eth kal ha’nepesh asher bah – “He anathematized them and every the soul who in her.” It refers to the city, the king, and all of the people. Unlike Jericho, which was noted as being totally anathematized, and unlike Ai which had exceptions for the booty, nothing is said here as to what was the case with Makkedah. As for Ai, it said—

“For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. ²⁷ Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua. ²⁸ So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day.” Joshua 8:26-28

As Jericho was the initial city and a type of firstfruits to the Lord, my speculation is that the livestock and booty of Makkedah would have been spared, but the account completely skips over that, noting only the total destruction of the city, her king, and her people...

²⁸ (con’t) **He let none remain.**

It is a noun, not a verb: *lo hishir sarid* – “no he left survivor.” This phrase will also be mentioned four times in this passage. The words are more fully explained by what is said later in verse 40 –

“So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining,

but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.” Joshua 10:40

Saying “but utterly destroyed all that breathed” does not necessarily mean the animals too. It is certain that this at least refers to the people. Further, the spoil of these five cities is probably included in the words of chapter 11 –

“And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing.” Joshua 11:14

It is probable that the spoil was taken. But the point of my focus on the detail is to note that the destruction of the cities and their people is being highlighted. The command was set forth in Deuteronomy to destroy every person and Joshua is now fulfilling it.

²⁸ (con’t) **He also did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.**

What happened to the king of Jericho was not explicitly stated. Rather, in chapter 6, all it said was, “And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword” (Joshua 6:21). From there, it notes this in chapter 8 –

“Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. ² And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it.” Joshua 8:1, 2

And then –

“And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raise over it a great heap of stones *that remains* to this day.” Joshua 8:29

As such, it can be speculated that something similar was done to the king of Jericho even though that was never recorded in the details of chapter 6. Such details, or the lack thereof, really help to reveal the typology being conveyed in each account.

²⁹ Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to Libnah; and they fought against Libnah.

The translation is off a bit. More precisely it reads, “And crossed over, Joshua, and all Israel with him, from Makkedah to Libnah. And he fought with Libnah.” Being singular, the subject is probably Joshua. Or it may be speaking of Israel as a whole, as if a single man is fighting.

As for the term “all Israel,” it simply means “all Israel in the battle who fought with him.” The city is in a westerly direction from Makkedah.

Libnah means “Whiteness.” However, that comes from *lavan*, a verb meaning to make white or make bricks because bricks whiten when they are made.

As for the city itself, it was near Makkedah. It will be granted to the inheritance of Judah as is recorded in Joshua 15. From there, it is noted as being designated a priestly city in Joshua 21:13. The city will revolt from Judah as is recorded in 2 Kings 8:22, probably because the king was a wicked man. However, Libnah appears to have returned to Judah later. The city will be noted even until the time of the exile of the people to Babylon.

³⁰ And the LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel; he struck it and all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword. He let none remain in it, but did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

Here, Joshua is left out of the verse. He was noted in the previous verse involving this battle, but now the subject is Israel. This is certainly revealing the united nature of Joshua and Israel, acting as one in order to defeat these foes.

As mentioned earlier, city is a feminine noun. Hence, translating it as “her” gives the biblical sense of what is being said. This continues all the way through Revelation where Mystery Babylon is spoken of as a woman. Hence, just for the typological clarity, this verse would more appropriately read –

“And gave Yehovah also her in hand Israel, and her king. And he struck her to mouth sword. And every the soul who in her, no he left in her survivor. And did to her king according to which had done to king Jericho.”

To get the sense of this, the words of Isaiah when speaking of Zion might help. Referring to Zion in the feminine, it says –

“Then you will say in your heart,
‘Who has begotten these for me,
Since I have lost my children and am desolate,
A captive, and wandering to and fro?
And who has brought these up?
There I was, left alone;
But these, where *were* they?’” Isaiah 49:21

She was a mother bereaved of children. In these battles in Joshua, the same is true. The mother was struck and her children as well. However, in the case of a city like Libnah, the mother continues with new children when Israel takes the cities and fills them with people, using the same name as she previously had.

And more, the king of Libnah is noted, like the king of Makkedah, as receiving the same treatment as the king of Jericho.

³¹ Then Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish; and they encamped against it and fought against it.

Again, it reads in the singular: “And crossed over, Joshua, and all Israel with him, from Libnah to Lachish, and he encamped against her and fought against her.” Saying it in the singular, it is either referring to Joshua or to Israel as a unified whole.

The movement is in a south-westerly direction. Lachish means Obstinate, Invincible, or Impregnable. Despite such a decisive name, it could not withstand Joshua because...

³² And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, who took it on the second day, and struck it and all the people who *were* in it with the edge of the sword, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

Again, I would render it: “And gave Yehovah Lachish in hand Israel, and he took her in the day, the second. And struck her to mouth sword, and every the soul who in her, according to all that had done to Libnah.”

The fact that the “second day” is noted shows that the city was well-defended, and it gives understanding to the name it was given. This is also confirmed in reading the accounts in 2 Kings 18 and 19 (see also 2 Chronicles 32) and in Jeremiah 34.

A second possibility for the words is that the city fell the next day after Libnah fell, but that seems less likely. Rather, it is more likely a note concerning Lachish being a strong fortress.

Like the previous two verses, it mentions Joshua and all Israel, and then it notes that Yehovah delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel. The united nature of Joshua and Israel is again highlighted.

Also, this battle does not say that they also killed its king. Rather, the king of Lachish was killed in verse 10:26. It may be that no king was appointed to replace him before this battle occurred. Next, despite the fact that Lachish was overthrown, the battle involved more...

³³ Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish;

Rather than “then,” as if it happens next, it says: *az alah horam melekh gezer la’zor eth lakhish* – “At that time ascended Horam, king Gezer, to help Lachish.” It was while the battle was being waged that he came up to assist.

This may help explain the fact that it took two days rather than one to defeat Lachish. Not only was it fortified, but Israel had to deal with another army joining in the battle against them.

The name Horam means “Mountainous” or “Mountaineer.” Of this, Abarim says –

“The noun *הר (har)* is the Bible’s common word for mountain or hill. Intuition dictates that the root of the word for mountain probably has to do with being elevated, but that’s not correct. In Hebrew thought, a mountain is not something that’s high but rather a lot of something gathered. And so, a mountain became synonymous for a large but centralized group of people (Jeremiah 51:25), or even gods (Isaiah 14:13).” Abarim

The name Gezer comes from the verb *gazar*, to cut or divide, and it is identical with the noun *gezer*, a part or a portion. Hence, it means Part or Portion. Despite the assistance on the part of Gezer, it was a futile effort...

33 (con't) and Joshua struck him and his people, until he left him none remaining.

Rather, like before, it is not an adjective but a noun: *ad bilti hishir lo sarid* – “until none he left to him survivor.” Here again we see the united nature of Joshua and Israel. Joshua is said to have struck him, killing all in the process. Next...

34 From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it and fought against it.

Literally rendered, it says: “And crossed over Joshua and all Israel with him from Lachish to Eglon. And they camped against her, and they fought against her.” Notice how it says “they” instead of “he.” In verse 29, it said in the singular that “he fought against Libnah.” The same is the case in verses 30, 31, 32, and 33.

The direction is now eastward from Lachish to Eglon. Eglon means Heifer-like, Calf-place, or Fine Bull Calf.

35 They took it on that day and struck it with the edge of the sword; all the people who were in it he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

Notice the change from the plural to the singular: “And they took it in the day, the it, and they struck her to mouth sword. And every soul that in her in the day, the that, he anathematized according to all that he had done to Lachish.”

This is the second city where it does not say that they also killed its king. Rather, the king of Eglon was killed in verse 10:26. Again, it may be that no king was appointed to replace him before this battle occurred. The account is being precise and very detailed. With the destruction of Eglon, it next says...

36 So Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it.

More literally: “And ascended Joshua and all Israel with him from Eglon to Hebron. And they fought against her.” The detail of the geography is exacting. While in the plain, it says they “crossed over” from place to place. Here, it says they ascended because it is in the hilly region. Once there, it says...

³⁷ And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword—its king, all its cities, and all the people who *were* in it;

This leaves the narrative with a difficulty, but not one that is beyond a moment of thought. It says: “And they took her and struck her to mouth sword and her king and all her cities, and every the soul in her.”

The difficulty is how can he have killed the king of Hebron if he had already been killed in verse 10:26? The answer is that this is either including him in the totality of the campaign against Hebron, or – more likely – a new king, such as a son of the king, rose to lead the city. This is just what is seen constantly in the books of Kings and Chronicles. Of this battle...

^{37 (con't)} he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon, but utterly destroyed it and all the people who *were* in it.

This introduces another difficulty. It reads: “no he left survivor according to all that he had done to Eglon. And he anathematized her and every the soul who in her.” The difficulty supposedly arises from what it says elsewhere, such as in Judges 1:8-10 –

“Now the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. ⁹ And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the mountains, in the South, and in the lowland. ¹⁰ Then Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron. (Now the name of Hebron *was* formerly Kirjath Arba.) And they killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.”

The question is, why was it necessary to go after Hebron if it was destroyed already? There are two options. The first is that the battles being described here are over a long period and encompass the whole time of battles while subduing the land. In other words, this is a summary of what is more explicitly detailed.

Or it could be the cities were destroyed and then rebuilt. If one notices how quickly cities are rebuilt after any recent war, it suddenly becomes no problem at all. People moved back into an area that was destroyed and reestablished it.

Unless Joshua set up a garrison in every city that was attacked and destroyed, there would eventually be cities that were reinhabited and refortified. With that, it next notes...

38 Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and they fought against it.

More precisely, it reads: “And returned Joshua, and all Israel with him, *to* Debir. And he fought against it.” Debir means Place of the Word, The Writer, or Oracle. Saying Joshua “returned” probably indicates that this was a city that lay in the direction of Gilgal. As they were heading back to that area, Debir was along the route, and the city was taken and destroyed.

This location is noted in Joshua 15:15 as being previously called Kirjath Sepher, City of Books or City of Scribes. It is also known in Joshua 15:48 as Kirjath Sannah, which may mean City of Learning. As for the city, it says...

39 And he took it and its king and all its cities; they struck them with the edge of the sword and utterly destroyed all the people who were in it.

Again, to be consistent, I would translate this as: “And he took her and her king and all her cities, and they struck them to mouth sword, and anathematized every soul who in her.” Notice the change from the singular, he, to the plural, they, as the words progress. And again, it says...

39 (con’t) He left none remaining; as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king.

More literally: “No he left survivor according to that he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and her king, and according to that he had done to Libnah and her king.” The change back to the singular is either focusing on Joshua, or the collective of Israel. As the next words refer to Joshua, it is probably the former...

40 So Joshua conquered all the land:

va’yakeh Yehoshua eth kal ha’arets – “And struck Joshua all the land.” This is obviously not the entire land of Canaan, but it comprises what is next stated...

40 (con’t) the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings;

More literally: “the mountain and the *Negev* (meaning south), and the *sh’phelah* (meaning lowland), and the slopes, and all their kings.” Each city that was faced, in whatever type of terrain they were located, was defeated by Joshua. And more...

⁴⁰ (con't) **he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed,**

lo hishir sarid v'eth kal han'shamah hekherim – “no he left survivor and each the breath he anathematized.” This is exactly in accord with Deuteronomy 20 where this command was given using the same word, *neshamah*, or breath –

“But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing **that breathes** remain alive, ¹⁷ but you shall utterly destroy them.” Deuteronomy 20:16, 17

⁴⁰ (con't) **as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.**

It is true that Yehovah gave commands concerning the destruction of those in Canaan, but the only time the word *neshamah*, or breath, is used in this context is from Moses' hand. Hence, this gives another clear evidence of the divine inspiration of Moses' words in Deuteronomy.

Exactly as the Lord God inspired Moses to write, so Joshua fulfilled. And more...

⁴¹ **And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon.**

It reads: “And struck them, Joshua, from Kadesh Barnea and until Gaza, and all country Goshen and until Gibeon.” The location of each of these except Goshen is known. There are various opinions on where Goshen is, but the point is that the named locations form the borders of Joshua's conquests.

Kadesh Barnea means either Sacred Desert of Wandering, or maybe in the active sense, Holy Purifying Wanderings. Gaza, or Azah, means Strong. Goshen means Drawing Near or Approaching, and Gibeon means Hill Town or Hilly.

⁴² **All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time,**

v'eth kal ha'melakhim ha'eleh v'eth artsam lakhad Yehoshua paam ekhat – “And all the kings, the these, and their land, took Joshua stroke one.” It was one sweeping engagement that brought down city after city along with their kings. Exactly as they were instructed to do in the law, so he did.

⁴² (con't) **because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.**

Joshua's conquests are explicitly stated to have been successful because Yehovah, God of Israel, was the One who fought for Israel. With that noted...

⁴³ (fin) **Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.**

After the campaign was complete, this final note is given. The camp had remained at the Gilgal, and Joshua with his warriors returned there having done exactly as the law commanded, and in accord with the presence of the Lord who fought for them.

*Every foe is defeated throughout the land
Every king has been slain that waged war against us
This, the result of the power of God's right hand
Yes, it is all accomplished by the Lord Jesus*

*That which stood against us is defeated
That which was contrary to us is no more
The source of its power has been unseated
And it shall be this way now and forevermore*

*Jesus has gained the victory!
In Him the battle has been won for us
Look at the deeds of the Lord! Open your eyes and see
Look at the glorious work of our Lord Jesus*

II. Pictures of Christ

The passage began with the defeat of Makkedah, or Place of Shepherds, which Joshua is said to have taken. A place of shepherds speaks of those who tend to the flocks. They can be either good shepherds or bad shepherds. The latter are found repeatedly in Ezekiel 34 –

Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I *am* against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them." Ezekiel 34:10

It noted that both Makkedah and her king were slain with the edge of the sword. Saying "with the edge of the sword" should make us think "with the law." The word for sword

and the word Horeb where the law was received are both comprised of the same three Hebrew letters. These were anathematized.

It also showed that what occurred to the king of Jericho also happened to the king of Makkedah. Remembering that Jericho, or Place of Fragrance, is a type of paradise will help to understand the typology.

From the passage, it is to be understood that he was hung from a tree. The King of Paradise became a curse for us so that we might receive the blessing of Abraham through faith. Likewise, Jesus, the Shepherd, became a curse for us so that we could be included in His flock. This same typology has been seen in the previous kings who were each a type of Christ in their deaths. In this, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep.

From Makkedah, the account next went to Joshua passing from Makkedah to Libnah, or Whiteness (v.29). Following the use of the root word, even since the early Genesis account where the people made *lavan*, or bricks, to build the tower of Babel, it has consistently pictured works-based salvation.

In verses 29 and 30, the battle against Libnah is described, revealing that it was struck along with its king. Again, it notes what had been done to the king of Jericho. This then anticipates the works of Christ being the only suitable works before God. His righteousness, based on His works, is imputed to us through His death. The gospel of John especially speaks of the works of Christ –

“But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.” John 5:6

As for those who believe, our works are summed up by Him also, saying, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent” (John 6:39).

From Libnah, the narrative moved to Lachish, or Obstinate. Again, the city is taken and anathematized. This time, however, the text does not say that the king was given the treatment of the king of Jericho. It typologically looks to the battle that was won by the Lord, defeating the obstinate nature in those who come to Him. Where believers once rejected Him, they now accept Him.

At that time, however, it told us that Horam, king of Gezer, came to help Lachish. This is an obvious picture. Horam signifies Mountaineer. Abarim gave us the idea of that signifying a large but centralized group of people. This extends to the idea of a government in the Bible.

He was described as having come from Gezer, meaning to cut or divide into parts; hence, Part or Portion. It is typical of all who are centralized against the gospel, attempting to divide the Lord's people. This would be those would join with the obstinate trying to divide through the government of the law. One can either have a part in Jesus' grace, or he will have his portion under the law.

Of them, it said that Joshua struck him until there was no survivor. In the end, there will only be those left who receive the grace.

After this, Joshua passed on to Eglon (v.34). If you remember from the previous two sermons, Eglon was typical of Israel's apostasy with the golden calf. It was seen in this section that the pronouns went from "he" to "they."

We won't address every instance of this after the occurrence in that verse, but you should get the point. There is the work of Christ and then there is the needed obedience of those to the work of Christ, who is the true Israel. People being responsible for their actions when committing idolatry appears to be the point of the pronoun changes.

However, the final pronouns reverted to the singular – "he anathematized according to all that he had done to Lachish." Like with Lachish, no note concerning the king being treated in the same manner as the king of Jericho was given.

It typologically looks to the battle that was won by the Lord, defeating the idolatrous nature in those who come to Him. Where believers once followed whatever idol was before them, they now follow Jesus.

After that, Joshua went up from Eglon to Hebron, or Alliance. Hebron in the last sermons was given to reveal the alliance between Israel and the Lord at the giving of the law. That was never intended to be a permanent state. Rather it was a temporary dispensation, as Paul says –

"But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring*

us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” Galatians 3:23-25

The final pronouns of this battle were in the singular as well. Christ is the One who has defeated the law, the alliance made with Israel, by fulfilling it. In this, He anathematized it. That is perfectly expressed in Paul’s words of Galatians –

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed [Greek: *anathema*]. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” Galatians 1:6-9

From there, it says that “Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir” (v.38). The meaning is Place of the Word, meaning an Oracle. Jesus is the Oracle. He is the spot from where the Word issues from because He is the embodiment of the law.

And it is He who died in fulfillment of it as well. Interestingly, verse 39 said that “he did to Debir and its king, as he had done also to Libnah and its king.” The words then skip over the previous four battles Hebron, Eglon, and Gezer, and Lachish to identify with the king of Libnah who is, in turn, identified with the king of Jericho.

It again speaks of the substitutionary nature of Christ’s work for us, becoming a curse so “that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Galatians 3:14). This cannot come through law, except as the law is fulfilled through Christ. And the law is only fulfilled through Christ who died on a tree in fulfillment of it.

The lesson is brought back to us, again and again, to understand that there is nothing we can do to merit salvation except trust in Christ’s work.

Verse 40 then revealed the scope of the victory saying, “all the land” and then describing it. It noted that he left no survivor and every person that had breath was anathematized. It then ended with “as Yehovah, God of Israel, had commanded.”

Jesus completely and entirely fulfilled every word that was given to Him to fulfill. He destroyed every obstacle that stood against His people. Every vestige of that which stands against God’s people is removed in Him.

With that seen, verse 41 mentioned the four areas that comprised the scope of Joshua's conquest – Kadesh Barnea, the Holy purifying wanderings of Israel under the law; Gaza, the strength of sin, which is the law; Goshen, the approaching of God's grace in Christ; and Gibeon, the termination of the law at the knoll where Christ was judged and in Him was judged sin, Gabbatha.

In verse 42, it said that Joshua took all of these kings and their land in one stroke. That is exactly what Christ did. He engaged the enemy, and He defeated him in one stroke at the cross of Calvary. What is seen here is a snapshot of the trek from law to grace, as it says, Joshua (Jesus) took all of these in one stroke because Yehovah, God of Israel, fought for Israel. As it says in Romans –

“What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?”
-Romans 8:31

What God did for Israel through Joshua is what Jesus has done for all who are His. It is His victory, not ours, and it is in His deeds, not ours, that the victory is secured.

In that, the verses ended with, “Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.” It's a beautiful ending, Jesus and all of Israel returned to the camp at the Liberty. Jesus placed Himself under the bondage of the law in order to redeem Israel from the law and to provide them with the Liberty that was lost in Eden.

And for any who come to Him, Jew or Gentile, they become a part of the commonwealth of Israel. The story is magnificent, and it is another of the many repetitions of the same theme that God keeps revealing to us in His word. Man under law is condemned. Christ came under the law to make it possible to be free.

What is it that we can give God that will earn our salvation? Think it through. This is what every single religion or supposed point of righteousness that man conjures up expresses. It is what we can do to restore us to God.

Only in Christ do we find what God has done to restore us to Him. Give up on self; it is a dead-end street. Look to Christ and His cross where peace and reconciliation are found. This is what I would ask you to do. Please, do it today.

Closing Verse: *“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish*

their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

-Romans 10:2-4

Next Week: Joshua 11:1-15 *For the battle, many men left home...* (The Waters of Merom) (23rd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

So Joshua Conquered All the Land

On that day Joshua took Makkedah
And struck it and its king with the edge of the sword
He utterly destroyed them—all the people who were in it
He let none remain, according to the word of the Lord

He also did to the king of Makkedah, so we know
As he had done to the king of Jericho

Then Joshua passed from Makkedah
And all Israel with him, to Libnah because things were going well
And they fought against Libnah
And the LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel

He struck it and all the people who were in it
With the edge of the sword, a mighty blow
He let none remain in. Not one person split
But did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho

Then Joshua passed from Libnah
And all Israel with him, to Lachish they went
And they encamped against it and fought against it
They fought and did not relent

And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel
Who took it on the second day, and struck it
And all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword

According to all that he had done to Libnah, not giving in a bit

Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish
Thinking the victory he was gaining
And Joshua struck him and his people
Until he left him none remaining

From Lachish Joshua passed to Eglon
And all Israel with him
And they encamped against it
And fought against it, for Eglon, things were lookin' grim

They took it on that day and struck it
With the edge of the sword, wiping out everyone
All the people who were in it he utterly destroyed that day
According to all that he to Lachish had done

So Joshua went up from Eglon
And all Israel with him, to Hebron, a mighty horde
And they fought against it
And they took it and struck it with the edge of the sword

Its king, all its cities, and all the people who were in it
He left none remaining. He kept on and didn't quit
According to all that he had done to Eglon
He utterly destroyed it and all the people who were in it

Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir
And they fought against it, surely Debir was floored
And he took it and its king and all its cities
They struck them with the edge of the sword

And utterly destroyed all the people who were in it
He left none remaining, as he had to Hebron done
So he did to Debir and its king
As he had done also to Libnah and its king, until
-----the battle was won

So Joshua conquered all the land:

The mountain country and the South as well
And the lowland and the wilderness slopes
And all their kings, sending them straight to... oh do tell!

There were none remaining
As the situation demanded
Joshua utterly destroyed all that breathed
As the LORD God of Israel had commanded

And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea
Rolling on and on
As far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen
Even as far as Gibeon
All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time
Because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel
Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him
To the camp at Gilgal, time for a break and relaxing as well

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 11:1-15 (THE WATERS OF MEROM)

The passage today continues the same pattern that has been presented in Joshua. One step logically follows after another as each story about the life of Joshua and Israel unfolds in typology pointing to the Person and work of Christ and the lives of His people in Him.

There is a battle to be waged in our verses. It anticipates a battle that we face today. The victory is already found in Christ, but we still have to live out our lives in Christ and we constantly face enemies that come against us.

Paul speaks of this in Ephesians 6. He writes of spiritual warfare and of an unseen enemy. The fact is that the unseen enemy is working out his devices in real people and real teachings in the world. That is perfectly evident from Paul's words when they are rightly considered. He spells out his thoughts on this spiritual warfare beginning in Ephesians 6:10, which is today's text verse...

Text Verse: *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."*

-Ephesians 6:10-13

The words here seem more spiritual and less tangible as if there is this unseen battle that we somehow have to guard against. But his continued thoughts show us that the spiritual side only points to realities that we must face in our Christian lives.

There is the gospel of peace. It is a spiritual thing, but it is realized in real people. There are fiery darts of the wicked one. That isn't the devil just shooting unseen arrows at you. It includes false teachers and preachers who are pointing their heresies at you, trying to destroy your faith. And so on.

The spiritual things Paul speaks of are realities we face. If people would understand this, there would be less hype and sensation about Ephesians 6, and there would be a lot more proper doctrine and getting the truth about Jesus out to those who need to hear it.

These things are typologically anticipated in today's passage. Such great things as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. So They Went Out (verses 1-5)

¹ And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard *these things*,

The words are based upon what was recorded in chapter 10 where the Gibeonites called Joshua to rescue them when attacked by the five kings. From there, Joshua defeated the five kings and went on to subdue the area of the southland. With that coming to the ears of Jabin, the account now begins.

The name Jabin, or *yavin*, has to do with discernment, coming from the word *bin*, meaning "to discern." The name means He perceives, He discerns, He understands, The Wise, The Intelligent. This name may be a hereditary title of the ruler of Hazor because it is the same name used at a much later date as found in Judges 4.

The name Hazor, or *khatsor*, actually has various meanings based on its root which signifies "to begin to cluster or gather." It may mean Village, Trumpet, Leek, Enclosure, and so on. The city will eventually fall within the borders of Naphtali (Joshua 19:36).

^{1 (con't)} that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph,

Jabin is the primary subject, but he needs an alliance in order to deal with the pressing issue: the Israelites flooding over the land, and destroying city after city. Hence, he calls out to other kings in order to form such an alliance.

The name Jobab, or *yovav*, comes from *yavav*, meaning to cry in a shrill voice. As such, it means To Call Shrilly, Crying Out, or To Lament. His city is Madon, coming from *din*, to judge. Thus, it probably means Contention or Strife.

Shimron comes from *shamar*, to watch or guard. Hence, it is Watching or Vigilant Guardian. Strong's defines it as Guardianship. Shimron will eventually be located within the borders of Zebulun (Joshua 19:15).

Achshaph is possibly from *kashaph*, meaning to practice sorcery. Hence, it signifies Fascination or Bewitched. The city will eventually be located within the borders of Asher (Joshua 19:25). Along with the call out to these kings, the petition next reaches much further...

² and to the kings who were from the north, in the mountains,

The word mountain is singular: *v'el ham'lakhim asher mits'phon be'har* – “And to the kings who from north in the mountain.” This probably refers to the hill-country as a single mountain. And so, it may refer to the mountainous area of Naphtali noted in Joshua 20:7.

² (con't) in the plain south of Chinneroth,

u-ba'aravah negev kinaroth – “and in the Arabah south Chinneroth.” The meaning is the plain that extends south from the Lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea as noted in Deuteronomy 1 –

These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab.” Deuteronomy 1:1 (Holman)

As a reminder, the word comes from *arav*, to grow dark. That is identical to *arav* – to take or give in pledge. Chinneroth comes from *kinor*, a harp. That comes from a root meaning to twang.

² (con't) in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west,

u-bash'phelah u-b'naphot dor miyam – “And in the lowland, and in heights Dor from west.” The Shephelah is the lowland noted in Joshua 9:1. It is a broad flat plain extending south from Mt. Carmel.

The “heights of Dor” is literally, “the sieves of Dor.” The meaning is that as a sieve is raised, it pours out. Hence it can signify heights or borders of an area. Dor means To Dwell, but it is identical to the word translated as generation, as in the time period of one's dwelling. Next...

³ to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

More correctly, the words read: “the Cannanite from east and from west, and the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountain [meaning hill country], and the Hivite under Hermon in land the Mizpah.”

The list is similar to that noted in Joshua 9:1. The meaning of the names are: Canaanite – Humiliated, Humbled, or even Subdued; Amorite – Talkers (active) or Renown (passive); Hittite – Terror, Terrible, Fearsome; Perizzite – Villager or Dweller in an Open Country; Jebusite – Treading Down (active) or Trodden Underfoot (passive); Hivite – Villagers, or maybe more specifically Tent Villagers; Hermon means Sacred; And finally, *ha’mitspah* or “The Mizpah” means The Watchtower.

This great alliance has been called together to come against Israel in battle, hoping to destroy them in one fell swoop...

⁴ So they went out, they and all their armies with them,

va’yetsu hem v’kal makhanehem imam – “And they went out, they and all their camps with them.” There is an obvious excitement in the words as it refers to the kings and then adding in the vast array of camps that accompanied them. A great and epic battle lay ahead that was comprised of...

^{4 (con’t)} as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude,

am rav ka’khol asher al sephath ha’yam la’rov – “People many according to the sand upon lip the sea to the multitude.” The thought is expressed in the superlative, comparable to “the stars in the heavens.” Just as they could not be counted, so it seemed that the multitudes in this battle could not be counted either. Also...

^{4 (con’t)} with very many horses and chariots.

Again, it is stated in the superlative: *v’sus va’rekhev rav meod* – “And horse and chariot many very.” Noting the horses and chariots is intended to show the vast advantage held by this army. Israel had neither. If these were equipped with iron hooks or scythes, as would be expected, they could cut through the infantry with ease, mutilating any who were caught in their path.

⁵ And when all these kings had met together,

va'yivadu kol ham'lakhim ha'eleh – “And made an appointment all the kings, the these.”
The idea is that of agreeing to meet at a set place and time in order to join forces. As such...

^{5 (con't)} **they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.**

The words are close enough to get the meaning. The kings, along with their armies have come to the appointed place and they have camped together towards the waters of Merom.

The name Merom is found only here and in verse 7. It is formed similarly to the word *marom*, or height. As such, it is the highest or upper waters of the three lakes in the Jordan Valley, now known as the Hula Valley. Of this area, Albert Barnes notes –

“This lake occupies the southern half of the Ard el Huleh, a depressed basin some 15 miles long and 3 or 4 miles wide lying between the hills of Galilee on the west and the lower spurs of Hermon on the east. The size of the lake varies with the season, and the northern side of it ends in a large swamp. The shape of the lake is triangular, the point being at the south, where the Jordan, which enters it on the north, again quits it. There is a considerable space of tableland along the southwestern shore, and here probably the troops of Jabin and his confederates were encamped, preparing to move southward when Joshua and his army fell suddenly upon them.” Albert Barnes

The location was highlighted in a video on YouTube by an adventuresome couple known as Sergio and Rhoda in Israel entitled 500 Million Birds in Hula Valley. Unbelievable! As for this large and impressive army, they will next be described...

*A battle is set, and the foes are gathered together
They want to destroy Israel from the face of the earth
They will come and attack in whatever weather
And if they gain the victory, they will dance with mirth*

*But we have the Lord on our side
And we have our exalted Leader in the battle
There is no way the enemy can abide
When we engage the fight and the swords start to rattle*

*The victory is assured when the Lord is our Head
We shall prevail! The Lord is with us!*

*Yes, the enemy will all be found dead
When we follow our Savior – the Lord Jesus*

II. And They Attacked Them (verses 6-15)

⁶ But the LORD said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid because of them,

va’yomer Yehovah el Yehoshua al tira mipenehem – “And said Yehovah unto Joshua no do fear (sg.) from their faces.” It is the often-repeated phrase that the Lord has everything set, Joshua has no need to fret over the enormity of those arrayed against him...

^{6 (con’t)} for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel.

Rather than “about,” the wording is exacting: *ki makhar ka’eth ha’zot anokhi noten eth kulam khalalim lipne Yisrael* – “For tomorrow according to the time, the this, I give all them pierced before Israel.” By the time that the hour they are speaking of comes, every soldier of the army will be pierced through.

The idea being conveyed here is that Israel has already gone up to meet the enemy and either a scout has reported the location of their encampment or Israel is close enough to see them. The distance to where Israel currently is located is too far from Gilgal to have marched in one day. Regardless of their current location, they will attack, and they will prevail.

^{6 (con’t)} You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.”

The words are to Joshua in the singular: *susehem t’aqer v’eth mark’votehem tisrophi ba’esh* – “their horses hamstring (sg.) and their chariots burn (sg.) in the fire.” The words carry several thoughts. The first is that of contempt. The horses and chariots would be dedicated to whatever god the people worshipped. This is seen, for example, in 2 Kings 23 –

“Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who *was* in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.”

-2 Kings 23:11

Even if not so dedicated, the horse and chariot would be a source of pride and confidence. To destroy them would be as if Israel had destroyed even that which the enemy trusted in –

“Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.” Psalm 20:7

This sentiment is found numerous times in the Old Testament where the horse is an implied source of trust and of victory in battle. Along with this, destroying the horses and the chariots was to teach Israel a future lesson as well.

Not only had they prevailed over such a foe, but they were to continue to trust in the Lord and not in their own armaments and abilities. This is seen explicitly in the law when referring to the multiplication of horses, not only for the king of Israel, but for the people as well –

“But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’” Deuteronomy 17:16

⁷ So Joshua and all the people of war with him came against them

va’yavo Yehoshua v’kal am ha’milkhamah immo alehem – “And came Joshua and all people the war with him upon them.” They are the ones to initiate the events in an offensive battle. This would leave the enemy completely surprised and unable to properly align themselves. This is because Israel came upon them...

^{7 (con’t)} suddenly by the waters of Merom, and they attacked them.

al me Merom pithom va’yipelu bahem – “upon waters Merom suddenly and fell in them.” The obvious strategy was to meet in this area, prepare the army for battle, and then take the battle to Joshua. However, instead of that, Joshua caught them before they were set in any type of battle array, they were given no time to muster the army when they were attacked, and Israel simply fell upon them in a manner that was entirely indefensible. Thus...

⁸ And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel,

va'yitnem Yehovah b'yad Yisrael – “And gave them, Yehovah, in hand Israel.” The Lord is the Subject and the Giver of the enemy. Israel is the recipient. From there, it changes to the plural for the next verbs...

8 (con't) who defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon,

va'yakum va'yirdphun ad Tsidon Rabah – “And struck (pl.) them, and chased (pl.) them to Sidon Greater.” Sidon comes from *tsud* – to hunt. Thus, it is Hunting Place. As it is on the coast, it means to hunt fish and thus, Fishery. Combined with the word *rabah*, it would mean Great Hunting Place or Great Fishery.

8 (con't) to the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward;

v'ad mis'r'photh mayim v'ad biqat mitspeh mizrakhah – “and to Burning of Water, and to Valley Watchtower eastward.” Misrephoth comes from *saraph*, to burn. Combined with *mayim*, or water, it thus means Burning of Water(s).

It is debated what Burning of Waters means. Some think it is glass manufacture. Others think hot springs. But the only hot springs in Israel are a bit south and east of the Sea of Galilee. Some think it is smelting pits by water, or something else. Regardless, with the flight of the enemy noted, the verse ends with...

8 (con't) they attacked them until they left none of them remaining.

The translation is wrong. The second verb is singular and so it is speaking of either the Lord or Israel. Israel is the nearest antecedent, and so it is the most likely subject: *va'yakum ad bilti hishir lahem sarid* – “and they strike them until none he left (sg.) to them survivor.” The entire verse thus reads:

“And He gives them, Yehovah, in hand Israel. And they strike them, and they chase them to Great Fishery and to Burning of Water and to Valley of Watchtower eastward, and they strike them until none he [Israel] left to them survivor.”

Those who fled from the battle went northwest to Sidon, southwest to Misrephoth Mayim, and eastward to the Valley of Mizpah. They ran all over, but Israel pursued them and utterly destroyed them.

⁹ So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him:

The words now are given to confirm the words of verse 6. The word of Yehovah was given, and Joshua is shown to have fulfilled it exactly...

⁹ (con't) **he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.**

Exactly as was spoken by the Lord to Joshua, so it is done:

Their horses you shall hamstring and their chariots you shall burn in the fire.
Their horses he hamstrung and their chariots he burned in the fire.

With that noted, the words continue to refer to Joshua...

¹⁰ **Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor, and struck its king with the sword;**

It appears that with the sudden attack upon the armies, and with a sure defeat at hand, the king of Hazor fled back to his city. As he was the chief instigator of the planned attack, this is Joshua's first order of business after eliminating all the other fleeing enemy. As such, he took the city and then struck her king, as the Hebrew says, "in the sword." The reason for this is next explicitly stated...

¹⁰ (con't) **for Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms.**

Earlier, it was said that the name Hazor is derived from a root that signifies "to begin to cluster or gather." This is almost a typological pun then. Hazor was the head of this gathering of kingdoms as if it was the trumpet that was blown to gather them together.

Because of their position as the head, it was to receive a special mark of punishment that would go beyond what other such cities would face. It would be the first and the most utterly destroyed...

¹¹ **And they struck all the people who were in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them.**

va'yaku eth kal ha'nephesh asher bah l'pi kherev hakherem – "And struck every soul who in her to mouth sword anathematizing." Exactly as was ordered according to the law, so Joshua unfailingly accomplishes. Every soul is devoted to the Lord. This is then further explained...

¹¹ (con't) **There was none left breathing.**

lo nothar kal n'shamah – “No remaining every breath.” Complete extermination is the command. Nothing is to be left alive, and so in exacting compliance with the law, so it was done. And as a final indignation for initiating the alliance...

11 (con't) Then he burned Hazor with fire.

v'eth khatsor saraph ba'esh – “And Hazor he burned in the fire.” This was to keep it from being reoccupied. However, in Judges 4:2, it is seen that it was rebuilt, despite being within the land grant of Naphtali. At that time it was ruled by another king also known as Jabin. For the present time, however, the city would remain unoccupied.

12 So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword.

This is referring to the list of the kings that had joined together in verses 1 & 2. It would be the ideal time to do this because their fighting men had been wiped out. As such, their resistance would be greatly diminished. And fighting men left behind would eventually be worn out. The cities would be quickly overthrown and destroyed.

The words “and all their kings,” could mean either that they died in battle, and they are included in the narrative now, or they could have fled to their cities and were wiped out then, or new kings were appointed to replace those lost in battle. Once the city was destroyed, the new kings would be executed as well.

12 (con't) He utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded.

The singular, identifying Joshua as the subject, continues here. He anathematized them exactly in accord with the Law of Moses. Nothing was left undone that was to be accomplished according to the precepts handed down to him –

“But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, ¹⁷ but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, ¹⁸ lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God.”

-Deuteronomy 20:16-18

13 But *as for* the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel burned none of them,

raq kal he'arim ha'om'doth al tilam lo s'rapham Israel – “Only, all the cities the standers upon their mound, no burned them Israel.” The meaning is that these cities were anathematized, meaning all life in them, but the structures were not destroyed. They could be inhabited and would be easy to defend. Thus, there was no need to utterly destroy them. The cities were spared...

^{13 (con't)} **except Hazor only, which Joshua burned.**

The exemptions of the previous clause are credited to Israel while the destruction in this one is credited to Joshua: *zulati eth khatsor l'badah saraph Yehoshua* – “Besides Hazor to alone burned Joshua.” The leading city of the conflict and the beginning of the gathering was purposefully destroyed as an example, a lesson, and a warning.

¹⁴ **And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock, the children of Israel took as booty for themselves;**

The law of *kherem*, or anathema, is decided by the Lord. If He allows the spoil to be taken by Israel, then they may take it. In this case, it was granted to them. By the time Israel apports the land and begins to settle, they would have all they would need to immediately settle down and begin a productive life. For the people in the cities, not so much...

^{14 (con't)} **but they struck every man with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, and they left none breathing.**

raq eth kal ha'adam hiku l'pi kherev ad hishmidam otam lo hishiru kal n'shamah – “only, every the man struck to mouth sword until they destroyed them; no left any breath.” The words “the man” do not exclude women. Rather, in this case, it speaks of humanity. All humans were slain by the sword until there was no breath left...

^{15 (fin)} **As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.**

Every verb in the Hebrew is in the perfect aspect. Thus, it is a mark of total completion of everything conveyed. The sequence of what is said is not to be missed. The Lord commanded Moses and he completed as commanded. Moses then commanded Joshua who also completed everything. It is then restated that nothing was left undone. All that the Lord had commanded Moses was completed.

*The Word of God – holy, pure, and perfect too
Is given to satisfy man’s weary soul
In this life, let us take an eternal view
And allow the word to convert us to God’s heavenly roll*

*There, in the Book of Life our names will be
Because we pursued His word and found Jesus
Innumerable redeemed, there beside the glassy sea
Such a marvelous thing God has done for us*

*If we will just open the Bible, our own Book of Life
And accept what it says as holy and true
Then between us and God will end the strife
In believing the gospel, life begins anew*

*Thank You, O God, for this marvelous word
In accepting its truths our place in heaven is forever assured*

III. Pictures of Christ

In the first portion of Chapter 10, we had a pretty clear picture of the Judaizers or Hebrew Roots movement people coming in and attacking the people of God. What was required was to destroy the five kings once and for all. It was a total ending of the Law of Moses, meaning the Torah, the Pentateuch, or the five books of Moses as a means of obtaining God’s favor.

The second portion of Chapter 10 continued to anticipate false teachers and false doctrines, such as work-based salvation. Instead, all such avenues are negated by the work of Jesus.

This passage continues on with those that come against the completed work of Christ, just as these foes are set to come against and destroy Israel. This is first seen in the leader of the gathering, Jabin, king of Hazor. Jabin is He understands, or more directly The Wise (Intelligent).

What we see is a picture of those who would come against sound doctrine by the intellectual elite that would stand against the wisdom of God –

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written:

‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’

²⁰ Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. ²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

As noted, Hazor has various meanings, but the root word is what is instructing us. It comes from a word signifying “to begin to cluster or gather.” This is exactly what Paul writes of as expressed to Timothy –

“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.” 2 Timothy 4:3 (NIV)

Such people are what the epistles focus on. They are the Gnostics with their secret wisdom. They are the intelligencia who are too smart for the gospel. They are those who want to divide and destroy for their own gain.

The only other king mentioned by name is Jobab. That signifies Crying Out. His city, Madon, signifies Contention or Strife. He is the type spoken of by Paul in the pastoral epistles. They cry out and lament over the simplicity of the gospel and strive contentiously to destroy it –

“But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.”
-2 Timothy 2:23

“But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. ¹⁰ Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, ¹¹ knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.” Titus 3:9-11

The other two kings were unnamed, but their cities' names meant Guardianship and Fascination or Bewitched. Paul equates the law to a guardianship in Galatians 4:2. I would suggest that these are two more types of foes to the gospel. Those who still want to cling to the law and those who are sensationalists, focusing on anything but the purity of the gospel.

Without going into every name of every location or people group that is then identified, we can assume that they are all allied with those already mentioned who come against the gospel. They are foes of it, and they are aligned against the people of God, ready to destroy them.

Together, they meet towards the waters of Merom. The word means Height. Its root is used when speaking of the proud –

Who is it you have mocked and blasphemed? Who have you raised your voice against and lifted your eyes **in pride** [lit: on high]? Against the Holy One of Israel!”
-Isaiah 37:23 (BSB)

This is exactly what those who come against the gospel do. They come against the Holy One of Israel in pride. They say His cross is insufficient, or that it is out of reach except to the enlightened, or any of ten thousand other permutations of twisting the truth.

And yet, despite the innumerable false doctrines and their false teachers, the gospel of Christ remains the only force suitable for salvation. Joshua's battle is promised to be won and that it would be on the following day. As long as Jesus is the Leader of our faith, we too shall prevail.

With that, in verse 6, the Lord told Joshua, “You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.” The lesson is anything that will bring about pride in one's abilities or that will distract us from a total reliance on the Lord must be completely removed. Pride leads to idolatry of self. But salvation is a work of the Lord alone.

In verse 7, we saw the attack of Joshua and the people of war “upon waters of Merom.” For those who are with Christ Jesus, the attack is against the flowing pride of the false teachers. In verse 8, the words went from the singular (the Lord) to the plural, and then back to the singular. The battle is won.

I can only speculate what the three places where the enemy fled to and were later destroyed signify, but I would say that the Great Fishery is the victory of the gospel for those who are fishers of men.

The Burning of Water would be zeal for the word of those who hold to it for sound instruction, prevailing over the enemy with it. And the Valley of the Watchtower would be the place where those who carefully watch over the truth of the gospel prevail. I have to admit this is total speculation, but it does fit the typology of waging a war for the purity of the gospel.

Verse 9 gave the credit for the actions solely to Joshua. And this is how it should be for any who are in the Lord. He is to receive the credit for destroying the pride of the enemy. Verse 10 then went on to describe Joshua's taking of Hazor and the killing of the king with his sword.

The destruction of the entity that rose up as the head of all of those false doctrines is ultimately accomplished by the Lord. The killing of the king with the sword is a picture of Christ destroying them with the Law (remembering from many other sermons that the words sword and Horeb, where the law was given, are spelled the same).

He is the embodiment of the law. The gospel is that Christ fulfilled the law, that He died in fulfillment of it, and that He prevailed over it through His resurrection. Our faith in that as outlined in 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 is what wins the battle and destroys the enemy.

With that, verse 11 said that all in the city were anathematized. This is what those who teach false gospels are, anathema, as Paul says in Galatians 1 –

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed [anathema]. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” Galatians 1:6-9

All false gospels will be utterly destroyed. Only what Christ has done will remain. This is the battle that we are in, and it is just what this passage is conveying to us.

Verse 12 detailed Joshua's taking all of the other kings and their cities and destroying them with the sword as well. In other words, all who come against the gospel will fail to overcome. God's people will prevail because Jesus has prevailed.

Verse 13 curiously mentions the cities of the kings were not destroyed even though all the inhabitants were. As a note of speculation, I would say this pictures those teachings that begin on the foundation of Christ but which divert from the truth. The city, the teaching founded on Christ, will remain, but those who pervert it – along with their teachings – will be destroyed.

Verse 14 said that the children of Israel took the spoil of the cities for themselves. Everything that is good and acceptable is to be saved. Only that which perverts and is wicked will be destroyed. Likewise, there will be rewards and losses for those who belong to Christ according to the lives they lead while in Christ.

With that, the verses today end with words of absolute completion of everything directed by the Lord. The Lord had commanded Moses – the Law. Moses commanded Joshua – the law was set forth before Jesus. Joshua followed the instructions completely – Jesus did all the law until it was complete.

The text then restated that nothing was left undone. All was finished according to the Lord's commands to Moses. Jesus wholly and entirely fulfilled what He was sent forth to do. The gospel is given based on this and nothing else. Only Christ accomplished the work. Only Christ's work can bring Israel (God's people – the commonwealth of Israel) to victory.

Anything that comes against the gospel is already defeated for all intents and purposes, but it also continues to be defeated in this dispensation of grace. This is the lesson of the passage today. It follows marvelously after the lessons of chapter 10.

Each step of Joshua is showing us the victory of the Lord in all ways and at all times. He has done it; now we just need to follow Him in the battle and be obedient to what He has set forth. This is the commission that we saw in our text verse today.

The overall lesson, once again, is that the Lord is in control, He has a plan, and that plan will come to pass. In the meantime, there are those who will come against God's people, be it the Judaizers, those who claim a wisdom that only they can convey, those who hold to immorality and licentiousness as an acceptable thing, or an innumerable host of other falsities.

We need to be on guard against such things, and we do that by staying in God’s word – reading it, learning it, meditating on it, and applying it to our lives. Jesus has already gained the victory. That is seen and understood already, but we still have a part to play in this ongoing and unfolding narrative called “redemptive history.”

And so let us trust in the Lord, be obedient to His word, and accept the victory that He has already won. Let us not lose out by getting involved with falsity, error, manipulation of the word, and so on. We eat three meals a day. By the next meal we have, we may not remember what it was we ate in the last meal, but it still did us good.

How can we expect to be filled with good if we neglect reading the word, attending Bible studies, and coming to church? That’s not how God has designed us, and we will suffer from it. This is an appeal to do those things because this is what we need to follow for holy living.

Spend more time in the word, spend more time thinking about the word, and spend more time talking to the Lord about His word. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus and let us read our Bibles. To the glory of God who sent Jesus and to the glory of God who gave us the word.

Closing Verse: *“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...” Ephesians 6:14-18*

Next Week: Joshua 11:16-23 *His victory is complete, and it is grand...* (And Joshua Took All the Land) (24th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Waters of Merom

And it came to pass
When Jabin king of Hazor heard these things

That he sent to Jobab king of Madon
To the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings...

Who were from the north
In the mountains where skiing is the best
In the plain south of Chinneroth
In the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west

To the Canaanites in the east and in the west
The Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite – hoorah!
The Jebusite in the mountains
And the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah

So they went out, they and all their armies with them
As many people as the sand
That is on the seashore in multitude
With very many horses and chariots, an army quite grand

And when all these kings had met together
So the account does tell
They came and camped together at the waters of Merom
To fight against Israel

But the LORD said to Joshua
“Do not be afraid because of them, so to you I tell
For tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them
Slain before Israel

“You shall their horses hamstring
And burn their chariots with fire, yes you shall do this thing”

So Joshua and all the people of war with him
Came against them suddenly (surely, they will get whacked!)
By the waters of Merom
Israel fell upon them and attacked

And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel
Who defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon
To the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward

They attacked them until they left of them remaining none

So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him
Yes, so he had learned
He hamstringed their horses
And their chariots with fire he burned

Joshua turned back at that time and took Hazor
And struck its king with the sword
For Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms
But it was a goner before the Lord

And they struck all the people
Who were in it with the edge of the sword, as the battle churned
Utterly destroying them. There was none left breathing
Then he Hazor with fire burned

So all the cities of those kings, and all their kings
Joshua took and struck with the edge of the sword
-----as the situation demanded
He utterly destroyed them
As Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded

But as for the cities that stood on their mounds
Israel burned none of them, burning them was spurned
Except Hazor only
Which Joshua burned

And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock
The children of Israel took as booty for themselves – ooh what fun
But they struck every man with the edge of the sword
Until they had destroyed them, and they left breathing no one

As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant
So Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did also
He left nothing undone
Of all that the LORD had commanded Moses, yes it was so

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word

Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 11:16-23 (AND JOSHUA TOOK ALL THE LAND)

God made an offer to the people of the world through the giving of His Son. That is grace. This offer extends forgiveness for every sin ever committed. That, on the other hand, is mercy. Grace cannot be earned. If it could be, then it wouldn't be grace.

However, mercy can be granted based on a set condition or stipulation. For example, if you are sentenced to death, the judge may say, "If you pay this particular amount, the death sentence will be commuted." There is nothing wrong with this. The one who holds the power determines what the rules and conditions are.

In the giving of His Son, grace was extended to us. In the acceptance of that offer through an act of faith, mercy is then granted. God is the offended party, and He has set the parameters for us to accept or refuse. Similarly, the Lord set the parameters for when Israel entered Canaan.

That is stated clearly and unambiguously in the Law of Moses. In his commentary of Joshua 11:19, John Gill states the following without agreeing or disagreeing with what the Jews say –

"There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel,... Though, according to the Jews, Joshua, upon his first landing in Canaan, sent letters and messages to all the inhabitants of the land, offering them peace on certain terms; particularly that he sent three messages, or proposed three things to them; that those who had a mind to flee might flee; that those who were desirous of making peace might make it; and they that were for war, let them fight; all were for the last, and so perished." Gill

That sounds like an offering of both grace and mercy. It was undeserved and it extended to any who met the terms set forth. But does it match with the preconditions already laid out in the law? Do you remember what the law says?

Text Verse: *"When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴ For they will*

turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.” Deuteronomy 7:1-4

There is nothing in the law to even hint at the claim of the Jews that John Gill cited. It is contrary to the law, and it is not found in Joshua. Further, it is contrary to the very nature of God in Christ who is typologically seen in the verses today.

The only reason for the Jews to make up something so ridiculous is that they either thought it would make them look less unfriendly and antagonistic, or that they believe God will pardon their sins without the means of pardon available to them under the law.

As John Gill lived in the 1700s, the first option seems unlikely at best. The Jews had nothing to lose in regard to people’s impression of them over such an issue. Those who believed in the word at that time accepted that God ordained the things Israel did. Those who didn’t believe in the word wouldn’t care one iota. Only in the return of the Jews to Israel would such a commentary possibly be entertained.

On the other hand, the Jews knew they were not right with God, at least according to their Scriptures. And so, to grant grace and mercy to those of Canaan would then alleviate their own guilty consciences. This is yet another reason why I don’t recommend spending a lot of time in Jewish commentaries on the Bible.

Their thoughts are skewed because they have rejected Christ. In their rejection of Christ, who is clearly seen throughout Scripture, there will never be an understanding of what God is intending to show them and us. The less extra-biblical material you look at in regard to the word, the better off you will be.

Yes, there are good commentaries and lots of exceptional helps out there, but they must be based on Scripture and in the proper context to be of any value. Be wise and discerning in how spend time studying the Bible.

Today, we will see why the citation above is totally wrong. God does offer grace and mercy, but it is based on His unchanging nature. Let us be sure of this. When He says that Jesus is the only way for us to be reconciled to Him, we need to accept that as absolute truth from God who does not lie.

Great truths such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. That He Might Utterly Destroy Them (verses 16-23)

¹⁶ Thus Joshua took all this land:

In these words, an accounting for everything taken during the Canaan campaign is made. Many translations say, “took all that land,” as if it is referring to the battles of the previous verses. Rather, it is more likely referring to what is said next. And so, “all this land” is looking ahead to the description which is detailed in the rest of the words of this verse.

These words are generally in the singular, i.e. “mountain” and “valley.” But the meaning extends to “mountains” and “valleys.” It is a broad description of the conquering of Canaan. The credit is given to Joshua as the leader of the nation. His conquests will be noted in a sevenfold division of the land. It is he who took...

¹⁶ (con’t) **the mountain country,**

The first division: *ha’har* – Literally, “the mountain,” but meaning the hill country. There is debate as to the exact meaning of these seven statements, but it appears to be describing the south first and then moving northward. As such, this would probably be referring to Canaan from that perspective and speak of the mountain country of Judea.

This is seen in Numbers 13:17 where the same term is used –

“Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, “Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains [*ha’har*, the mountain].”

It is even described as the hill country in the New Testament –

“Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah.” Luke 1:39

Similarly, it will be seen later in Joshua that Hebron which is in Judea will be considered as the hill country –

“So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron) in the mountains [*b’har* – ‘in mountain’] of Judah.” Joshua 20:7

Next, it says...

16 (con't) **all the South,**

The second division: *v'eth kal ha'negev* – “and all the Negev.” The word Negev means “south,” but it is also designating a specific location and is thus a proper noun – “the South.” It comes from an unused root meaning to be parched, and the Negev is a very parched land. This would be in accord with the words of Joshua 10:40 –

“So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South [*negev*] and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded.”

From there, it again goes back to what was stated in chapter 10 –

16 (con't) **all the land of Goshen,**

The third division: *v'eth kal erets ha'goshen* – “and all land the Goshen.” This was a part of what was recorded in the previous chapter –

“And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon.” Joshua 10:41

In this verse, the word Goshen is prefixed by an article – “the Goshen.” Thus, it is referring to a district. The name will be used only one more time in Joshua 15:51. There, it will be referring only to a city and not the greater area now being described. As a reminder, Goshen means Drawing Near or Approaching.

16 (con't) **the lowland,**

The fourth division: *v'eth ha'sh'phelah* – “and the Shephelah.” The Shephelah is a transitional region of soft-sloping rolling hills in South-Central Israel stretching 6 to 9 miles in length. The word comes from *shaphel*, to become low or abased. Thus, in comparison to the mountainous area, it the abased, the lowland. Next...

16 (con't) **and the Jordan plain**

The fifth division: *v'eth ha'aravah* – “and the Arabah.” This is the plain that extends about one hundred miles south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba forming a border between Israel and Jordan. The word comes from *arav*, to grow dark or become evening. This would be because of the darkness of the terrain. However, that is identical to *arav*, meaning to take or give in pledge. Next...

16 (con't) —the mountains of Israel

The sixth division: *v'eth har Yisrael* – “And mountain Israel.” Although debated, this is probably referring to the mountainous region of the area north of Jerusalem and extending past Galilee northward. This would have been the area taken during the events earlier in chapter 11. Also...

16 (con't) and its lowlands,

The seventh division: *u-sh'phelatoh* – “and his lowland.” This would be the lowland area of Israel north of the land of Judah and would include the coastal plain area. With this division given, more specific detail is provided concerning the area to the north...

17 from Mount Halak

min ha'har he'khalaq – “from the mountain, the Khalaq.” This is a mountain mentioned only here and in chapter 12. The name comes from *khalaq*, meaning “smooth.” For example, it was used in Genesis 27:11, saying –

“And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned [*khalaq*] man.’”

The word is used figuratively in Proverbs and Ezekiel for speaking in a flattering manner because the smooth tongue is so employed.

17 (con't) and the ascent to Seir,

ha'oleh seir – “the ascender Seir.” Seir means hairy, coming from *sa'iyir*, hairy. Refer again to Genesis 27:11 –

“And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy [*sa'iyir*] man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man.’”

The Bible gives the he-goat as an analogy because it is hairy. It is the animal used as a sin offering, such as on the Day of Atonement and elsewhere.

The mountain, Halak, is defining the southern border of Canaan as originally described by the Lord. Because it is neither the southernmost point in Canaan, and being mentioned only twice in Joshua, we can speculate that we are given these locations for typological reasons. Also, consider that both names so far, Halak and Seir, are derived from words found in one verse of Genesis. For now, the narrative continues with...

17 (con't) **even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon**

v'ad baal gad b'biqat ha'l'vanon – “and unto Baal Gad in valley the Lebanon.” The name Baal Gad means “Lord of Fortune” with a secondary meaning of “Lord of the Invasion.” This is because Gad (Fortune) comes from *gadad* meaning to cut or invade. Baal simply means “master.” Hence it is one with authority.

Lebanon means White One or even Mountain of Snow. However, it is derived from *lavan*, meaning white. This is identical to *lavan*, or brick, because bricks turn white when fired. That word carries the connotation of works because bricks are fashioned by man as opposed to stone which is fashioned by God.

The type of valley here, *biqat*, comes from *baqa*, meaning to cleave, rend, or rip open. Hence, it is a valley that is a split between mountains. Baal Gad in this valley of Lebanon is next said to be...

17 (con't) **below Mount Hermon.**

takhat har khermon – “Under Mount Hermon.” Hermon means Sacred. This location is given as the northern border of Israel. Hence, the words of this verse are essentially saying, “Everything between the southern border and the northern border was taken by Joshua.”

This cannot be taken in the absolute sense as Israel never drove out all the native inhabitants of the land. It is giving the scope of the victories attained by Joshua within the borders and concerning those armies they faced in battle. Of them...

17 (con't) **He captured all their kings, and struck them down and killed them.**

It is still referring to Joshua using singular verbs. More precisely, it reads, “And all their kings captured, and struck them down, and killed them.” Every battle that he engaged in, he was victorious. Upon achieving victory, the king’s execution followed. Thus, it is a note of total victory. Of these many battles, it next says...

¹⁸ Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

The Hebrew reads, “Days many made Joshua with all the kings, the these, war.” The total campaign for Canaan lasted between six and seven years. Israel left Mount Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after the exodus (Numbers 10:11). Moses then says in Deuteronomy 2 –

“And the time we took to come from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered *was* thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them.” Deuteronomy 2:14

We have seen that entry into Canaan was the beginning of the forty-first year since leaving Egypt (Joshua 4:19). In Numbers 13, the spies were sent out to look over Canaan. Next, go forward to Joshua 14:10 where Caleb says –

“And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old.”

Therefore, it took between six and seven years to get to this point. Caleb was forty years old in the second year after leaving Egypt. Being 85 at the end of the campaign means he was 39 when departing Egypt, 79 when entering Canaan, and another six to seven years of fighting to subdue Canaan.

¹⁹ There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel,

The preposition is *el*, unto: *lo hayetah ir asher hishlimah el bene Yisrael* – “no was city which acquiesced unto sons Israel.” The reason I would use this rather than “made peace,” is that it is a single word that more fully expresses the matter. It is the same word, *shalam*, used twice in chapter 10 and again here in relation to the inhabitants of Gibeon...

¹⁹ (con’t) except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon.

This was the people group who were the subject of the treaty made in chapter 9 and who Joshua defended in chapter 10. Hivite means Tent Villager, but it is identical to *khavah* or “Life,” the name of Adam’s wife, Eve.

As we have previously seen, Abarim notes that the verb form *khavah* “means to lay out in order to live collectively, and describes investing one’s personal sovereignty into a living collective like a symbiont. It’s mostly translated as to prostrate, which is to submit oneself wholly and bodily to a collective or to the leader of that collective.” That is what the Gibeonites are doing, submitting themselves to a collective.

The name Gibeon, or *Giv’on*, comes from *gavia*, meaning a cup or a bowl. When upside down, it looks like a hill. As such, it means Hill Town or Hilly. Remember, it is closely associated with the New Testament word Gabbatha.

¹⁹ (con’t) **All *the others* they took in battle.**

It is speaking not of the act of battle, but of the entire campaign: *ha’kol laq’hu ba’milkhamah* – “The all they took in the war.” Every city that Israel faced was defeated. Only Gibeon acquiesced to the power and fear of Israel, joining them through the cutting of a covenant.

²⁰ **For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts,**

It is singular – heart: *ki me’et Yehovah hayetah l’khazeq eth livam* – “For from Yehovah was to strengthen their heart.” The meaning is that the actions and directions of the Lord caused the people to strengthen their collective heart. The Lord didn’t actively change it, but by His designs the people made their own unified heart strong against Him. And there was a purpose in this...

²⁰ (con’t) **that they should come against Israel in battle,**

liqrat ha’milkhamah eth Yisrael – “to meet the war with Israel.” Instead of acquiescing to Israel as Gibeon had done, these nations knew they were to be either be anathematized or brought into subjugation. Thus, they needed to stand and fight. With their heart strengthened, the latter was their united choice.

²⁰ (con’t) **that He might utterly destroy them,**

l'maan hakharimam – “To end purpose anathematize them.” The Lord was leading them to strengthen their heart against them so that they would be wholly destroyed through the act of anathematization. They would corrupt Israel through their wicked practices, so they needed to be eliminated.

²⁰ (con't) **and that they might receive no mercy,**

l'bilti heyoth lahem teckhinah – “to no be to them supplication *Giver*.” This is a new word in Scripture, *teckhinah*. It is almost always used in the sense of supplication for favor. As such, the words here are complicated. I would suggest that rather than saying, “that they might receive no mercy,” as if the action is from the Lord, it is instead saying that the object of supplication (the Lord) is not available to them. That is because their heart was hardened against Him. As a result...

²⁰ (con't) **but that He might destroy them,**

ki l'maan hashmidam – “for to end purpose destroy them.” This is the point of how the Lord acted and directed events to occur. The people were corrupt, they would corrupt Israel, and they needed to be exterminated.

Had Joshua sent in offers of peace, as ridiculously claimed by the Jews in the opening comments of the sermon, these words could not be included in the passage. Nor would the words in the law have been given previously, which are next referred to...

²⁰ (con't) **as the LORD had commanded Moses.**

ka'asher tsivah Yehovah eth Mosheh – “for which commanded Yehovah Moses.” The commands to Moses were explicit and they were repeated several times in various ways, such as in our text verse today. The Lord commanded Moses, and Moses repeated the commands to the people.

No treaties were to be made, no voice of supplication was to be heeded, and none of the inhabitants were to be allowed to live. The Lord, through his actions and instructions, led the inhabitants to bring these things upon themselves while Israel brought destruction upon them.

²¹ **And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim from the mountains:**

The word “mountain” is singular all three times in this verse. Thus, it is referring to the hill country each time. Anakim comes from *anaq*, meaning “neck.” Therefore, the Anakim are a clan of people known for their unusually long or thick necks or the adornments on their necks. These people were driven out...

21 (con’t) from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel;

Hebron means Alliance. Debir means Place of the Word. Anab means Grape or Fruit, coming from a root that means “to bear fruit.” Judah means Praise. Israel means He Strives with God. The Anakim were cut off from these places by Joshua. And more...

21 (con’t) Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities.

They were not merely cut off, as if driven out, but they were destroyed entirely. This group is emphasized out of all of those destroyed because it was the word concerning them that brought about Israel’s time of punishment in the first place. When the spies returned from Canaan in Numbers 13, they said –

“We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we.” ³² And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature. ³³ There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.” Numbers 13:31-33

Only Joshua and Caleb stood against the word of the other ten spies. Now, the text specifically notes that Joshua led Israel in the defeat of them. And more, in Joshua 15, it will be Caleb who personally destroys the Anakim of Hebron. It next says...

22 None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel;

The verb is singular, and thus it is referring to Joshua: “None left (sg.) Anakim in land sons Israel.” Joshua, as the leader, ensured that in all of the land where Israel dwelt, no Anakim was left alive. As such...

22 (con’t) they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

Gaza, or Azzah, means Strong. Gath means Winepress. Ashdod means Ravager. These are the only areas where these men of giant stature remained. Eventually, they and the other giants would even be wiped out from there.

²³ So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses;

In complete obedience to the law as spoken by the Lord, and as conveyed by Moses, so Joshua did. The land was subdued, and the inheritance was secured for Israel...

^{23 (con't)} and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes.

This anticipates the division of the land in Joshua 13. We are given a brief summary of events now which will be more fully explained later in Joshua. The point here is to highlight Joshua's obedience to the law and his ability to perform as the law directed.

As an informative note, a new word, *makhaloqeth*, is introduced here. It means "divisions," coming from *khalaq*, to divide or share. Most of its 42 uses will be in the books of 1 & 2 Chronicles. With that, the verse and the chapter end with...

^{23 (fin)} Then the land rested from war.

There is another new word to close us out today, *shaqat*. It signifies to be quiet or undisturbed. It comes from a primitive root signifying to repose. Hence, one can think of idleness or being undisturbed. Rather than Israel, it is the land itself that is spoken of in this manner. With the enemy subdued, there is a sense of calm and idleness of the land which then leaves the people to relax and enjoy themselves.

*Who is it that will receive mercy from the Lord?
And who is it that will be cut off forever
The answer is carefully recorded in His word
Any can know, both the simple and the clever*

*Those who humble themselves before Him, they shall stand
But those who are filled with pride shall be cast away
Better to humble yourself under His great hand
Than to arrogantly trust in your own deeds and turn away*

Jesus has paid the price to reconcile us to God

*So, let us trust in the marvelous thing He has done
Then, on heavenly streets we shall trod
And revel in the glorious victory of God's own Son*

II. Pictures of Christ

Joshua is the great type of Jesus, fighting the Lord's battles while leading His people toward the time of anticipated repose that the He offers them. The opening statement of this section corresponds to the final words of it –

v.16 And took Joshua all the land, the this.

v.23 And took Joshua all the land...And the land rested from war.

It is like bookends to highlight what is in the intervening verses. The land is emblematic of the world to which Christ has come, retaking the authority over it from Satan. Within the verses, the word mountain is used five times. Hence, it would be good to repeat the words of Abarim quoted in chapter 10 –

“The noun *הר* (*har*) is the Bible's common word for mountain or hill. Intuition dictates that the root of the word for mountain probably has to do with being elevated, but that's not correct. In Hebrew thought, a mountain is not something that's high but rather a lot of something gathered. And so, a mountain became synonymous for a large but centralized group of people (Jeremiah 51:25), or even gods (Isaiah 14:13).” Abarim

As such, there is a focus on the centralized nature of peoples. In the first verse, there was also noted the seven divisions of the land. The first division was actually that of the mountainous country. That was followed by the Negev, or parched land. It is a land devoid of water. Water carries various connotations in the Bible, but here, it would refer to life, particularly life obtained through the word.

The third division was the land of the Goshen, meaning Drawing Near or Approaching. The next was the Shephelah, meaning low or abased. After that was the Aravah or plain. This word ultimately comes from the idea of giving or taking in pledge. From there was mentioned the mountain of Israel, or He strives with God. That was accompanied by the final division of “his lowland.” We could equate that to “his abasement.”

I would suggest that these seven divisions are each referring to Christ. He is 1) the Gatherer of God's people; 2) the Giver of water (life through the word) in the otherwise parched world; 3) the One through whom man may draw near to God; 4) the One who

abased Himself in order to bring the humbled to God; 5) the One through whom the pledge, meaning the Holy Spirit, is given; 6) the One who gathers God's people by striving with (for) God in order to accomplish His purposes; and 7) who in His striving did so in His abasement. Each speaks of His incarnation in order to retake the right to the world.

Verse 17 then referred to the scope of the events – from Mount Halak, or Mount the Smooth, and the ascent to Seir, meaning Hairy. Hair in Scripture speaks of awareness, especially awareness of sin.

Jesus came knowing no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), pictured by the smooth mountain. But He arose in the likeness of sinful man (Hebrews 2:17), pictured by the hairy mountain, in order to accomplish His work. His ministry extended, as it says, “unto Baal Gad in valley the Lebanon.” Translated through typology, this would be “unto Lord of the Invasion in the cleaving of the works.”

In other words, Christ came as an aware Man and accomplished all that was necessary under the law to bring man to God. It is His works that make it possible. All other works are insufficient to accomplish the purpose.

This was said to be “under Mount Hermon.” Hermon has been a consistent picture of heaven when it is presented. The picture is that Christ accomplished His work on the earth under the Sacred place (heaven), not in it.

From there, it said he captured all their kings, struck them down, and killed them. That is well explained by Paul in Colossians 2:15 where it says that Christ “disarmed principalities and powers” and that “He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them” in His cross.

The length of Joshua's conquest was “many days.” Christ came, He lived many days on the earth, and He warred against the powers that stood against man. Despite the cross being the final victory over all those powers, there is no contradiction in this. One leads to the other. Joshua's campaign suitably reflects the life and work of Christ.

Verse 19 noted that not a city acquiesced unto the sons of Israel. A city is a place of man's creation. It is thus a place of rebellion against God because it reflects his own civilization and culture. It is independent of God, trusting in its own resources and fortifications to maintain and sustain itself. Understanding this, it then said, “except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon.”

As we saw, Hivite is identical to *khavah*, or life. The verb form gives the sense of submitting oneself to a collective. Also, Gibeon, or *Giv'on*, comes from *gavia*, meaning a cup or a bowl. When upside down, it looks like a hill. As noted, it is closely associated with the New Testament word Gabbatha.

Jesus submitted Himself to the Roman authority in order to establish the New Covenant in His blood. The Gibeonites submitted themselves to Joshua in order to enter into the covenant relationship that had been established with Israel.

The entire thought speaks of total exclusivity. There is uniting with Christ and there is all else. The false religions and false religious expressions of the world all stand in enmity with Jesus. All will be destroyed. Only those who submit to His collective and become united to the commonwealth of Israel will be spared.

With that, the rather difficult words of verse 20 spoke of the fact that it was from the Lord to strengthen their heart. Any religion based on man's devising will, by default, strengthen the heart of those who follow it. It is a natural consequence of it.

Only those who will humble themselves and submit to the gospel are of any redeemable value to Him. The others are strengthened to come against Israel (God's commonwealth) in battle. They are against God in Christ. Israel is for God in Christ – plain and simple theology.

That is where the importance of the words "to no be to them supplication *Giver*" arises. Anyone, in any religion outside of faith in Christ, has no avenue available for them to have their supplications heard and responded to because they do not have the Object of supplications, meaning the Lord, available to them.

As such, there is only one avenue available to them, destruction. Again, plain and simple theology. This is because it is, as the verse says, "as the Lord had commanded Moses."

Man is under law, be it Adam or Moses. God gave the law of Moses to redeem man, but it is clearly a law that must be fulfilled vicariously by Christ. Hence, faith in Christ's fulfillment of the law through His work, including His death, is the only avenue for man to be reconciled to Him.

With that, the seemingly unrelated words concerning the Anakim were given. The reason they seem unrelated is because they are the only people groups singled out. Their name comes from *anaq*, or neck. But that requires more explanation.

Anaq signifies being fitted out with supplies, and thus furnished liberally, just as a necklace is made up of many pieces. It is thus used figurately as a sign of pride as in Psalm 73:6 when referring to the wicked where it says, “Therefore pride serves as their necklace.”

Man can either humble himself before God in Christ, or he stands at enmity with God. There are no other options. That is well reflected in the proverb –

“A man’s pride will bring him low,
But the humble in spirit will retain honor.” Proverbs 29:23

With that, it said that these Anakim were destroyed from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel. The picture when considering the meaning of their names is that the proud will be destroyed from any place that is in accord with God’s purposes – Alliance with Him, where his Word is, in the place where Fruit bears, where His Praise exists, and where those who Strive with Him find their place.

The Anakim (the proud) and their cities (their place of rebellion against God) were destroyed by Joshua and they remained only in an area outside of where Israel dwelt. The idea is that anything outside of the scope of true faith in Christ is eliminated and cut off. It has no part in what God offers.

Finally, verse 23 referred to the total victory of Joshua over the land and giving it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions. It speaks of what Jesus will do for His redeemed. That will be in a land that is at peace from war. The enmity will cease, and man will be in harmony with God once again.

This is already realized for all who have come to Christ in the sense that the victory is won. Someday that will be actualized for all of His people. But the fact that it is seen here in Joshua gives us the hope-filled assurance that it will, in fact, come to pass.

God has a plan, and He is slowly and methodically working it out in Christ. It is being typologically shown in these Joshua sermons, one step at a time, so that we can see how. In the end, even if any of the typology presented is wrong, the overall picture is perfectly clear.

The victory is found in Jesus, and He has granted it to any and all who fall under the collective commonwealth of Israel. For Israel the people, it is those who have come to

Christ through His finished work of the law and who have been circumcised in the heart by Him. For those of the Gentiles, it is those who have come to Christ through His cross, giving up on any other avenue of reconciliation with God.

The same salvation, in the same manner, is offered to Jews and Gentiles through simple faith in Jesus. All others will not be a part of what God is doing for humanity as He reconciles us to Himself. The theology in that regard is plain and simple. It is either Jesus or nothing with God. Nothing, by default, means total and permanent separation from Him. Consider your place, give up on self, and come to God through the finished, final, and forever work of Jesus Christ. Do it today!

Closing Verse: *“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Colossians 2:13, 14*

Next Week: Joshua 12.1-6 (An Inheritance Toward the Rising of the Sun) (25th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

And Joshua Took All the Land

Thus Joshua took all this land:

The mountain country, all the South, all the land of Goshen

-----so he did do

The lowland, and the Jordan plain

The mountains of Israel and its lowlands too

From Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir

Even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below

-----Mount Hermon

He captured all their kings

And struck them down and killed them as is now known

Joshua made war a long time with all those kings

There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel

Except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon
All the others they took in battle, sending them to the Pit to dwell

For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts
That they should come against Israel in battle, you see
That He might utterly destroy them
And that they might receive no mercy

But that He might destroy them, so the situation demanded
As the LORD had to Moses commanded

And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim
From the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab
-----showing no pities
From all the mountains of Judah, and from all the
-----mountains of Israel
Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities

None of the Anakim were left in the land
Of the children of Israel
They remained only in Gaza
In Gath, and in Ashdod as well

So Joshua took the whole land
According to all that the LORD had said to Moses
-----so he did do
And Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel
According to their divisions by their tribes too

Then the land rested from war
That's the end of this chapter, and there ain't no more

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise

Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 12:1-6

(AN INHERITANCE TOWARD THE RISING OF THE SUN)

The thing about going through the Bible verse by verse as we have been doing is that you learn as you go. In Numbers 32, I assumed that the tribes mentioned in our verses today pictured unsaved people because their inheritance was outside of Canaan.

After going through all of the verses in Numbers 32 through Joshua 11, I cannot agree with that conclusion now. Even then, I was unsure and mentioned my uncertainty in the introduction to the second Numbers 32 sermon. I just couldn't put my finger on what was being presented.

Now, it is more apparent that there was a logical order of events in Numbers 21 that more accurately describes what the people of these tribes typologically anticipate. As a result, the typology concerning the meaning of these tribes when elsewhere mentioned would not have been correct as well.

These people have an inheritance. Just because it is not in Canaan does not mean that they have not been saved. The crossing of the Jordan in Joshua 3 and 4 clearly pointed to Israel's national salvation. But there are those of Israel who are already saved. They have already received the inheritance offered by God in Christ.

As I say, we learn as we go, and we will not stop learning until we get to the end.

Text Verse: *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13*

I would rather be wrong and correct the errors as I go than to never figure out the typology of what is being said. This is often a very difficult trek. But God communicates with purpose and intent in His word.

As such, we need to contemplate His meaning and figure out what He is saying. God is working through history, typology, prophecy, and moral lessons in order to get us to understand what He is doing in the world through Christ.

If we keep that in mind, as we continue through the word, we will be able to self-correct our previously incorrect thoughts. It bothers me that I may have drawn some incorrect conclusions in that Numbers sermon, but if the thoughts are corrected now, then we are on the right path. In the end, the Lord knows. We just need to keep on thinking and praying for discernment to determine what He is telling us.

For now, we have six verses to look over. An inheritance is noted east of the Jordan. What is this telling us? We will endeavor to sort out the many names of people and locations as we go. Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Sihon King of the Amorites (verses 1-3)

Joshua 12 contains two main sections that comprise the sum total of the victories in the wars for the land possessed by Israel: verses 1-6 detail the victories east of the Jordan; verses 7-24 detail the victories west of the Jordan.

These are notably divided further. The first set of conquests says, “whom the children of Israel defeated” for those victories east of the Jordan (verse 1). This is further explained as “These Moses the servant of the Lord and the children of Israel had conquered” in verse 6. The second set of conquests says, “which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered” (verse 7).

Recording these, at this point in the narrative serves at least two main purposes. The first provides a conclusion of the wars waged. The second provides a basis for the next main section of the book, where the land is divided among the tribes. That will commence in Joshua 13:8. With that noted, the verses begin with...

¹ These *are* the kings of the land whom the children of Israel defeated,

The words begin with a conjunction to connect it directly to the preceding section – “And these, kings the land who struck sons Israel.” As such, we can more naturally see the flow between the ending of chapter 11 and the words here –

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war. ... “And these, kings the land who struck sons Israel...”

Seeing this, the narrative continues with...

¹ (con't) and whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan toward the rising of the sun,

More literally, it reads, “and possessed (pl.) their land in side the Jordan rising (eastward) the sun.” It is detailing the land won in battle prior to entry into Canaan. The battles are more fully detailed in Numbers 21. They are then recounted by Moses in Deuteronomy 2 & 3.

Also, the division of those lands is carefully detailed in Numbers 32, and it is recounted in Deuteronomy 3. As the Jordan is a picture of Christ, the Descender, the designation “in side the Jordan” is telling us that this land pictures events prior to Israel’s national salvation that were detailed earlier in Joshua. This is based on it being “toward the rising of the sun,” as will be explained later. This land is...

¹ (con't) from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon,

mi'nakhal arnon ad har khermon – “from Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon.” The *nakhal* is a torrent or wadi. It is derived from the verb *nakhal* signifying “to take possession.” The name Arnon comes from *ranan*, signifying to give a jubilant, ringing cry, and thus rejoicing. Therefore, this is the Roaring Stream. Also...

¹ (con't) and all the eastern Jordan plain:

v'kal ha'aravah mizrakhah – “and all the Aravah, eastward.” The word translated as “eastward” is the same word just translated as rising in an earlier clause. It comes from *zarakh*, signifying to rise or come forth as in the dawning of the day. As such, it is eastward.

The Aravah is the plain that extends about one hundred miles, south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, forming a border between Israel and Jordan. The word comes from *arav*, to grow dark or become evening. This is because of the darkness of the terrain. However, that is identical to *arav*, meaning to take or given in pledge. This is the land east of the Jordan...

² One king was Sihon king of the Amorites,

The Hebrew reads more simply, and it is singular: *sikhon melekh ha'emori* – “Sihon king the Amorite.” The name Sihon comes from a root that signifies “to sweep away,” or “to strike down.” Thus, his name may signify anything from “Tempestuous” to “Warrior.”

He is defined further as *melekh ha'emori*, or “king the Amorite.” Amorite comes from *amar*, meaning to utter or say. Therefore, the name signifies being spoken of, and thus “Renowned.” It is he...

^{2 (con't)} **who dwelt in Heshbon *and* ruled half of Gilead, from Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, from the middle of that river, even as far as the River Jabbok, *which is* the border of the Ammonites,**

From here, the clauses in the translation are laid out much differently from the Hebrew. The rest of the verse reads, “the dweller in Heshbon, ruling from Aroer which upon lip Wadi Arnon and midst the wadi, and half the Gilead, and to Jabbok – the wadi – border sons Ammon.”

It is defining the extent of his rule. First, it notes that he is the dweller in Heshbon. Heshbon comes from *khashav*. It signifies to consider, calculate, or devise. Therefore, it signifies an explanation of things, or “Intelligence.”

Aroer means “Stripped,” “Bare,” or “Naked.” It is on the “lip” or edge of the Wadi Arnon and its border extended to the middle of the wadi as is normally the case where a river is divided between two kingdoms. But more specifically, the city itself extended into the wadi. This is seen in Joshua 13:9 –

“from Aroer which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the town that *is* in the midst of the ravine, and all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon.”

This city is also called Ar of Moab, such as in Numbers 21:28. It belonged to Moab, but Sihon’s rule extended as far as that location. The careful designation of this city is given because there are two other locations known as Aroer. One is found in Joshua 13:25 and the other is found in 1 Samuel 30:28. Along with this city, the rule of Sihon included half of the Gilead.

Gilead means Perpetual Fountain. When Gilead is referred to, it is more of a great area that extends to both the north and south of the Jabbok River. Here it is identified with the area south of the Jabbok and extending to Wadi Aroer. Jabbok, or *yaboq*, means, “Pouring out.”

That is on the border of the sons of Ammon. Ammon comes from the word *am*, or “people.” The sense is that they are the people called “A People,” and thus inbred, having their source in the union of Lot and his younger daughter. The area Sihon possessed continues to be described next, saying...

³ and the eastern Jordan plain from the Sea of Chinneroth as far as the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea),

The clauses are a bit jumbled. It reads, “and the Aravah to Sea Kinereth eastward and to Sea the Aravah (Sea of Salt) eastward.” It is describing the western border of the land. It is the plain known as the Aravah that extends along the Jordan River on its east bank, and which goes from the Sea of Galilee all the way south to the Dead Sea.

The name Kinereth comes from *kinor*, meaning a type of harp. The reason for the name is the shape of the sea, which looks like a harp when viewed from above. The harp is an instrument used for praising, prophesying, and making a joyful noise.

As for the explanatory words “Sea of Salt,” salt is a sign of incorruptibility. In the case of a covenant, it is a sign of the incorruptible nature of a covenant. This western border that goes to the south continues to...

^{3 (con't)} the road to Beth Jeshimoth, and southward below the slopes of Pisgah.

derek beith hay'shimoth u-mi'teman takhat ashdoth ha'pishgah – “way House the Yeshimoth and from south under slopes the Pisgah.” The word *beith* means “house,” *ha* is the definite article and *yeshimoth* means, “Desolations.” Thus, it is “House of the Desolations.”

Pisgah, or *ha'pishgah*, meaning “the Pisgah,” signifies a cleft. It is a high area where there is a cleft in the mountain. As such, it reads “Slopes of the Cleft.”

*The land is before us, but it is possessed by a foe
He must be removed before we can enter in
How will it be done? How can we make it so?
It is a great battle we face. How will we win?*

*The foe stands against us
We cannot defeat him on our own
What we need is the strength of the Lord Jesus*

This is what the word has shown

*Through His deeds we can this foe defeat
And through what He has done, the battle we can win
Through Jesus this great foe we can unseat
And in this, we can then enter in*

II. Og King of Bashan (verses 4-6)

⁴ *The other king was Og king of Bashan and his territory,*

u-gebul og melekh ha'bashan – “And territory Og, king the Bashan.” As noted, the battle against Og is also recorded in Numbers 21. His name comes from *uggah*, which is a round baked cake. That comes from *ug*, to bake.

The location, Bashan, is prefixed by an article. It signifies something like “The place of fertile soil.” He is next described...

^{4 (con't)} *who was of the remnant of the giants,*

The word “giants” is an explanation of their size, not a meaning of their name: *mi'yeter ha'rephaim* – “from remnant the Rephaim.” The name Rephaim is a hard one to pin down. It comes from a word meaning to sink down or relax. This is similar to the Nephilim. That comes from *naphal*, meaning to fall.

However, Rephaim could also come from a word meaning “to heal.” If so, then it indicates that their size came from being invigorated in some way, probably through special inbreeding.

The root, *rapha*, also means ghosts or departed spirits, but that isn't the intent here. They are a group of exceptionally large people who lived in the area at the time. It is he...

^{4 (con't)} *who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,*

ha'yoshev b'ashtaroth u'b'edrei – “the dweller in Ashtaroth and in Edrei.” The name Ashtaroth, was seen in Deuteronomy 1 and again in Joshua 9. It is believed to signify Union of Instructions, and thus One Law. Edrei means something like “Mighty.” The

meaning is that he dwelt in and ruled from both cities, probably having a palace in each of them. The narrative continues by next noting...

⁵ and reigned over Mount Hermon,

The Hebrew says, “in Mount Hermon.” However, the meaning is “over,” not that he reigned from there. Hermon means Sacred.

^{5 (con't)} over Salcah,

Again, it says, “and in Salcah.” Salcah means Walking.

^{5 (con't)} over all Bashan,

And again, it reads, “and in all the Bashan.” That is then next further explained...

^{5 (con't)} as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites,

The names are singular: “to border the Geshurite and the Maachathite.” The name Geshur comes from an unused root meaning to join. Thus, it may mean “Bridge.” They may have been located at a spot that forded, or bridged, the Jordan. Maakah comes from a verb that means to press or squeeze. Thus the name signifies “Oppression.”

Geshur was a small area in the northeast corner of Bashan. It was adjoined to the area of Argob (Deuteronomy 3:14), and to the kingdom of Aram (Syria) as is seen in 2 Samuel 15:8. It is where Absalom fled after murdering his brother Amnon (2 Samuel 13:37).

The Maachthite dwelt on the southwest area of Mount Hermon where the Jordan finds its source. This can be inferred from Deuteronomy 3:14. Next, his kingdom continues with...

^{5 (con't)} and over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

This would be the northern half of the Gilead with his southern border being the northern border of Sihon. The two kingdoms together form a large swath of land that comprises parts of Jordan and Syria today. It extends from the area of the Dead Sea all the way up to the area of Mount Hermon.

With that noted, the first major section of Chapter 12 ends with the words of verse 6, saying...

⁶These Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel had conquered;

More literally, it reads: “Moses, servant Yehovah, and sons Israel struck them.” The battles are carefully recorded in Numbers 21. There, it notes that these kings were the aggressors. They came out against Israel for battle even though Israel had only asked permission to go through Sihon’s land.

After Sihon was defeated, Og then came out against them. His land, therefore, became a possession of Israel. Once it was subdued, certain tribes wanted it because it is a fertile land, well suited to pasturing flocks. As such...

^{6 (fin)}and Moses the servant of the LORD had given it *as* a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

More literally: “and gave it, Moses, servant Yehovah, inheritance to the Reubenite and to the Gadite, and to the half-tribe the Manasseh.” This is the land east of the Jordan that is allotted as an inheritance to these tribes. Reuben means See a Son. Gad means Fortune. Manasseh has a dual meaning of to Forget and From a debt. It is the kings of these areas that have been disinherited so that those of Israel can receive their inheritance.

*Another foe stands against us
Together they are united as one
But they cannot prevail against the Lord Jesus
Through Him, this battle is already won*

*There is an inheritance waiting for us
And it is for sure that we will possess it
Because we have on our side the Lord Jesus
Never to the enemy shall we submit*

*Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised
Because through faith in His work, the battle is won
Our hearts are filled with joy and our voices raised
We are victors in Christ because of what He has done*

III. Pictures of Christ

There are many names in this short passage, both of locations and of people. It is to be remembered that these things occurred before the death of Moses. Hence, despite picturing the Lord, it is still at a time when Israel has not yet collectively come to Jesus.

Despite this, salvation for individuals is available as is clearly revealed in the verses that immediately preceded the accounts in Numbers 21 which began with a few verses concerning trusting in the Lord rather than self for the victory (Numbers 21:1-3).

It then detailed the account of Israel complaining against the Lord and speaking against God and against Moses. Because of that, the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and many died. However, when they acknowledged their sin, the Lord told Moses to fashion a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. Anyone bitten could look at the bronze serpent and live.

It is a clear picture of those of Israel being saved by looking to the cross of Christ (verses 4-9). The chapter then contained poetic lines indicating how the Spirit is received (verses 10-20). Finally, we saw the battle where the two foes were defeated, Sihon and Og (verses 21-35).

After their defeat, chapter 34 gave the details of how this land was granted to the Reubenite, the Gadite, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

It is necessary to detail their inheritance again in Joshua to fully settle the matter of why they received the inheritance and also exactly what land each tribe will receive.

Because this happened while Moses was the leader of Israel, I couldn't see what these people were picturing while still in Numbers. I gave an opinion and am now sure it was incorrect.

These Israelites describe either those saved in Israel prior to Israel's national salvation or those saved prior to the coming of Christ by faith in the Messiah.

An argument can be made for both options, but it is certainly the first. This is referring to those who have received an inheritance in Israel. This will be seen more clearly in Joshua 13.

These two- and one-half tribes received their possession first, and it is on the side of the Jordan (the Descender – Jesus) eastward. East in the Bible signifies before; west is after. Although the word *qedem*, or east, is not used, it is implied with the word *mizrakh*, or eastward.

The root of that word, *zarakh*, to arise, is used in Malachi 4 to describe those who look to the rising of Christ and His effect on them –

“For behold, the day is coming,
Burning like an oven,
And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble.
And the day which is coming shall burn them up,’
Says the LORD of hosts,
‘That will leave them neither root nor branch.
² But to you who fear My name
The Sun of Righteousness shall **arise** [*zarakh*]
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.
³ You shall trample the wicked,
For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet
On the day that I do *this*,’
Says the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 4:1-3

With this understood, I should note that many of these locations are in a variety of passages from Numbers, Deuteronomy, and even Joshua. In order to be consistent, I went back to the sermons where the names were mentioned to obtain the same meaning for the typology as was used before.

By doing this, we have a consistent analysis of the words that are all lumped together into one short passage. Their land is first described as “from Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon.” Using the root meaning of the words, this can be paraphrased as “from the inheritance of rejoicing to the Sacred Mountain.” It is surely a picture of salvation and inheritance of the heavenly promise –

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ... In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who

works all things according to the counsel of His will,¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.” Ephesians 1:3 & 11, 12

In Ephesians, Paul is writing to Gentiles, but his words include any who are saved in this dispensation, Jews or Gentiles. Hence, it is before the salvation of national Israel, even if it includes some from Israel.

Next, it says, “and all the Aravah, eastward.” This is paraphrased as “and all the pledge, eastward.” Hence, it is speaking of the pledge of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:14) prior to national Israel’s salvation.

After that, it named the first foe, “Sihon king the Amorite.” In type, this would read “Warrior king of the Renowned.” In Numbers 21, I suggested that he anticipates the Antichrist.” There is no reason to amend that, and yet, it is true that there are already antichrists in the world –

“Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.” 1 John 2:18

Those who come to Christ prevail over this spirit of antichrist that exists in the world. He was next described as “the dweller in Heshbon, ruling from Aroer which upon lip Wadi Arnon and midst the wadi, and half the Gilead, and to Jabbok – the wadi – border sons Ammon.”

Taking the meaning of the words, it says, “the dweller in Intelligence, ruling from Stripped upon the edge of inheritance Rejoicing and midst inheritance, and half the Perpetual Fountain, and to Pouring Out – the inheritance – border sons A People.”

When one inherits the kingdom, he inherits the whole kingdom. In this case, this is one of two foes to be defeated and thus it speaks of the first half of the battle. Hence, half of the Perpetual Fountain. The words, though confusing, speak of the various aspects of what Christ offers. For example, Paul says of intelligence in 1 Corinthians 1 –

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.¹⁹ For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;

the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” 1 Corinthians 1:18, 19 (NIV)

Of being stripped, Paul says this in 1 Corinthians 14, using the term “laid bare” –

“But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, ²⁵ as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, ‘God is really among you!’” 1 Corinthians 14:24, 25 (NIV)

The point is that this foe, described by these terms, will be defeated in order to provide the inheritance of the pledge of the Spirit, the reception of the Spirit, the pouring out of the Spirit, and so on. That description continues with, “and the Aravah to Sea Kinereth eastward and to Sea the Aravah (Sea of Salt) eastward.”

Once again, translating the words reads: “and the pledge to Sea of the Harp eastward and to Sea the Pledge (Sea of Covenant) eastward.” Again, it points to the work of Jesus. The pledge is the Spirit. The harp anticipates Him as the source of prophecy. Harps, at times, accompany prophesying. And the salt anticipates His incorruptible nature (Acts 2:27) and thus the incorruptible nature of His covenant.

The direction eastward indicates that this is east of the Jordan, the Descender, and thus it is an inheritance granted before the nation itself receives its inheritance.

The final clause of the verses concerning Sihon say, “way House the Yeshimoth and from south under slopes the Pisgah.” Translated, it would say “way House the Desolations and from south under the slopes of the Cleft.”

As it is on the way to the House of Desolations (another word for death), it means that the house is outside of the inheritance. Under the Cleft anticipates passing through Christ into the inheritance. With that, the verses turn to the land of Og.

In the Numbers 21 sermon, I noted him as a type of the False Prophet of Revelation. Having said that, and just like the antichrist, John says –

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” 1 John 4:1

Therefore, even if there is one final False Prophet, there is the spirit of the false prophet that has existed all along. Those who come to Christ overcome this.

Like in Numbers 21, Og is said to be king of the Bashan, or Place of fertile soil. His name comes from *uggah*, which is a round baked cake. That comes from *ug*, to bake. The picture we see is one set in opposition to Israel. The *uggah*, or baked cake, is seen seven times in the Bible. It is that which nourishes and sustains life.

Thus Og, who is king over the fertile place of soil, anticipates this spirit of false prophecy that denies the people of God the truth and nourishment of the word. He is noted here as “from the remnant of the Rephaim.” Rephaim signifies to sink down or relax.

Charlie’s best guess as to why he is called Rephaim here is that he anticipates those who find the ease of lies of the false prophets appealing. Peter alludes to this type of simple appeal –

“But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.” 2 Peter 2:1, 2

Here he is called “the dweller in Ashtaroth and in Edrei,” or Unity of Instructions and Mighty. The unity of instruction is against the gospel, and it is a powerful foe. His reign, until it is taken from him is said to be “in Mount Hermon and in Salcah and in all the Bashan.” Translated, it would say “In Sacred Mount, and in Walking, and in all the Place of fertile soil.”

Until he is eliminated, access to the Lord is restricted, one’s walk is opposed to the Lord, and the truth and nourishment of the word is unavailable. In his defeat through coming to Jesus, the inheritance is granted to everyone who believes.

It then notes that Og’s domain went “to border the Geshurite and the Maachathite.” The names mean To Join (as in a bridge) and Oppression. As they are outside of the inheritance, I would assume it signifies those who are not joined to the inheritance and who are under the oppression of the law.

Next, Og’s rule was “half the Gilead border Sihon king Heshbon,” or half the Perpetual Fountain border Intelligence. As this is the other half of the Perpetual Fountain, and as he was defeated, the inheritance encompasses the entire Perpetual Fountain – the giving of the Spirit through Christ.

The final verse referred to Moses the servant of the Lord and it noted the land the children of Israel conquered. However, the typology of Moses is clear. The typological meaning refers to Jesus' fulfillment of the law (Moses) and those of Israel who accept His work.

With that, the final words of the section say that Moses gave it as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. Their possession, though not in Canaan, is clearly a picture of a possession in Christ.

It's not that these people are types of those who aren't saved, as I once thought, but rather, it is that they picture those who are saved prior to the national salvation of Israel. The second set of twelve stones set up in Joshua 4 are a clear representation of those who form the church, both Jew and Gentile.

In the end, the point of it all is Christ Jesus. His work extends out to all, both Jew and Gentile, and to both Israel and the church. It is the same saving message to both. God has done it all through Him. All we need to do as individuals is to accept this, and all Israel needs to do as a nation is to accept it as well.

Time is marching on, and we have choices to make. I hope and pray that each person who hears this word will consider that and make the right choice, by faith, in calling out to God through Jesus. He is the only hope in this fallen and quickly failing world. Receive God's goodness as it is offered through Him and be sure to do so today.

Closing Verse: *"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."*

-Ephesians 1:11, 12

Next Week: Joshua 12:7-24 *This is the nation's legacy and its reward...* (An Inheritance Seaward) (26th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

An Inheritance Toward the Rising of the Sun

These are the kings of the land

Whom the children of Israel defeated; over whom they won
And whose land they possessed on the other side of the Jordan
Toward the rising of the sun

From the River Arnon to Mount Hermon
And all the eastern Jordan plain as it is known:

One king was Sihon king of the Amorites
Who dwelt in Heshbon and ruled half of Gilead
From Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon
From the middle of that river, not north or south even a tad

Even as far as the River Jabbok
Which is the border of the Ammonites, so they agree
And the eastern Jordan plain from the Sea of Chinneroth
As far as the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea)

The road to Beth Jeshimoth as the map denotes
And southward below the Pisgah slopes

The other king was Og king of Bashan and his territory
Who was of the remnant of the giants, yes it's true
Who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei
And reigned over Mount Hermon, over Salcah, over all Bashan too

As far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites
-----so it is known
And over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

These Moses the servant of the LORD
And the children of Israel had conquered on that day
And Moses the servant of the LORD had given it as a possession
To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 12:7-24 (AN INHERITANCE SEAWARD)

At times, the typology in the book of Joshua can be rather hard to pin down. The more names of people and locations there are, the more difficult it can become to decipher the typology. And there are a lot of parts of Joshua that heap on the names.

As you saw last week, and as we will see again this week, that is certainly the case with chapter 12. I will be honest, I am not even going to attempt to try to give you the meaning of every name given.

I will give enough info to demonstrate what this account is telling us about the work of Christ, but I am not going to start making unfounded conclusions just to tickle your ears. It is easy to make anything say anything. That does not interest me at all.

However, I do believe every word that is given, including every name, has a purpose. By contrast, Jamieson-Faucet-Brown comes to a different conclusion. For example, from their commentary on verse 7 –

“Baal-gad ... even unto ... Halak—(See on [188]Jos 11:17). A list of thirty-one chief towns is here given; and, as the whole land contained a superficial extent of only fifteen miles in length by fifty in breadth, it is evident that these capital cities belonged to petty and insignificant kingdoms. With a few exceptions, they were not the scenes of any important events recorded in the sacred history, and therefore do not require a particular notice.” JFB

Text Verse: *“Every word of God is pure;
He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.
⁶Do not add to His words,
Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.” Proverbs 30:5, 6*

It should be noted that the distance concerning the length of Israel that was given by Jamieson-Faucet-Brown is about one hundred and fifteen miles, not fifteen. Also, to say that these locations “do not require a particular notice” when that is exactly why God has included them in His word is a bit troubling to me.

There may not be a lot of commentary that can be derived from these names, but they are there for a reason and so they should be given particular notice. Many of the names

will be mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, so it is good to understand how these locations fit into the overall layout of the land.

And more, like all things in Scripture, the names are given to alert us to other truths that God has tucked away in the word. Despite that, it is complicated to sit down and derive everything one can about such a passage. Rather, it is the kind of thing that someone might do after pondering the passage over months or years.

I have a bit more than 10 hours on any given Monday to research the contents of a passage for a sermon. It can be tiring, even mentally debilitating, but it is also amazingly joyous to do. Today's passage is not unimportant, except in how we may treat it. Let us not have that attitude toward God's word.

Let us do our best to draw out what the word is telling us. I hope and pray what is presented here today accomplishes that end, even if it does not fully answer the meaning of what every name given is intended to reveal.

Great things such as marvelous hidden types and pictures of Christ are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Possession According to Their Divisions (verses 7, 8)

⁷ And these *are* the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel conquered

The narrative details all of the kings conquered in the campaign to take Canaan. The words of this verse are in accord with what has already been recorded in chapters 10 and 11 –

“So Joshua conquered all the land: the mountain country and the South and the lowland and the wilderness slopes, and all their kings; he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded. ⁴¹ And Joshua conquered them from Kadesh Barnea as far as Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even as far as Gibeon. ⁴² All these kings and their land Joshua took at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.” Joshua 10:40-42

“Thus Joshua took all this land: the mountain country, all the South, all the land of Goshen, the lowland, and the Jordan plain—the mountains of Israel and its lowlands, ¹⁷ from Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir, even as far as Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, and struck them down and killed them.” Joshua 11:16, 17

Those are the areas and even specific locations taken by Joshua. The kings who were taken are to be named now. They are those...

⁷ (con't) **on this side of the Jordan, on the west,**

More literally, it reads: *b'ever ha'yarden yamah* – “in side the Jordan, seaward.” It is on a particular side of the Jordan and that is the westward, or seaward, side, as it is looking toward the Mediterranean Sea. The word *yam* signifies both “sea” and “west.” The extent of the area goes...

⁷ (con't) **from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir,**

It is the same locations noted in Joshua 11:17, but they are listed from north to south here instead of south to north: *mibaal gad b'biqat ha'l'vanon v'ad ha'har he'khalaq ha'oleh seirah* – “from Baal Gad in valley the Lebanon and unto the mount, the Smooth, the ascender Seir.”

As was noted then, the name Baal Gad means “Lord of Fortune” with a secondary meaning of “Lord of the Invasion.” This is because Gad (Fortune) comes from *gadad* meaning to cut or invade. Baal simply means “master.” Hence it is one with authority.

Lebanon means White One or even Mountain of Snow. However, it is derived from *lavan*, meaning white. This is identical to *lavan*, or brick, because bricks turn white when fired. That word carries the connotation of works because bricks imply the work of man as opposed to stone which is fashioned by God.

The type of valley here, *biqat*, comes from *baqa*, meaning to cleave, rend, or rip open. Hence, it is a valley that is a split between mountains. That is the northern demarcation. It then goes to the south, to the mount, the Smooth.” This is the second and last time this is mentioned. As seen in chapter 11, the name comes from *khalaq*, meaning “smooth.” For example, it was used in Genesis 27:11, saying –

“And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned [*khalaq*] man.’”

The word is used figuratively in Proverbs and Ezekiel when speaking in a flattering manner because of the smooth tongue that is so employed.

This mount is described next as “the ascender Seir.” As was noted, Seir means hairy, coming from *sa’iyir*, hairy. For example, it was used in Genesis 27:11, saying –

“And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, ‘Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy [*sa’iyir*] man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man.’”

By analogy, it also speaks of a he-goat because the he-goat is a hairy animal. That is the animal used as a sin offering, such as on the Day of Atonement and elsewhere. These borders then are named in order to define all of the area...

⁷ (con’t) **which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their divisions,**

The words are similar to those of Joshua 11:23, with a few differences. Also, they are actually their own clause in the Hebrew: *v’yitenah Yehoshua l’shivte Yisrael yerushah k’makh’l’qotam* – “and gave Joshua to tribes Israel inheritance according to their divisions.”

This anticipates the actual description of the division of the land coming up in Joshua 13. The kings are disinherited in order for Israel to then inherit the land. The rule of these kings is next noted by the various topographical indicators, saying...

⁸ **in the mountain country,**

As in Joshua 11, the land is next divided into seven divisions. Six are by location. The seventh division is for the six named people groups. This is the first division: *ba’har* – “in the mountain.” It means in the mountainous areas.

⁸ (con’t) **in the lowlands,**

The second division: *u-ba’sh’phelah* – and in the Shephelah, meaning the transitional region of soft-sloping rolling hills in south-central Israel stretching about 6 to 9 miles in length. The word comes from *shaphel*, to become low or abased. It is the lowland.

8 (con't) in the *Jordan* plain,

The third division: *u-ba'aravah* – “and in the Aravah.” This is the plain that extends about one hundred miles south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba forming a border between Israel and Jordan. The word comes from *arav*, to grow dark or become evening.

This is because of the darkness of the terrain. However, that is identical to *arav*, meaning to take or give in pledge.

8 (con't) in the slopes,

The fourth division: *u-ba'ashedoth* – “and in the slopes.” The word *ashedah* comes from *ashed*, meaning a foundation, bottom, or lower part. That comes from a root signifying to pour. As such, some translations say “springs.” But this is more likely the slopes of the mountains. Cities built on them would be fortified and thus ideally located.

8 (con't) in the wilderness,

The fifth division: *u-ba'midbar* – “and in the wilderness.” It signifies an area that is very dry and barren and thus sparsely inhabited. In Scripture, the wilderness is equated to a place of testing and trial. This would predominantly be in the areas of Judah and Benjamin. It is an area noted in the New Testament, such as in Matthew 3:1 and elsewhere.

8 (con't) and in the South—

The sixth division: *u-ba'negev* – “and in the Negev.” Negev means “south,” but it is also the designation of a specific location and is thus a proper noun – “the South.” It comes from an unused root meaning to be parched, and the Negev is a very parched land. All of this is the land of...

8 (con't) the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

The seventh division, which is naming the people groups rather than a location: Each of these names is stated in the singular, not the plural. The names mean: Hittite – Terror, Terrible, Fearsome; Amorite – Talkers (active) or Renown (passive); Canaanite – Humiliated, Humbled, or even Subdued; Perizzite – Villager or Dweller in an Open

Country; Hivite – Villagers, or maybe more specifically, Tent Villagers; Jebusite – Treading Down (active) or Trodden Underfoot (passive).

With the borders defined, the areas identified, and the people groups named, the listing next details the kings of the individual cities that were disinherited...

*There is a land to be subdued, ruled by many kings
But just one Leader will defeat them all
Because of His victories, my heart sings
Yes, the enemies have all seen their downfall*

*Our Leader gained the victory because He is great
None can stand against Him; not now, not ever
What was their land, now belongs to His estate
And He offers it to “whosoever”*

*If you will believe in Him, accepting His victory
You too can share in the inheritance of the saints
By faith alone it comes, works would be contradictory
So be sure to cast off the law’s restraints*

II. Thirty-one Kings (verses 9-24)

⁹ the king of Jericho, one;

The listing is generally given in the order of the battles. The first location was Jericho, meaning Place of Fragrance. It has a secondary meaning of Place of the Moon.

^{9 (con’t)} the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one;

melekh ha’ay asher mi’tsad beit el ekhad – “king the Ai which from side Bethel, one.”
The Ai means The Ruins. It is said to be located from the side of Bethel, meaning House of God.

¹⁰ the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

Of these kings, Albert Barnes notes, “Those enumerated in Joshua 12:10-18 either belonged to the league of the southern Canaanites (Joshua 10:1 ff), the power of which

was broken in the battle of Beth-horon, or were at any rate conquered in the campaign following that battle.”

The name Jerusalem has many possible meanings. For simplicity, it is Foundation of Peace. Hebron means Alliance.

¹¹ the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

Jarmuth means Elevation. Lachish means Obstinate.

¹² the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

Eglon means Heifer-like. Gezer means Part or Portion.

¹³ the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

Debir means Place of the Word. Geder is found only here in Scripture. It comes from *gadar*, meaning to wall up or around. Hence, it means Wall.

¹⁴ the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

Hormah is a name given in Numbers 21:3. It means Anathema. Arad is mentioned in Numbers 21:1, in the same account as Hormah. Arad comes from either an unused root meaning to sequester, and thus a fugitive, or from a root which signifies untamed, such as the wild donkey. Either way, the result is the same – it carries the sense of One who is Unrestrained.

To understand the significance of these locations, a review of the Numbers 21 sermon would be a good thing to do in your free time.

¹⁵ the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

Libnah means Whiteness. However, that comes from *lavan*, a verb meaning to make whiter or make bricks because bricks whiten when they are made. Adullam is first seen here. It means Refuge or The Justice of the People.

¹⁶ the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one;

Makkedah means Place of Shepherds. Bethel means House of God.

17 the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hephher, one;

Tapuakh is introduced here and will be seen six times. It comes from *naphakh*, signifying to breathe or blow. It means Love Apple, being identical to *tapuakh* found in Proverbs 25:11 and several times in the Song of Solomon. Its name is derived from its fragrance. Khepher means either Well (from dig) or Shame. It could be a combination of the two – Well of Shame.

18 the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

melekh aphek ekhad melekh la'sharon ekhad – “King Aphek, one; king to the Sharon, one.” The words “to the Sharon” would indicate the district of Sharon. Aphek is first seen here. It comes from *aphaq*, meaning to contain, refrain, or be strong. Hence, it is Fortress. Sharon is also introduced here. It signifies Great Plain, but also Body Armor.

19 the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

Of the rest of the verses, Albert Barnes notes, “Those mentioned in Joshua 12:19-24 were in like manner connected with the northern confederates (Joshua 11:1 ff), who were defeated at the Waters of Merom.” Madon means Contention or Strife.

Khatsor has various meanings based on its root that signifies “to begin to cluster or gather.” It may mean Village, Trumpet, Leek, Enclosure, etc.

20 the king of Shimron Meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

Shimron Meron was mentioned in Joshua 11:1 simply as Shimron. Shimron means Watching or Vigilant Guardian. The word Meron comes from a word signifying well fed or fat. Hence, this would mean Vigilance and Prosperity. Achshaph signifies Fascination or Bewitched.

21 the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

Both locations are introduced here. The meaning of Taanakh is completely uncertain. Some think it is derived from an Egyptian word; others from an Arabic word. There is no corresponding root word found in Scripture. Megiddo comes from *gadad*, to penetrate or cut. Hence it signifies Invading or Intruding.

22 the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one;

melekh qedesh ekhad melekh yaq'noam la'karmel ekhad – “king Kadesh one; king Jokneam to the Carmel, one.” Kedesh means Sanctuary or Sacred Place, coming from *qedesh*, meaning holy.

Jokneam is first found here and then only twice more in Joshua. It means either People will be Lamented or Let the People Acquire. It is said to be “to the Carmel,” meaning in the district of Carmel. That means Plantation or Orchard.

²³ the king of Dor in the heights of Dor, one;

The “heights of Dor” is literally “the sieves of Dor.” The meaning is that as a sieve is raised, it pours out. Hence it can signify heights or borders of an area. Dor means To Dwell, but it is identical to the word translated as generation, as in the time period of one’s dwelling.

^{23 (con't)} the king of the people of Gilgal, one;

melekh goyim l'gilgal ekhad – “king nations to Gilgal, one.” This is not the Gilgal where Joshua and Israel encamped. There is a lot of speculation where this was or what the real meaning of the words is. Gilgal means Rolling Away, a Wheel, or Circle of Stones. Metaphorically, it means Liberty.

²⁴ the king of Tirzah, one—

Tirtzah means Delight or Pleasantness.

^{24 (fin)} all the kings, thirty-one.

This is the total number of kings subdued on the west side of the Jordan River. Bullinger uses Hebrew gematria to define the meaning of the number. The number comes from the letters aleph/1 and lamed/30. It is the number of El or God. Hence, he defines it as Deity.

Combining them with the two from the east side, and the total number of kings is thirty-three. The number is derived from 3, signifying “that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire,” and 11, which “is the number that marks disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration.” Hence, 3 and 11 are two seemingly contradictory numbers.

*Thirty-one kings met their end in the war
Because God Himself fought for us
This is the victory of which He swore
And it has come about through the giving of Jesus*

*Thirty-one kings; all have met their end
And the inheritance is now offered to us
To our helpless state He did attend
God heard our voice and sent the Lord Jesus*

*Great is God to His people Israel
And we have come to know what He has done for us
Of His great deeds, we shall all the world tell
Because we now have come to know the Lord Jesus*

III. Pictures of Christ

There are obviously a lot of names of both people and places in this section. Hence, to fit everything in typology correctly may be beyond what is possible, but I will give my best analysis. We have to look at things from the perspective that the book of Joshua is given to highlight the victories of the Lord.

The first half of the chapter was a picture of those who had come to Christ prior to national Israel's salvation. Hence, it would logically follow that this is picturing the same for Israel as a nation now. That is seen with the words "in side the Jordan seaward." It is that area west of the Jordan.

The sea is the place furthest west. In Revelation 4, we see the throne of God and before Him is a sea of glass. Hence, John would have been east of both the sea and the throne. I note this so you can get the sense. The Biblical idea is that man approaches God from the east and always anticipates Him as he moves west. This is seen, for example, in the layout of the tabernacle and the temple.

With this understanding, the borders of the land here in Joshua 12 are defined as those on the north and the south. The meaning would be the same as was previously given in the Joshua 11 sermon. Therefore, the words "from Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon" would typologically mean "from Lord of the Invasion in the cleaving of the works."

In other words, Christ came as a Man aware of the consequences of sin. He accomplished all that was necessary under the law to bring man to God. It is His works that make it possible. All other works are insufficient to accomplish the purpose.

The words “as far as Mount Halak and the ascent to Seir,” look to the sinless Jesus who came in the appearance of sinful man. Mount Halak is the smooth mountain, representing a sinless nature. Hair in Scripture speaks of awareness, especially awareness of sin.

Jesus came knowing no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), pictured by the smooth mountain. But He came in the likeness of sinful man (Hebrews 2:17), pictured by the hairy mountain, in order to accomplish His work. Hence, these borders define His nature and the scope of his work.

This is highlighted by the words of verse 7 noting Joshua gave this land to the tribes of Israel. Simply change Joshua (The Lord is Salvation) in the earthly sense to Jesus (the Lord who is “Salvation”) in the spiritual sense.

From there, the six types of land divisions were named. In chapter 11, these six divisions are each referring to Christ. They are the mountain, the lowland, the Aravah, the slopes, the wilderness, and the South (*negev*).

He is 1) the gatherer of God’s people; 2) the One who abased Himself in order to bring the humbled to God; 3) the One through whom the pledge, meaning the Holy Spirit, is given; 4) the Foundation upon which all else is built (1 Corinthians 3:11); 5) the One who was tested and tried and yet who prevailed; and 6) the Giver of water (life through the word) in the otherwise parched world.

The seventh division, that of the six people groups, anticipates Christ’s victory over those who each group represents. They are the same listing of people mentioned in Joshua 3:10, 9:1, & 11:3.

With that noted, the account then turned to the defeat of the thirty-one kings, naming their locations. As the kings are unnamed but the locations are named, it would indicate the land which is inherited by Israel.

It is certain that each location tells its own story, and every location is a part of the whole. However, were I to attempt to define each, I would have to make things up as I went – something I refuse to do. This is especially so when the meaning of one of the

locations, Taanach, is wholly unknown. The names that can be found for it in various references are simply best guesses.

I will give you the best meaning I can from my studies in one quick list:

Place of Fragrance
The Ruins (from side of Bethel)
Foundation of Peace
Alliance
Elevation
Obstinate
Heifer-like
Portion
Place of the Word
Wall
Anathema
Untamed
Whiteness (works)
Refuge (or Justice of the People)
Place of Shepherds
House of God
Love Apple
Well (or Shame)
Fortress
To the Great Plain (or Body Armor)
Contention
To Begin to Cluster or Gather
Vigilance and Prosperity
Fascination
?
Invading
Sacred Place
Let the People Acquire (in) Orchard
Generation in the Sieves (heights) of Generation
Nations of Liberty
Delight

Some of the meanings are obvious. We know from previous sermons in Deuteronomy and Joshua that Jericho, the Place of Fragrance, anticipates Christ's restoration of us to

paradise, meaning access to heaven. Ai, the Ruins, represented Christ's victory over the law.

Jerusalem, or Foundation of Peace, seems obvious as anticipating the peace offered through Jesus. That can be more fully seen in New Testament references, such as Galatians 4 and Hebrews 12. We might be able to equate Sharon (Body Armor) with Paul's words concerning putting on the whole armor of God which is given by Christ. And so on.

But there is a point where we can make anything say anything. I don't desire to do that. We can be satisfied that God knows exactly why each location is listed and that each has its own typological anticipation of Christ.

Someone may be able to do a more thorough job on a listing than me, and that would be great. But I would recommend anyone making such a list to provide the references for each name and how they came to their conclusions. Otherwise, such a list would be pick and choose. We should not go there.

As for the final words of the chapter, Bullinger approached the meaning of the number 31 in a different manner than he normally does by defining it based on gematria. That is a valid science, but it can be easily manipulated as well.

His conclusion of the meaning of 31 beautifully matches the domain conquered by Joshua. As he anticipates Christ Jesus, and as Christ is El, God, Canaan anticipates the victory of God in Christ over all His foes and the granting of the full inheritance to His people.

Finally, and because there are those of the inheritance on both sides of the Jordan, the total number of defeated kings, 33, would presumably have meaning as well. As I noted, the number is derived from 3, signifying "that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire," and 11, which "is the number which marks disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration."

Together, these two seemingly contradictory numbers would appear to look to the state of the world, even during the millennium after Israel has come to Christ, as still lacking its final restoration. Hence, the need for a new heaven and a new earth as promised in Revelation.

This can be seen in the words of Hebrews 2 –

“For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. ⁶ But one testified in a certain place, saying:

‘What is man that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man that You take care of him?

⁷ You have made him a little lower than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
And set him over the works of Your hands.

⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”

-Hebrews 2:5-9

What Christ has done is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire, and yet, there will remain a mark of disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration on this earth until it finds its final and forever renewal.

There is no reason to dismiss this as either speculation or stretching the meaning to fit a hoped-for outcome. The definitions provided by Bullinger beautifully match the state of things in the world as they are and as they will be until the final consummation of the redemptive scenario laid out in Scripture.

The chapter has concluded logically with what has come before it in the winning of the battles, the marking out of the territory, and how all of it anticipates the victories of the Lord on behalf of His people.

It is also a chapter of assurance for each of us in our own battles. Consider that God was so attentive to the needs of Israel that He watched over them and gave them victory after victory. As these victories anticipate the victories of Christ Jesus to secure our salvation and that of Israel as a nation, then we can be assured that He is watching over us just as closely when we belong to Him.

It would be contradictory and perverse to think that God saved us through all of the trials and troubles that Christ faced, for Him to then say, “Ok, you’re on your own in this life.” Rather, in reading Joshua, and indeed all of Scripture, we can be even more assured that God has the best plan for us in the lives we lead.

So hold on to that thought and be reassured by it. When we are in Christ, we are God's children. As He is the perfect Father, we can know that He is perfectly attentive to us from moment to moment. Thank God for Jesus Christ who made this possible.

Closing Verse: *"He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,
And they inherited the labor of the nations,
⁴⁵ That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws." Psalm 105:44, 45*

Next Week: Joshua 13:1-14 *Getting one's inheritance sure is grand...* (Now Therefore, Divide This Land) (27th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

An Inheritance Seaward

And these are the kings of the country
Which conquered Joshua and the children of Israel
On this side of the Jordan, on the west
From Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon, as the record does tell

As far as Mount Halak
And the ascent to Seir without any noted revisions
Which Joshua gave to the tribes of Israel as a possession
According to their divisions

In the mountain country, in the lowlands, in the Jordan plain
In the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the South, yes those sites
The Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites
The Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

The king of Jericho, one
The king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one
The king of Jerusalem, one
The king of Hebron, one – isn't this fun!

The king of Jarmuth, one

The king of Lachish, one
The king of Eglon, one
The king of Gezer, one – we'll make it rhyme with the word pun

The king of Debir, one
The king of Geder, one
The king of Hormah, one
The king of Arad, one – we'll be done before the setting of the sun

The king of Libnah, one
The king of Adullam, one
The king of Makkedah, one
The king of Bethel, one – a few more before the list is done

The king of Tappuah, one
The king of Hopher, one
The king of Aphek, one
The king of Lasharon, one – this is a ton of fun!

The king of Madon, one
The king of Hazor, one
The king of Shimron Meron, one
The king of Achshaph, one – one is more than none

The king of Taanach, one
The king of Megiddo, one
The king of Kedesh, one
The king of Jokneam in Carmel, one – his city got overrun

The king of Dor in the heights of Dor, one
The king of the people of Gilgal, one
The king of Tirzah, one
All the kings, thirty-one – and now we're done

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 13:1-14 **(NOW THEREFORE, DIVIDE THIS LAND)**

Of the words of Joshua, Arthur Stanley, from his book *Sinai and Palestine in Connection With Their History*, dated 1883, says –

“There is one document in the Hebrew Scriptures to which probably no parallel exists in the topographical records of any other ancient nation. In the Book of Joshua we have what may without offence be termed the [Doomsday] Book of the conquest of Canaan. Ten chapters of that Book are devoted to a description of the country, in which not only are its general features and boundaries carefully laid down, but the names and situations of its towns and villages enumerated with a precision of geographical terms which encourages and almost compels a minute investigation.”

In other words, because of the precision of what is stated in the chapters detailing the land of Israel, it begs the naysayer of Scripture to prove it wrong. There isn't just a smattering of detailed information, but an overwhelming amount of it.

And it is so comprehensive and precise that either the author knew exactly what he was writing so that anyone at any time could pinpoint the locations with a bit of effort, or it is a completely flawed description of the markings and borders he has laid out.

As time has marched on and things have been buried or removed, some locations may be harder to pinpoint, but there is enough of what is written that can be substantiated, even 3000+ years later, that the correctness of the other locations when they were written down is assured.

As we go through the verses today, we'll see that many of these names were not only written down once, but several times. And they were not just written down by being copied one account from another. Rather, they were written down in a way that would ensure that any disputes about the details could be resolved by a review of the details of a secondary account.

Text Verse: *“Then He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’ ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:25-27*

The reliability of Old Testament Scripture is put to the test even in the New Testament. Again and again, the word “Scripture” is cited by Jesus or the apostles when referring to the Old Testament. At other times, Jesus or an apostle will simply make a point from Scripture, such as –

“For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:38, 39

Jesus presents the flood as a literal occurrence. He speaks of Abel as a literal human. If there was an Abel, then there was an Adam who begot Abel. Jesus tells us that Moses (meaning the Torah, the five books of Moses) and the prophets speak of Him. The entire Bible, the word of God, calls forth with the words, “Test me! See if I am what I have presented.” If we do test it, we will be assured of its veracity.

As for the contents of our passage, Charles Ellicott makes a marvelous point about those who claim the books of Moses and Joshua were actually penned at a much later date. If that were so, there would be some real inconsistencies of thought. Using the law as his example, he says –

“We are also able to understand more clearly why so much stress was laid upon the necessity of adherence to the Book of the Law in Joshua’s commission (Joshua 1:6-8). The fact that these rules are not what human nature would be at all disposed to obey continuously and as a matter of set practice (have they ever been observed yet in any conquest recorded in history?) is worth noting, as a proof of the undesigned veracity of the story. It is a mark of thorough consistency between the law and the history of Israel. And if the authorship of Deuteronomy belonged to the late date which some claim for it, how could we account for the insertion of a law which was never kept, and could not be kept at the time when some suppose it was written? From the days of Solomon and thenceforward, the relation of the remnant of the conquered Canaanites to Israel was fixed. The Phœnicians and Philistines maintained a separate national existence to the last.”

His point is well stated. If these things were written much later, even as late as 300BC as so many claim, it would make no sense to include items which proved a total failure on Israel’s part. This might be the case in a fictional story, but it would never be the case in writings that claimed to be historical, accurate, and indeed holy.

Trust the word, even if you don't always understand it. When the Bible says there was a city, a well, or an altar in a certain spot, you can bet that someone will go there, pull out his spade, and hear the tink of the metal hitting rock which is what he was looking for. It has happened innumerable times in history, and it continues to occur regularly today.

Archaeology is only one of a host of sciences that validates the pages of Scripture. Evolution schmevotion. I don't have enough faith to believe we evolved, and neither should you. There is not one bone on the planet that has yet proved that inane "theory," which is – by the way – why it is still called a "theory." Trust the word of God. It is, after all, God's word.

And great things are always to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. This Is the Land That Yet Remains (verses 1-7)

¹ Now Joshua was old, advanced in years.

This is more a paraphrase. The Hebrew says: *vihoshua zaqen ba ba'yamim* – "And Joshua old, entering in the days." Despite being a type of the Lord, Joshua was also a man, a historical figure, who led Israel, but who also aged and eventually died. However, the events of his life are used to convey truths about the work of the Lord and the ongoing story of redemptive history.

^{1 (con't)} And the LORD said to him:

There are times in the narrative that the Lord obviously spoke to Joshua personally, such as during the battle of Ai when He instructed Joshua to act in the heat of battle. Whether this is the case now, or whether the Lord speaks to him through a prophet, priest, or some other way is not recorded. But the Lord does speak to him...

^{1 (con't)} "You are old, advanced in years,

atah zaqantah bata ba'yamim – "You old, entering in the days." There are things to consider about these words. Joshua isn't nearly as old as Moses was at the time of his death. It is likely that Joshua was around a hundred years old.

Moses was one hundred and twenty when he died and “his eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor diminished.” Despite being aged, he was not “old.” On the other hand, Joshua will die at the same age Joseph did, one hundred and ten (Joshua 24:29). Some years before that, he is already considered as “old.”

Therefore, being old is not so much dependent on the actual number of years a person lives, but the state of the person at any given time. In 1 Kings 1:15, it says that David was “very old,” and yet he was only about seventy when he died.

The state of Joshua demands that certain things must be done. The conquests he made have established a foothold in the land that is great enough so that it can be divided among the tribes. And yet, there are many people groups that have not yet been subdued in the land; some never will be.

Despite this, the instructions found in the law intended for the land to be solely the possession of Israel. Therefore, the division of the land, even before it is wholly subdued, now falls to Joshua...

^{1 (con't)} **and there remains very much land yet to be possessed.**

v'ha'arets nisharah harbeh meod l'rishtah – “and the land left much, very, to possess.” Despite his great successes in the many conquests he led, a significant amount of land remained outside of the control of Israel. This is unlike the land east of the Jordan which was wholly subdued under Moses.

It is a marvelous parallel to the state of things for those who come to Christ. In Him, the inheritance is secured because of Christ's fulfillment and ending of the law. And yet, there are battles to be won and enemies to be subdued after coming to Him.

There is no contradiction in this at all. It is exactly how the New Testament portrays the state of things. There is total victory and assured salvation in Christ, and yet there is a constant war being waged against those who are in Christ.

Anyone who doesn't get this either feels he must earn his salvation (Christ's victory was not total), which is impossible to do, or he feels he can lose his salvation (the struggles of life in Christ can overcome what He has done), which is likewise impossible.

As for the literal history of Israel's unconquered land...

² This is the land that yet remains:

zot ha'arets ha'nishareth – “This the land, the remaining.” This clause introduces what will be said through verse 7. As such, this is a parenthetical thought which terminates with the words of verse 7 –

2: This is the land

2-6: Naming the land.

7: Now therefore, divide this land.

^{2 (con't)} **all the territory of the Philistines and all *that of* the Geshurites,**

kal g'liloth ha'p'lishtim v'kal ha'geshuri – “all circles the Philistines and all the Geshuri.” A new word is introduced here, *gelilah*. It comes from *galal*, meaning to roll. Thus, it is a region, like a circle, as if encircled by borders.

As for the people groups, the name Philistine comes from, *palash*, signifying to roll in the dust as an act of mourning. They are the Grievers. The name Geshur comes from an unused root meaning to join. Thus, it may mean Bridge.

Some think that these from Geshur are the same as those mentioned in Joshua 12:5, being in the northeast area of Canaan. Others think they may be the same people group, but a portion of them settled in the south. That seems more likely for two reasons.

The first is that the Geshuri is mentioned in 1 Samuel 27:8 and it is clearly in the southern area of Canaan. Also, it is because the region of these groups is next described. That region is...

³ **from Sihor, which *is* east of Egypt,**

min ha'sikhor asher al pene mitsraim – “from the Sikhor which upon face Egypt.” The Sikhor probably derives its name from *shakhar*, to be black. If so, it is a dark, turbid river. It is The Turbid. This is the same river known as the Wadi of Egypt in Joshua 15:4. Today, it is known as the Wadi el Arish that flows into the Mediterranean Sea from the Sinai Peninsula. The border goes...

^{3 (con't)} **as far as the border of Ekron northward**

v'ad gebul eqron tsaphonah – “and unto border Ekron northward.” Ekron comes from *aqar*, to pluck up or uproot. But that is from the same as *eqer*, an offshoot or descendant. Hence, the name could mean either Offshoot or Uprooted. Zephaniah will make a play on the name later in Scripture, saying, “Ekron shall be Uprooted” (Zephaniah 2:4).

Ekron is the most northern of the five cities of the Philistines.

³ (con't) **(which is counted as Canaanite);**

la'kenaani tekhashev – “to the Canaanite reckoned.” The words could be referring to the previous clause when speaking of Ekron. However, it is more likely tied to the next clauses. This would mean that the named people groups are regarded as Canaanites, even if they are not specifically descendants of Canaan. In other words, they are subject to conquest. They are...

³ (con't) **the five lords of the Philistines—**

khameshet sarne p'lishtim – “five lords Philistines.” The word *seren* is introduced here. It signifies a lord, but also an axle. Hence, the word may indicate the lord is the central point upon which the city turns. These five lords, plus one people group, are...

³ (con't) **the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites;**

The names are all in the singular, not the plural. And the word “also” is not in the text. As for their names, Gaza (Azah) means Strong. Ashdod means Ravager. Ashkelon comes from *shaqal*, to weigh, as in weighing money. Hence it is the Market. Gath means Winepress. Ekron was named in the previous verse. These are the five groups of Philistines.

Along with them are named the Avites. Their name comes from *avah*, to bend or twist, but also a distortion or ruin, or even perversity or moral evil. They may be the Ruiners, but I would think the name could extend to Mischief-makers. They are included here because of what is said in Deuteronomy 2:23 –

“And the Avim, who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza—the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and dwelt in their place.”

Apparently, they continued to exist in limited number even if mostly destroyed and driven out. The details continue with...

⁴ from the south, all the land of the Canaanites,

The actual division of the verses is debated. Some place the words. “from the south” with the previous clause. Some place them with the words following. The Greek, instead of saying *mi'teman*, or “from the South,” says “from Teman,” which is the proper name of a location belonging to Edom.

No matter which, it immediately follows with the land of the Canaanites. That extends northward...

⁴ (con't) and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorites;

u-m'arah asher la'tsidonim ad apheqah ad gebul ha'emori – “and Mearah which to the Sidonians unto Aphek unto border the Amorite.” Mearah means Cave. It is a region with a cave near Lebanon. Several possible sites have been suggested.

Sidon comes from *tsud*, to hunt. Thus, it is Hunting Place. As it is on the coast, it means to hunt fish and thus Fishery. Aphek comes from *aphaq*, meaning to hold or to be strong, and so it means Fortress. And Amorite signifies Renown.

The idea here is all of the area of the Canaanites from Ekron north to Sidon and then eastward to Aphek which may be the northern area of Bashan, and which extends to the area of Mount Hermon. However, there are at least three different locations known as Aphek, and so this is a bit of guesswork.

⁵ the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath;

Depending on the root word, Gebal means either Boundary or Hill of God. Lebanon means White One or even Mountain of Snow. Baal Gad means Lord of Fortune with a secondary meaning of Lord of the Invasion. Hermon means Sacred. Hamath means Defense or Citadel.

Gebal is also known as Byblos and is a city on the Mediterranean north of Sidon (even north of Beirut), It is seen in 1 Kings 5:18 and Ezekiel 29:9. The borders mentioned go

eastward and extend to Mount Hermon and even northward to Hamath, which was the northern location spied out by the twelve spies in Numbers 13. It was recorded as the northern border in Numbers 34.

⁶all the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon as far as the Brook Misrephoth, *and* all the Sidonians—

The Brook Misrephoth, or Misrephoth Mayim, means Burning of Waters. It was seen in Joshua 11:8. This explains the people who live in those areas. It is inclusive of the Sidonians and Phoenicians. What is said about all these people and the named locations is, obviously, conditional.

These areas were never fully cleansed of the inhabitants, even if they were controlled by Israel such as during the time of David and Solomon. Therefore, what the Lord next says is only assured if Israel itself acted...

^{6 (con't)} them I will drive out from before the children of Israel;

It is emphatic and it refers to all of the peoples and places mentioned since verse 2, "I will drive them out." The Lord promises to do so, but Ellicott is right in how he presents it, saying, "...the promise of driving them out from before the children of Israel, supposes that the Israelites must use their own endeavours, must go up against them. If Israel, through sloth or cowardice, let them alone, they are not likely to be driven out. We must go forth in our Christian warfare, and then God will go before us."

He is right about this in both that which is promised to Israel and our own situation as believers. It is as common as wind gusts in a hurricane for Christians to claim success in something, but then never put forward any effort in order to obtain what they have claimed.

But more directly, we are told about the spiritual warfare we are in; and yet, without the proper tools to wage that war, one cannot triumph. In Ephesians 6, Paul writes of truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, surety of salvation, and the employment of the word of God.

Each one of these things finds its basis in knowing the word and applying it to our lives. Israel may have known how to fight but failed to engage the battle. Or Israel may have faced a battle and not known how to fight. Are we any different in our spiritual walk? Not in the least.

What we are seeing in Joshua is a reflection of what we are called to in our own lives. This is something that was already perfectly stated in Number 33 –

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places; ⁵³ you shall dispossess *the inhabitants of* the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess. ⁵⁴ And you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone’s *inheritance* shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. ⁵⁵ But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. ⁵⁶ Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.’” Numbers 33:51-56

The Lord will clear out the inhabitants if Israel will act in driving out the inhabitants. The Lord will go before us in our spiritual battles if we are simply willing to follow and be set for the battles we are to face. As for Joshua, the Lord continues, saying...

⁶ (con’t) **only divide it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you.**

This is more an explanation than a translation. It reads: *raq hapileha l’yisrael b’nakhlah ka’asher tsivitikha* – “only, cause it to fall to Israel in inheritance according to which I commanded you.” The inheritance will fall by lot, but only because Joshua will cause the lots to fall. With that, the parenthetical thought in verses 2-6 is complete and the closing thought of the section is provided...

⁷ **Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”**

The meaning is “all of the land just named,” not just that which is subdued. In other words, the land is to be divided and those areas not yet subdued were to be handled by the tribe who received the particular allotment. That is exactly seen in Joshua 17.

The main kings and fortifications had been subdued. The structure of the societies within Canaan had been sufficiently destroyed so that those remaining would find it

difficult to organize against Israel. And so, the land was now to be parceled up and granted to those who had not received an inheritance east of the Jordan.

For example, Judah and Simeon will receive their allotment in Joshua 15 and 19, but then it will say this in Judges 1:3 –

“So Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I will likewise go with you to your allotted territory.” And Simeon went with him.”

These tribes were willing to put forth the effort, “and the Lord delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand” (Judges 1:4). Other tribes failed to obey, and they never did drive out the inhabitants. That will be seen in just a few verses.

*It is time to get about dividing the land
It is ready to be inhabited, so get it done
Enough battles have been fought to understand
That the rest of the battles you face will be won*

*I will drive out the rest if you will just get started
And you cannot fail if you will get up and get going
Do not be afraid, dismayed, or downhearted
Be confident in My word; great things I will be showing*

*If you sit idly about, you cannot expect a victory
But if you head out confident in the truth of My word
Then you shall prevail; test Me in this and you will see
Just have trust and faith in what you have heard*

II. Nevertheless (verses 8-14)

There is a ton of repetition from previous sermons in these verses set before us. It even closely mirrors much of what was said in Joshua 12:1-6. It may seem tedious and redundant. “Haven’t we just heard this?”

This will continue throughout the allotment to each individual tribe. But the specificity is necessary. There is not only typology for us to consider, but it is also a set of actual inheritances that had to be precisely detailed for a group of people that actually existed.

Just as we have extremely precise descriptions in the legal recordings of our land deeds, Israel also needed to maintain such records. Thus, we need to be patient as we go through these allotments, understanding that there was a need for precision in order to ensure harmony within and among the tribes of Israel.

⁸With the other half-tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance,

As an explanatory paraphrase, the NKJV adds in words that are not in the text. It says: *imo ha'reuveni v'ha'gadi laqehu nakhalatam* – “With him the Reubenite and the Gadite took their inheritance.” The words here need to be taken with the last words of verse 7.

There it referred to Manasseh. As such, the “With him” is referring to Manasseh. One half of him was divided east of the Jordan while the other half was west of the Jordan.

^{8 (con't)} which Moses had given them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the LORD had given them:

The Hebrew reads more precisely: “which had given to them Moses, in side the Jordan eastward, according to which had given to them Moses, servant Yehovah.” In other words, the land had been given to them by Moses, meaning the two- and one-half tribes, and then it had been divided by Moses among them.

It wasn't just that they all had been given the expanse of land and could settle wherever they wanted, but that they had been given the expanse of land which was then carefully – even meticulously – described and apportioned out. In other words, these tribes together had received their inheritance and then each tribe individually had received its inheritance. The entire expanse was...

⁹from Aroer which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the town that *is* in the midst of the ravine, and all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon;

The land described in verses 9 and 10 is the southern area of the land grant east of the Jordan. It comprises the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites.

As a reminder, Aroer means Stripped, Bare, or Naked. Arnon means Roaring Stream. The type of ravine is a *nakhal*, signifying a wadi. The word comes from the verb *nakhal* signifying “to take possession.”

The noting of the city which is in the midst of the ravine is most probably speaking of Aroer, the same city just mentioned. It is both on the bank of the ravine and within the ravine. Hence, it is a double city. If this is correct, then Isaiah refers to this double city –

“The cities of Aroer *are* forsaken; They will be for flocks Which lie down, and no one will make *them* afraid.” Isaiah 17:2

Next, *ha'mishor*, or “the plain,” is a word that signifies a level place. Thus, it figuratively speaks of uprightness. It is “the place of uprightness.” Medeba means something like Waters of Rest. And Dibon means Pining. Also included are...

¹⁰ all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the children of Ammon;

Sihon means something like Tempestuous or Warrior. Heshbon means Intelligence. Ammon means A People. Everything that belonged to the kingdom of Sihon was subdued and the inhabitants were completely destroyed, even right up to the border of the land. Also included in this large tract was...

¹¹ Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salcah;

The land described in verses 11 and 12 is the northern area of the land grant east of the Jordan. It comprises the kingdom of Og in the Bashan. With this in mind, Gilead means Perpetual Fountain.

The Gushurite possessed a small area in the northeast corner of Bashan. It was adjoined to the area of Argob (Deuteronomy 3:14), and to the kingdom of Aram (Syria) as seen in 2 Samuel 15:8. As we saw earlier, Geshur means Bridge.

The Maachthite dwelt on the southwest area of Mount Hermon where the Jordan finds its source. Maacah means Oppression. Also, Bashan is prefixed by an article, the Bashan. It means The Place of Fertile Soil. Salcah means Walking. With these borders defined, it next says this is...

¹² all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei,

As we saw in the last chapter, Og comes from *uggah*, which is a round baked cake. That comes from *ug*, to bake. His reign was from both of these cities, probably having a

palace in each. Ashtaroth is believed to signify Union of Instructions, and thus One Law. Edrei means something like Mighty.

12 (con't) who remained of the remnant of the giants; for Moses had defeated and cast out these.

The wording is rather precise: *hu nishar mi'yeter ha'rephaim va'yakem mosheh va'yorishem* – “He remained from remnant the Rephaim. And struck them Moses and dispossessed them.” It is two separate thoughts. Og alone remained of the Rephaim. Moses both destroyed Og and those he reigned over.

If you compare the corresponding verses in Chapters 12 and 13, you can see the similarities and the differences –

“The other king was Og king of Bashan and his territory, who was of the remnant of the giants, who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, ⁵ and reigned over Mount Hermon, over Salcah, over all Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.” Joshua 12:4, 5

“Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salcah; ¹² all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants; for Moses had defeated and cast out these.” Joshua 13:11, 12

Though it is essentially the same thing being said, it is purposefully restructured as if to ensure that what is said in one place is fully understood by saying it again a bit differently in another place. Therefore, if one was to be twisted or incorrectly analyzed, the other would provide support to correct the error.

The same is true with the previous verses concerning Sihon and his territory. There are some larger differences in the description of his kingdom, but together they form a full picture for the tribes to ensure that the scope of the entire land, as well as that of the individual parcels, is perfectly understood.

With that, a curious negative note is entered into the account...

¹³ Nevertheless the children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites, but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

The word translated as “Nevertheless” is simply “And.” Also, the names are in the singular in the first clause and they are stated by their principal name in the second clause – “And the sons of Israel did not dispossess the Geshurite and the Maacahthite. And Geshur and Maakath dwell in the midst of Israel until this day.”

The curiosity of saying this comes from the fact that these two people groups were not a part of the kingdom of Og. Rather, they dwelt on his border as noted in verse 12:5. However, the matter is resolved by the fact that they were located within the borders specified by the Lord as belonging to Israel. Other such notes of failure will be seen as the Bible continues.

¹⁴ Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance;

This is explicitly stated now while referring to the land east of the Jordan to explain why Levi is not included in any land inheritance there. This is repeated in the allotment to Manasseh on the east side in verse 13:33 and concerning all other allotments west of the Jordan in verse 14:4.

It will then be addressed as the main subject of Chapter 21. The narrative is being extremely precise in dealing with the Levites, as in the book of Numbers does in particular, but elsewhere in Scripture as well.

^{14 (fin)} the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as He said to them.

The translation is rather poor. It was copied from the KJV which got much of it wrong. It is emphatic and reads: *ishe Yehovah elohe Yisrael hu nakhalato ka'asher diber lo* – “Fire offerings of Yehovah, God of Israel, IT his inheritance as He said to him.”

First, not all offerings are sacrifices. Second, there is an emphasis on the fact that the offerings are Levi’s inheritance. As they belong to the Lord, and so the Lord is then Levi’s inheritance –

“Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD *is* his inheritance, just as the LORD your God promised him.” Deuteronomy 10:9

Also, the words appear as if the Lord was speaking directly to Levi, “as He said to him.” The Levites are uniquely set apart as the Lord’s, and it was by the word of the Lord that this came about.

As for the typology of what is presented in these verses, it has been explained, and in some cases, re-explained several times. Since we just went through much of it at the beginning of chapter 12, there is no point in going through it all again.

It is true that there are minor differences that could be evaluated for typology, but the overall message of the presentation shouts out details that we know refer to Jesus. He is the focal point of all that is given.

And yet, we cannot ignore the fact that these details were also minutely provided to ensure Israel would have exact guidelines and particulars to avoid any land conflict later in their own history. Hence, the reiteration of the details will allow for those who might argue to reference another account to overcome any disputes that might arise.

As for our own surety of what is presented, remember what was said by Arthur Stanley and Charles Ellicott as we opened today. What the Bible presents calls out to be tested and verified. And for thousands of years, this is exactly what people have done.

They have tried to prove it is in error and they have failed. They have found supposed contradictions and then these were proven wrong. They have tested it for accuracy, and it has passed at the turn of every page.

It is certain that not everything in the Bible has been proven true, but it is also certain that nothing in the Bible has been proven false. There is a great difference between the two. The latter removes any reason to ever read it again. The former challenges us to continue seeking out what it says, knowing that it has been proven right. This allows us to be confident that it will continue to be right in everything else that is still unknown.

Trust the word of God. It is a faithful friend that will never let you down. And above all, trust Jesus who is the focal point of the entire word. I can tell you with one hundred percent confidence that He will never (No, never ever!) let you down.

Closing Verse: *“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:14, 15*

Next Week: Joshua 13:15-33 *It is where we are set to go, so we are headed toward...* (An Inheritance by Jericho, Eastward) (28th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Now Therefore, Divide This Land

Now Joshua was old, advanced in years
And the LORD said to him, yes, Joshua He addressed
“You are old, advanced in years
And there remains very much land yet to be possessed

This is the land that yet remains:
All the territory of the Philistines and all that of the Geshurite
From Sihor, which is east of Egypt
As far as the border of Ekron northward (which is counted
-----as Canaanite)

The five lords of the Philistines—
The Gazites, the Ashdodites
The Ashkelonites, the Gittites
And the Ekronites; also the Avites – so many “-ites”

From the south
All the land of the Canaanites
And Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians as far as Aphek
To the border of the Amorites

The land of the Gebalites
And all Lebanon, toward the sunrise
From Baal Gad below Mount Hermon
As far as the entrance to Hamath, where Hamath lies

All the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon
As far as the Brook Misrephoth, so the record does tell
And all the Sidonians
Them I will drive out from before the children of Israel

Only divide it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, so you shall do
As I have commanded you

Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance, divide it this way
To the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh

With the other half-tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites
Received their inheritance, measured out by cord
Which Moses had given them, beyond the Jordan eastward
As had given them, Moses, the servant of the Lord

From Aroer which is on the bank of the River Arnon
And the town that is in the midst of the ravine
And all the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon
All the land that is there seen

All the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites
Who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border
-----of the children of Ammon
Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites
All Mount Hermon

And all Bashan as far as Salcah
All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth
-----and Edrei too
Who remained of the remnant of the giants
For Moses had defeated and cast out these, their land he did accrue

Nevertheless the children of Israel
Did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites
-----so they did not obey
But the Geshurites and the Maachathites
Dwell among the Israelites until this day

Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance
The sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel
Made by fire are their inheritance
As He said to them – as He did tell

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 13:15-33 **(AN INHERITANCE BY JERICHO, EASTWARD)**

In Chapters 1-12, Israel's entrance into Canaan and subduing of the land were detailed. Within those chapters, there were several logical divisions of what was taking place. As a whole, those chapters should be taken as the first major division of the historical aspect of the book.

The next major division began at verses 13:1-14. That defined the scope of the land to be inherited and the people groups who possessed the land prior to Israel on both sides of the Jordan.

This major section is to go from Chapter 13 through chapter 22. It is long, and the structure is often difficult. If we can just remember that this lengthy division of the land is all picturing the Lord's distribution of His inheritance to His people, it will take away much of the tedium that we may otherwise feel.

Think of our position in Christ. We have received Christ's completed work. We have been given the pledge of the Spirit, the guarantee of our salvation, and yet, we have actually not fully received the inheritance that has been granted.

Think of it as a will that cannot be revoked. A son is given his land inheritance. It has been guaranteed by the legal document, but he has to live out his life while waiting for the actual bestowal of it.

There is also a condition in the will that things will be added to the inheritance (rewards) or taken away from it (losses) based on how he lives his life while waiting for the inheritance.

Text Verse: *"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."* 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

Our inheritance is absolutely guaranteed, and it cannot be revoked. However, the quality of the inheritance is up to the one who is receiving it to act in accordance with whatever instructions are given.

Israel has attained the promise, but how it handles the conditional portion is up to them. Look to how God has dealt with national Israel and you will more fully understand how God will deal with you as an individual. Keep thinking on these lines as we go through these pages.

The meticulous nature of defining each inheritance assures us that God is being equally meticulous in His dealings with us. The excitement of the first conquests of Joshua remains true for what we are now going through if we can just remember this.

The passage today may seem overloaded with names and information. There is certainly a ton of typology in what is presented, and delving into speculation on the minutiae would lead us away from the main theme. God is revealing His plan to us in a manner that reveals Christ. Keep that in mind.

This great truth continues to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Land of Reuben (verses 15-23)

In Joshua 13:8-14 that were looked at last week, an overall description of the land east of the Jordan was detailed. With that complete, the parceling out of that land to the two and one-half tribes will now take place.

Each step is methodically detailed to ensure that an accurate accounting of each inheritance is recorded. The land has already been briefly described in Number 32 –

“So Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country. ³⁴ And the children of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer, ³⁵ Atroth and Shophan and Jazer and Jogbehah, ³⁶ Beth Nimrah and Beth Haran, fortified cities, and folds for sheep. ³⁷ And the children of Reuben built Heshbon and Elealeh and Kirjathaim, ³⁸ Nebo and Baal Meon (*their* names being changed) and Shibmah; and they gave *other* names to the cities which they

built. ³⁹ And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who *were* in it. ⁴⁰ So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. ⁴¹ Also Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its small towns, and called them Havoth Jair. ⁴² Then Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.”

-Numbers 32:33-42

As for the divisions being documented in Joshua, the tribes would be able to refer back to these writings if there was ever a dispute concerning the land. This parceling out of the land begins with...

¹⁵ And Moses had given to the tribe of the children of Reuben *an inheritance* according to their families.

Reuben is the firstborn son of Israel, and his inheritance is detailed first. His name means See a Son. The words, “according to their families” mean that the overall parcel is given based on their tribal inheritance and from there it will be more precisely divided by those within Reuben in a fair and equitable manner.

It is Moses who granted this land with the stipulation that they would go with Israel into battle in order to subdue the land of Canaan. Once that was accomplished, the grant would be considered permanent. As for the overall area of Reuben...

¹⁶ Their territory was from Aroer, which *is* on the bank of the River Arnon, and the city that *is* in the midst of the ravine, and all the plain by Medeba;

The Hebrew reads “border” instead of “territory.” The land is being defined by the southern border and moving north according to their cities. Further, the land is the southernmost portion of all the land east of the Jordan. It borders the land of Moab. This border was almost identically described in verse 13:9. The cities of this land include...

¹⁷ Heshbon and all its cities that *are* in the plain: Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon,

Just for reference, the names of these locations mean: Hesbon – Intelligence; Dibon – Pining; Bamoth Baal – High Places of Baal or Great High Place of Baal; Beth Baal Meon – House of the Master of the Hideout. As an interesting point of history, the famous Mesha Stele, or Moabite Stone, was found in Dibon.

¹⁸ Jahaza, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

In sloppy fashion, the translation here and in the coming verses leaves out the conjunctions: *v'yahtsah, u-qedemoth, u-mephaath* – “And Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath.” Jahaza is a variant spelling of Jahaz. It is where the battle between Israel and Sihon took place as is recorded in Numbers 21:23. It means Trodden Down.

Kedemoth means Ancient Times, Antiquity, or Beginnings. Mephaath is first seen here. It means something like Place of Radiance. Joshua 21 shows that all three of these will become Levitical cities.

¹⁹ Kirjathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the mountain of the valley,

Again, each location is preceded by a conjunction which is left off by the translators. Kirjathaim means Twin Cities or Double Cities. Sibmah may mean Spice. The third city is *tsereth ha'shakhar b'har ha'emeq*, or “Zereth the Shahar in mountain the valley.” It is found only here in the Bible.

The meaning is hard to pin down. It may mean Splendor of the Dawn, but the word specialists at Abarim seem to stretch the meaning, saying it might point to an eclipse. They call it Distress at a Solar Eclipse or Darkness at Midday. They then say that “These events are obviously mimicked in the Biblical accounts of the crucifixion and resurrection.”

That would be incorrect. There was no eclipse at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. The moon is full at the Passover, so it is seen at night and is hidden during the day. Therefore, the moon cannot eclipse the sun at that time of month.

The most probable meaning is Splendor of the Dawn. As Zereth Shahar is believed by some to border the Dead Sea, the beautiful coloring of the landscape would be resplendent, and especially so at the dawn.

²⁰ Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth—

Again, and to be precise, each location is preceded by the word “and.” Beth Peor means “House of Peor.” Peor comes from the verb *paar*, meaning “to open.” Thus, it is the House of the Opening. The next location is *ashdoth ha'pishgah*, or Ashdoth of the Pisgah, meaning Slopes of the Cleft. Beth Jeshimoth means House of the Desolations.

21 all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon,

This means all of the other cities that were in the realm of Sihon and which extended out over the open and flat plain, the *mishor*, that was mentioned in Joshua 13:9. This land is very suitable for grazing. All of this was the land of Sihon...

21 (con't) whom Moses had struck

The battle was detailed in Numbers 21, and it has been referred to numerous times since. It next says...

21 (con't) with the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba,

oto v'eth n'siye midyan eth evi, v'eth reqem, v'eth tsur, v'eth khur, v'eth reva – “with and with princes Midian, with Evi, and with Rekem, and with Zur, and with Hur, and with Reba.” This does not mean that they were killed in the same battle with Sihon, but in the same manner.

Rather, they had conspired against Israel by seducing them and so the Lord instructed Moses to take vengeance on them as is seen in Numbers 31. Here, they are called *nasiy'* or “princes.” Literally, “exalted ones.” The word comes from *nasa*, to lift up. Hence, they were raised up to serve under Sihon.

Their names as best as can be determined mean – *Evi* – Desirous; *Reqem* – Many Colored; *Tsur* – Rock; *Khur* – White; *Reva* – Fourth. Of them, it next says...

21 (con't) who were princes of Sihon dwelling in the country.

n'siyke sikhon yosheve ha'arets – “consecrated Sihon dwellers the land.” Sihon had taken the land he possessed from Moab. Because they were dwelling in the Moabites territory when it was taken over, Midianite men were appointed as vassals under him over a portion of the territory.

Here, instead of prince, the word *n'siyke* is used. This speaks of a libation that is poured out or a molten image. Hence, it signifies something like pouring out authority or consecrating to serve in a particular position. Along with killing these vassals, it says...

22 The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor,

The slaying of Balaam and the five men just mentioned is recorded in Numbers 31:8. So infamous is Balaam, that he will be named two more times in Joshua and also in Nehemiah and Micah. In the New Testament Peter, Jude, and Revelation also discuss his deeds. He was...

²² (con't) **the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them.**

The word used to describe Balaam is the verb *qasam*. It signifies to practice divination or act as a soothsayer. It is also used of the witch of En Dor where she acts as a conjuror.

The biblical narrative does not tell how he ended up among these vassals. At the end of the account in Numbers 24:25, it said that he “departed and returned to his place.” The meaning could be that he “turned to his place,” but never got there, instead stopping at the dwelling of these Midianites and dying there.

Or he could have returned to his home after giving advice to Midian about how to handle Israel. When they took his advice, he may have returned there to receive his wages and been killed. No matter what, he was found among these men and was slain by the sword.

²³ **And the border of the children of Reuben was the bank of the Jordan.**

The Hebrew is difficult, but it reads similarly to Numbers 34:6 and Joshua 15:12: *vay'hi gebul bene Reuven ha'yarden u-gebul* – “And was border sons Reuben the Jordan and his border.” The most likely meaning is that Reuben’s border is formed by the natural border of the Jordan.

The bank of the Jordan, or the Descender, is said to be the western border of the land given to Reuben. But this is only in the very northern extremity. Almost all of their western border lay on the eastern edge of the Dead Sea. Because of this, it can be seen that the Dead Sea is actually thought of as a final portion of the Jordan River.

²³ (con't) **This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.**

Reuben desired this land outside of Canaan and it was granted to him. Rather than agriculture, the land is mostly suitable for pasturing flocks. Of their history in the Bible, Cambridge notes, “In the chief struggle of the nation Reuben never took part. No judge,

no prophet, no hero of the tribe is handed down to us.” Thus, the history of their tribe is almost one of obscurity.

*There is an inheritance that is coming to us
And it has already been granted, the deal is done
We have received the promise because of Jesus
It is based on His work alone; that of God’s own Son*

*There is no need to worry if we will enter glory
It is guaranteed because we believed what was told to us
We heard the word of faith, the gospel story
And we believed on the glorious name of Jesus*

*The inheritance is given to all who are sanctified
It has been granted because of what God has done
It has come through the blood of Jesus, He who died
And who rose again! In Him the victory is won*

II. The Land of Gad (verses 24-28)

²⁴ Moses also had given *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad according to their families.

Gad is the seventh son of Israel, and his inheritance is the second to be detailed. His name means Fortune. Like Reuben, his parcel of land came from the direction of Moses. As for the overall area of Gad...

²⁵ Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead,

Jazer, or *yatser*, means Helpful or He Shall Help. The words “all the cities of Gilead” do not mean that they possessed all of that land. Rather, half of the Gilead is given to Manasseh as will be indicated in verse 13:31. And yet, no cities are mentioned in that half. Hence, “all the cities of Gilead” means that there were no inhabitable cities in the other half of the Gilead that went to Manasseh. Along with that...

^{25 (con’t)} and half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, which is before Rabbah,

The Hebrew reads “and half land sons Ammon.” What this means is that it was originally Ammonite land that was taken by Sihon. When Israel defeated Sihon, it then became the property of Israel. The importance of this is that Israel was told by the Lord –

“And *when* you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you *any* of the land of the people of Ammon *as* a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot *as* a possession.”

-Deuteronomy 2:19

This land will later be contested by Ammon in Judges 11. However, Israel’s right to it was firm because Ammon lost possession of it to Sihon and Sihon lost possession of it to Israel. The name Rabbah means Great or Populus. The description continues with...

²⁶ and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir,

Heshbon signifies an explanation of things or Intelligence. *ramath ha’mitspeh* or Ramath the Mizpah means something like Height *of* the Watchtower. This is the area where Jacob and Laban set up their heap of stones as a witness between them as was seen in Genesis 31.

Betonim is found only here in the Bible and it probably means Pistachios. Although it could come from *beten*, a womb, and thus mean Hollows. This would still fit with Pistachios which form two hollows when split open and the nut is removed. Mahanaim means Two Camps.

As for the last name, the Hebrew reads Lidbir. Most translations equate it to Debir which means Place of the Word. However, it may be the same as Lo Debar which is first seen in 2 Samuel 9:4. If this is so, then it literally means “No Word.” As such, the intended meaning could go from No Pasture to Nothing. It is used in a pun in Amos 6:13 –

“You who rejoice over Lo Debar,
Who say, ‘Have we not taken Karnaim for ourselves
By our own strength?’” Amos 6:13

In this, it means “You who rejoice over nothing.” The idea then is that of stupidity.
Next...

²⁷ and in the valley Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon,

Beth Haram is found only here in Scripture, but it is certainly the same place known as Beth Haran found in Numbers 32:36. It means Mountain House or House of the Lofty. Beth Nimrah means House of the Leopard or House of Clean Water.

Succoth means Tabernacles. The location received its name in Genesis 33:17 when Jacob built himself a house and made tabernacles for his livestock. Hence, it was thereafter called Succoth.

Zaphon means North, but also Concealed because the north is the hidden direction in the northern hemisphere.

²⁷ (con't) with the Jordan as *its* border, as far as the edge of the Sea of Chinnereth, on the other side of the Jordan eastward.

ha'yarden u-gebul ad qetseh yam kinereth ever ha'yarden mizrakhah: "the Jordan and border to extremity sea Chinnereth, side the Jordan eastward." This defines the westernmost area of the land grant which is the eastern side of the Jordan River and reaching to the very southern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

²⁸ This is the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

Gad desired to join with Reuben in the land outside of Canaan and it was granted to them. Taken together, the land of Reuben and Gad cover all of the kingdom that belonged to Sihon.

*The Spirit is the guarantee of the inheritance
Given by God because of faith in His Son
Will He take it back? Of this, there is no chance
We have gone from death to life – the victory is won*

*And so, let us live out our lives as we should
Anticipating the inheritance given to us
Living in holiness is right, that is understood
Living according to the glory of our Lord Jesus*

*Thank You, O God, for the promise that lies ahead
Help us to live in faith, and faithfully too
May we conform to all that Your word has said
And may our lives and our hearts be loyal, pure, and true*

III. The Land of the Half Tribe of Manasseh (verses 29-32)

²⁹ Moses also had given *an inheritance* to half the tribe of Manasseh; it was for half the tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families:

The wording is precise in this verse, but it is something that cannot be discerned from the English translation. The first occurrence of the word “tribe” is the word *shevet*. The second is the word *mateh*.

Both words are commonly translated as “tribes,” and they both signify a type of staff or rod. Further, both come from roots signifying to branch off.

Though very similar in intent, *shevet* looks to a political stem and branch, whereas *mateh* looks more to a genealogical one. For example, the first word, *shevet*, was seen eighteen times in Deuteronomy while *mateh* never was.

Likewise, *shevet* is used 33 times in Joshua while *mateh* is used 17 times, but only from Joshua 13-22.

So to understand what is being said, we can translate this verse as: “And gave Moses to half polity, Manasseh. And it was to half descended sons Manasseh according to their families.”

Manasseh is an adopted son of Israel, being the firstborn son of Joseph. Both sons of Joseph were to be given an inheritance along with the other sons of Israel. The land now to be detailed is the final parcel of land to be portioned out east of the Jordan.

The name Manasseh has a dual meaning of He Shall Forget and From a Debt. Like Reuben and Gad, this parcel of land came from the direction of Moses seen in Numbers 32 –

“And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who *were* in it. ⁴⁰ So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. ⁴¹ Also Jair the son of Manasseh went and

took its small towns, and called them Havoth Jair. ⁴²Then Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.”

-Numbers 32:39-42

As for the overall area of this half of Manasseh...

³⁰Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair which are in Bashan, sixty cities;

Because Machir dispossessed the Amorites in this area, Moses bestowed this land to half the tribe as an inheritance. This parcel nicely lines up with the parcel belonging to the other half of Manasseh west of the Jordan so that the two comprise one enormous swath of land that covers both sides.

When looking at them on a map, it almost looks like two arms stretching out, one to the east and one to the west. The territory of this half tribe goes from Mahanaim on its south, which is on Gad’s northern border, and it covers all of the area of the Bashan as well as all the towns of Jair, or *khavoth yair*, meaning Villages of the Enlightener.

As a side note, Jair will be listed in the genealogy of the tribe of Judah in 1 Chronicles –

“Now afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he *was* sixty years old; and she bore him Segub. ²²Segub begot Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.”

-1 Chronicles 2:21-22

Despite this, he is reckoned as being a son of Manasseh in Numbers 32:41 and again in the next verse. In 1 Chronicles 2:21, 22 it said that he is a descendant of Manasseh through Machir’s daughter, her son Segub, and then through Jair. Thus, Manasseh is reckoned as his great, great-grandfather.

The surprising part of his genealogy is his being reckoned as a son of Manasseh, rather than a son of Judah, and this despite Machir’s daughter having married Hezron, a grandson of Judah. This is because the reckoning of a person in Scripture is through the father.

However, this could be because Hezron was old when he married her and already had other children. He may not have wanted this son to interfere with the inheritance rights of his other children, so their son was reckoned through Manasseh.

As far as the number of villages making up Jair, it changes from time to time in Scripture. Depending on the account, it may be twenty-three villages, thirty, or even sixty. The reason for the difference is based upon the context of what is being said.

For example, Moses spoke of the sixty towns of Jair in Deuteronomy 3. When he did, it was referring to everything in a wider sense that was taken by both Jair and a man named Nobah. That included its daughter villages. In Numbers, it was referred to in its stricter sense, meaning only the cities captured by Jair.

An example for understanding would be to say that Charlie Brown owns 15 McDonald's franchises in Sarasota. Those are Charlie's McDonald's. However, there are 25 total McDonald's in Sarasota. One might say, I'm going to Charlie's for lunch, while actually going to one that isn't Charlie's. The term is simply used for the whole. Later in Judges 10, it will say –

“After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years. ⁴ Now he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns, which are called “Havoth Jair” to this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead. ⁵ And Jair died and was buried in Camon.” Judges 10:3-5

There is no contradiction. The sons of Jair were given thirty of the sixty towns in this area to rule, and they were called by the name of their father within the wider sense of the term mentioned above. Though a bit confusing, with a bit of research, it all makes complete sense.

As far as this land, it was the first recorded granting of land to any people of Israel, as noted in Numbers 32:42. That is rather interesting, especially when considering that it is also the first land the inhabitants were to be permanently dispossessed from. In 1 Chronicles 5, this is recorded –

“So the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land. Their *numbers* increased from Bashan to Baal Hermon, that is, to Senir, or Mount Hermon. ²⁴ These *were* the heads of their fathers' houses: Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. They were mighty men of valor, famous men, *and* heads of their fathers' houses.

²⁵ And they were unfaithful to the God of their fathers, and played the harlot after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. ²⁶ So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, that is, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. He carried the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of

Manasseh into captivity. He took them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river of Gozan to this day.” 1 Chronicles 5:23-26

The first of these tribes who are granted land were also the first to be dispossessed from it later in Israel’s history. The majority of the people of these tribes disappeared into obscurity. As far as their cities...

³¹ **half of Gilead,**

This is the half of the Gilead to the north of what Gad received. No cities are listed in this area...

^{31 (con’t)} **and Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan,**

Ashtaroth is believed to signify Union of Instructions, and thus One Law. Edrei means something like Mighty. These...

^{31 (con’t)} **were for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir according to their families.**

This means that those who descend from Machir received land on both sides of the Jordan. As this is so, it is speculated that Machir was the only son of Manasseh. Machir means, Salesman. 1 Chronicles 7:14 says that Manasseh bore him by a concubine from Aram. The same place from which Machir’s son was named – because of the union between his father and mother, Manasseh and Manasseh’s Aramitiss concubine – became their possession. This may explain why he then named his own son Gilead.

Gilead means, Perpetual Fountain, or Heap of Booty. It is the border area between Syria and Canaan, and Machir may have called him Gilead to honor the union between the two people groups he came from. This also explains why it said in Numbers 32 that he went to Gilead and took it and dwelt there.

³² **These are the areas which Moses had distributed as an inheritance**

Rather than which, it is probably better translated as whom. In other words, rather than referring to the land, it is referring to the people: *elleh asher nikhal mosheh* – “These whom caused to inherit, Moses.” This then would correspond to the verses which opened each section of the passage –

And gave Moses to tribe (*mateh*) sons Reuben (13:15).

And gave Moses to tribe (*mateh*) Gad (13:24).

And gave Moses to half tribe (*shevet*) Manasseh, and it was to half tribe (*mateh*) sons Manasseh (13:29).

These whom caused to inherit, Moses (13:32).

This inheritance was granted by Moses...

³² (con't) **in the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward.**

b'arvoth moav me'ever l'yarden y'rikho mizrakhah – “in plains Moab from side to Jordan, Jericho, eastward.” These words refer to that action of Moses which explains the location of the inheritance as stated in Numbers 34. Putting the two side by side will show this –

The location of the inheritance:

“For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received *their inheritance*; and the half-tribe of Manasseh has received its inheritance. ¹⁵ The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, across from Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.”

-Numbers 34:14, 15

The action of Moses:

“These whom caused to inherit, Moses, in plains Moab from side to Jordan, Jericho, eastward.” (32)

The action was accomplished in the same place where the grant was made. Using the words of this verse and translating them in typology, it would say, “These whom caused to inherit, He Who Draws Out, in pledge From Father from side to Descender, Place of Fragrance, eastward.”

This would signify that in Christ’s fulfillment of the law, the pledge from the Father is given in Christ’s first Advent and in anticipation of the heavenly promise. Next...

³³ **But to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance;**

Here it turns to the political entity: *u'l'shevet ha'levi lo nathan mosheh nakhalah* – “And to tribe [polity] the Levite, no gave inheritance.” The Levites, meaning the polity of Levites, were set apart for the service of the Lord. Hence, no inheritance is given to them out of the land grants. But this does not mean they did not possess an inheritance. Rather...

³³ (con't) **the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as He had said to them.**

Yehovah elohe Yisrael hu nakhalatam ka'asher dibber lahem – “Yehovah, God Israel, HE, their inheritance according to which spoke to them.” The Levites, who include the priestly class, received from the land of the people the Lord’s portion, the tithe. Hence, He is their inheritance.

As we have previously seen, they picture Christ in the service of the law, administering it, mediating it, fulfilling it and finally bringing it to its end.

This finishes the land grant including the cities given to Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, all of which is east of the Jordan. The book is being very precise in what it is presenting. And think of it! This is only for an earthly inheritance of land that will be filled with a group of people that may or may not care at all about the Lord.

But He promised that they would receive it and so the account is meticulously detailing every bit of what is being given. If God is going into such detail over something like this and for a group of people that He has already labeled as stiff-necked, imagine how carefully he is recording the details of our inheritance.

Are we stiff-necked? He is recording that. Are we expending ourselves in His service? That is being recorded. Above all, are we living as people of faith in His presence? This is the key to everything else we do, and it is the main point upon which every reward or loss will be based.

It is faith that brought us to Jesus. It is faith that secured our salvation. And it is faith by which our deeds will be reckoned. So, in all you do, have faith. Be thankful. That is demonstrating faith. Pray and ask God for His guidance. That is demonstrating faith. Spend your time talking to the Lord. That too is demonstration of faith.

The closer you align your thoughts to the thought that God is always with you, the greater your faith will be. The inheritance awaits. Let us live in faith until the day we are brought into it and receive it in all its fulness. And may that day be soon.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:9, 10*

Next Week: Joshua 14:1-5 *To a different inheritance, they have the rights...* (No Part to the Levites) (29th Joshua sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

An Inheritance by Jericho, Eastward

And Moses had given to the tribe of the children of Reuben
An inheritance according to their families as we have seen
Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the bank of
-----the River Arnon
And the city that is in the midst of the ravine

And all the plain by Medeba
Heshbon and all its cities that are in the plain as well:
Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon
Jahaza, Kedemoth, Mephaath – as the record does tell

Kirjathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar
On the mountain of the valley
Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth
And that’s not the final tally

All the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon
-----king of the Amorites
Who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses had struck in one spree
With the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba
Who were princes of Sihon dwelling in the country

The children of Israel
Also killed with the sword, without haw or hem
Balaam the son of Beor the soothsayer

Among those who were killed by them

And the border of the children of Reuben
Was the bank of the Jordan, yes it's true
This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben
According to their families, the cities and their villages too

Moses also had given an inheritance to the tribe of Gad
To the children of Gad according to their families was the score
Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead
And half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer

Which is before Rabbah
And from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim
And from Mahanaim to the border of Debir
And in the valley Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon
-----a lot of land it would seem

The rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon
With the Jordan as its border
As far as the edge of the Sea of Chinnereth
On the other side of the Jordan eastward, so was the order

This is the inheritance of the children of Gad, so the record
-----does tell
According to their families, the cities and their villages as well

Moses also had given an inheritance to half the tribe of Manasseh
It was for half the tribe of the children of Manasseh
-----according to their families, it is so
Their territory was from Mahanaim
All Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, so the record
-----does show

And all the towns of Jair which are in Bashan, sixty cities
Half of Gilead, Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities of the kingdom
-----of Og in Bashan, as we know
Were for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh
For half of the children of Machir according to

-----their families, it is so

These are the areas which Moses
Had distributed as an inheritance on that day
In the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan
By Jericho eastward, so the records say

But to the tribe of Levi
Moses had given no inheritance, it was so
The LORD God of Israel was their inheritance
As He had said to them, and as they came to know

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 14:1-5 (NO PART TO THE LEVITES)

In 1972, the Miami Dolphins, under coach Don Shula, had what became known as “the Perfect Season.” They went 14-0. Many of the players became household names. I remember watching them and being excited about the team despite not really caring much about sports. One can kind of get caught up in something like that.

But despite having a perfect season, each player was imperfect, and each game had its own flaws. There were fumbles, there were interceptions, and so on. And so, there is the dichotomy between the imperfect team and their perfect season. The two are seemingly at odds with one another, and yet they really aren’t. Out of imperfection, perfection arose.

The Bible shows us what is perfect and what is flawed. At times, it shows us this explicitly, and at times it does so in veiled ways. It also shows us how something that is seemingly imperfect can be made perfect. We’ll see something along those lines in our verses today.

Text Verse: *“How then can man be righteous before God?*

Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?

⁵ If even the moon does not shine,

And the stars are not pure in His sight,

⁶ How much less man, who is a maggot,

And a son of man, who is a worm?” Job 25:4-6

Despite often not speaking rightly about the Lord, the questions of Bildad the Shuhite are still valid. How can man, who is by nature unrighteous, be considered righteous before God? In understanding the work of Christ, we can know that with God, it is possible.

How can a person who is born of a woman be pure? Being a human implies bearing sin, simply because sin is transmitted from father to child. So, how can one who is born of a woman be pure? With God in Christ, that too is possible.

As for stars not being pure in the sight of God, that depends on the nature and meaning of the word “star.” One thing that is tainted and impure can be emblematic of another thing that is not. We have seen that in typology innumerable times in our study of the Old Testament.

For example, Joshua may have been a fallen, sinful man, but he could still anticipate and picture the perfect, unblemished Lord Jesus. Likewise, despite the imperfection of the individual members of the team, the Miami Dolphins were still able to have the perfect season.

This sermon is entitled *No Part to the Levites*, but that is only in relation to a tribal land grant, one that reveals imperfection. And yet, in the imperfection of the land inheritance of the tribes of Israel, there is still a note of a double measure of spiritual perfection. How? Well, stick around and we will evaluate the matter.

Nifty things such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. And They Divided the Land (verses 1-5)

¹ These *are the areas* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan,

After designating the inheritance east of the Jordan to the three-and-one-half tribes, the narrative now turns to the inheritance in the land of Canaan proper. This is the land...

^{1 (con't)} which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them.

It is of note that Eleazar (Whom God Helps) is placed prior to Joshua. The reason for this goes back to Joshua's inauguration –

“And the LORD said to Moses: ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; ¹⁹ set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. ²⁰ And you shall give *some* of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. ²¹ He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the LORD for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation.’” Numbers 27:18-21

Eleazar is the one to determine the will of the Lord. He then conveys that will to Joshua. One must know the will of the Lord prior to abiding by that will. In the case of the division of the land, it will come from the Lord through the hand of Eleazar.

From there Joshua will oversee the process and direct it through the fathers of the tribes. The word translated as tribe, *mateh*, signifies the genealogical aspect of the tribe rather than the political aspect.

As for the fathers of the tribes, it is rather surprising that they have already been named and designated for this purpose in Numbers 34:16-28. Although that passage was not too long before entrance into Canaan, the narrative now follows after seven years of war within the land.

And yet, it can be assumed that they have all survived in order to receive their inheritance and portion it out to their tribes. Were it not so, a replacement would have been named.

²Their inheritance was by lot,

b'goral nakhalatam – “In lot their inheritance.” This is now the first of twenty-six times that the *goral*, or lot, will be mentioned in Joshua. The word comes from an unused root meaning to be rough, such as a stone. Hence, it is a pebble used for the purpose of determining lots. At times, it is used to indicate a portion or destiny, such as “this is my lot in life.”

^{2 (con't)} as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe.

This is what was specifically detailed in Numbers 34:16-29 and which was summed up with the words, “These *are* the ones the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance among the children of Israel in the land of Canaan” (Numbers 34:29).

Hence, the narrative now is given to show strict obedience to the words set forth by the Lord through Moses. Notably in those verses, however, there is no mention of Reuben, Gad, or the other half-tribe of Manasseh. The reason for that is...

³For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan;

This was specifically stated in Numbers 34:14, 15. Their land had been subdued and the inheritance was given, provided they helped the other tribes to subdue their inheritances west of the Jordan.

What is notable concerning these stated allotments is that though there are twelve tribes recorded as receiving an inheritance, there are actually thirteen land allotments:

Two and one-half east of the Jordan = 3

Nine and one-half west of the Jordan = 10

The number thirteen in Scripture signifies “rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea” (Bullinger). This is pretty much the constant theme of Israel throughout their years. The number of their inheritances forms a picture of their attitude and their conduct before the Lord.

Despite this, there is one more tribe to consider...

^{3 (con't)} **but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them.**

This defines the fourteenth division which is spread among the thirteen divisions. This is the third time in just two chapters that this has been stated. Levi is given no land inheritance. However –

“Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as He said to them” (13:14).

“But to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as He had said to them” (13:33).

“...but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them” (14:3).

And so, despite there being no land inheritance for Levi, there actually is an inheritance for them. As such, the number of inheritances now extends to fourteen, the number Bullinger defines as “a double measure of spiritual perfection” and “the number associated with the incarnation.”

One can see that despite Israel’s rebellion and apostasy in the earthly realm, because of Levi, the Lord has placed His stamp upon them in the spiritual realm. The wisdom of God is carefully revealed in everything that is seen in these tribal allotments.

Next, the note of how one tribe became two is stated again...

⁴ For the children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim.

If this were not detailed in Scripture, there would be an imperfection of division, both as tribes and in land grants. However, Jacob adopted the two sons of Joseph, thus giving him a double portion of land. But this then brings in another multiple of fourteen. Though there are twelve natural sons of Jacob, there are fourteen reckoned to Israel –

Twelve: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin.

Fourteen: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph (and Manasseh and Ephraim), and Benjamin.

This then corresponds to twelve/fourteen apostles –

Twelve: Simon/Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus (Thaddaeus), Simon the Canaanite, Judas Iscariot.

Fourteen: Simon/Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus/Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, Judas Iscariot (replaced by Matthias), Saul/Paul.

As for the imperfection of the land inheritance for Israel, that is seen in the next words...

^{4 (con't)} And they gave no part to the Levites in the land,

This is based upon what has already been repeatedly said and which was noted again in verse 3. No tribal land inheritance is given to the tribe of Levi because they will be spread out among the tribes as those who minister the law among the people.

This was first prophesied by Jacob in Genesis 49 –

“Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of cruelty *are in* their dwelling place.
⁶Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united to their assembly;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.

⁷ Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.” Genesis 49:5-7

Because of what they did in Genesis 34 by killing the males in Shechem, Jacob prophesied over these two sons that they would be divided and scattered.

Though seemingly a negative, the reason for their scattering within Israel occurs for Levi because of their bravery before the Lord at the time when Israel made the golden calf to worship –

“Now when Moses saw that the people *were* unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to *their* shame among their enemies), ²⁶ then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, ‘Whoever *is* on the LORD’s side—*come* to me!’ And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. ²⁷ And he said to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.”’ ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. ²⁹ Then Moses said, ‘Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.’” Exodus 32:25-29

Levi took up arms against his own brothers. This was reckoned to them as the reason for a particular blessing from the Lord which is that He would be their inheritance. To understand that, one must then understand how this came about.

At the Exodus, the Lord killed the firstborn of Egypt, including both man and beast. As He spared them in Israel, the law of the firstborn was enacted –

“And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, ¹² that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD’s. ¹³ But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem *it*, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem. ¹⁴ So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What *is* this?’ that you shall say to him, ‘By strength of hand the LORD brought us

out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ¹⁵ And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’ ¹⁶ It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.” Exodus 13:11-16

The firstborn of all belonged to the Lord and was to be sacrificed to Him. To avoid the obvious difficulties of such a situation, the firstborn males were to be redeemed.

Next, in Numbers, the selection of the Levites in place of the firstborn of Israel was made. Hence, they would belong solely to the Lord and not be reckoned for a tribal land inheritance –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁶ ‘Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them *ceremonially*. ⁷ Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purification on them, and let them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. ⁸ Then let them take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull as a sin offering. ⁹ And you shall bring the Levites before the tabernacle of meeting, and you shall gather together the whole congregation of the children of Israel. ¹⁰ So you shall bring the Levites before the LORD, and the children of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites; ¹¹ and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD *like* a wave offering from the children of Israel, that they may perform the work of the LORD. ¹² Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, and you shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites.

¹³ ‘And you shall stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, and then offer them *like* a wave offering to the LORD. ¹⁴ Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine. ¹⁵ After that the Levites shall go in to service the tabernacle of meeting. So you shall cleanse them and offer them *like* a wave offering. ¹⁶ For they are wholly given to Me from among the children of Israel; I have taken them for Myself instead of all who open the womb, the firstborn of all the children of Israel. ¹⁷ For all the firstborn among the children of Israel are Mine, both man and beast; on the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them to Myself. ¹⁸ I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn of the children of Israel. ¹⁹ And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the

work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary.” Numbers 8:5-19

At that time, it still has not been recorded that Levi would receive no land inheritance. That is first seen in Numbers 18 –

“Then the LORD said to Aaron: ‘You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I *am* your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

²¹ “Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting. ²² Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. ²³ But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; *it shall be* a statute forever, throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴ For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up *as* a heave offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, ‘Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.’” Numbers 18:20-24

As is seen there, it is Aaron – meaning the priestly class – who was told that he would receive no land inheritance and Levi would be attached to them in the service of the Lord. The Levites were to stand between the people and the priests in the service of the tabernacle while the priests ministered between the people and the Lord.

Because of this service, those tithes that were presented to the Lord as a heave offering, meaning the third-year tithes, were to belong to the Levites. These tithes were considered the Lord’s portion. As such, it is said that the Lord is Levi’s inheritance.

From this tithe of the land, the Levites were then to offer up a tenth of that for the priests –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶ ‘Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: ‘When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the LORD, a tenth of the tithe. ²⁷ And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though *it were* the grain of the threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. ²⁸ Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the LORD from all your

tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the LORD's heave offering from it to Aaron the priest. ²⁹ Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the LORD, from all the best of them, the consecrated part of them.' ³⁰ Therefore you shall say to them: 'When you have lifted up the best of it, then *the rest* shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress. ³¹ You may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it *is* your reward for your work in the tabernacle of meeting. ³² And you shall bear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die.'" Leviticus 18:25-32

What is presented to the Levites is a tithe to the Lord. What is then presented to the priests, the tithe of the tithe, is reckoned as if it was the actual produce of the Levites, even though they had no land inheritance. Therefore, even though they had no land grant, those tithes from the third-year tithes are given as if they had their own land.

With this understood, the reason for their receiving no land inheritance is more perfectly seen. Their siding with the Lord at the incident of the golden calf became the defining moment which fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob, and which allowed them to receive the Lord as their inheritance.

Moses spoke of this as he blessed the tribes before his death. In his blessing upon Levi, a portion of his words said –

“Who says of his father and mother,
'I have not seen them';
Nor did he acknowledge his brothers,
Or know his own children;
For they have observed Your word
And kept Your covenant.” Deuteronomy 33:9

To more perfectly understand Moses' words, those lines from Deuteronomy concerning Levi should be reexamined...

***Who says of his father and mother,**

Levi is referred to by a verb prefixed by an article: *ha'omer l'aviv u-l'imo* – “The sayer to his father and to his mother.” Here, it is referring to Levi as if he is an individual, a collective in the singular. He says...

***‘I have not seen them’;**

It is singular: *lo’reitiv* – “Not I have seen him.” The mother is the wife of the father and so the singular stands for both. The father and the mother are there, but it is as if they are not seen, and they are not regarded. The same attitude is again seen in the next words...

***Nor did he acknowledge his brothers,**

v’eth ekhav lo hikir – “And his brothers no regard.” Moses says that even though Levi had brothers, his mind was not on them when called to do what he must do. Moses is making a point about Levi’s priorities. Moses next says...

***Or know his own children;**

v’eth banav lo yada – “And sons no know.” Any children of Levi are as if they are not even his when he is called to act. Levi doesn’t see the parents before him, doesn’t regard the brothers around him, and he doesn’t know his own sons.

Despite them being the closest of family relationships, Moses speaks of Levi’s priorities. What is it that Levi has put first? To tell us, Moses slips into the plural...

***For they have observed Your word**

ki shameru imratekha– “For they have heeded Your word.” The plural now speaks of the people of the tribe. They are Levi, but they are also Levites. The actions of the people are being highlighted.

The word of the Lord takes precedence over even the closest of family relationships. If parents, siblings, or even children come between a person and the Lord, they are to be overlooked, disregarded, and treated as a stranger. Nothing can come between the faithful and the word of the Lord. Levi accepted the premise and applied it...

***And kept Your covenant.**

uberitekha yintsoru – “And Your covenant they have guarded.” The covenant of the Lord, which is based upon the word of the Lord, must take priority. To not heed it is to find death. To heed it is to find life. All family relations will end, but the covenant and

the word remain. Levi was presented with a choice at the time of the golden calf, and they chose the side of the Lord.

Levi put the word of the Lord, and His covenant, first. They went throughout the camp without recognizing faces, and they slew any who came before them. Because of this, they and those attached to them were granted the high honor of the priestly class.

Their zeal for the Lord was a highlight among all of the failings of Israel, and – indeed – all the failings of Levi, including those of Moses and Aaron. What they did was a demonstration of what the Lord finds pleasing above all else, meaning faith in Him and attendance to His word.

It is for this reason that Levi was particularly chosen to not receive any land inheritance. There is a perfection in the numbering of the tribes (14) and an imperfection in the number of earthly land grants (13) that only becomes perfect when the Lord is included in the inheritance, revealed through the spiritual inheritance of Levi.

One might ask, “How can perfection come from imperfection?” Indeed, it was essentially the question implied in the Red Heifer sacrifice, and that is implied here again in the designation of land grants. The answer is, “When the Lord is involved, that which is imperfect can be perfected.”

In this case, it is because of the separation of Levi and yet the inclusion of Levi. They were not counted for a land grant. However, they were given property...

⁴ (con't) **except cities to dwell *in*, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property.**

This is dealt with several times, but the provision for Levitical cities is found in Numbers 35 –

“And the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan *across from* Jericho, saying: ² ‘Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall *also* give the Levites common-land around the cities. ³ They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle, for their herds, and for all their animals. ⁴ The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. ⁵ And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south

side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.” Numbers 35:1-5

And again, in the next verses, the Lord designated some of their cities as cities of refuge, and then designated the total number of cities to be given them –

“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. ⁷ So all the cities you will give to the Levites *shall be* forty-eight; these *you shall give* with their common-land. ⁸ And the cities which you will give *shall be* from the possession of the children of Israel; from the larger *tribe* you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives.” Numbers 35:6-8

All of these cities will be named and appointed in the coming chapters of Joshua. However, the fact that they receive no individual tribal inheritance is most appropriately dealt with now, before the division of the lands to the other tribes.

With that noted and understood, this section is complete with the words...

^{5 (fin)} **As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.**

This is a preemptory statement anticipating the actual division of the land as recorded in the coming chapters. Each step of the process is logical and necessary to first lay the framework for what is anticipated and to then actually comply with the command that was given by the Lord through Moses.

*You shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary
Upon Your priesthood, it shall fall
Those who are unclean but who come to Me
You shall bear it for one and all*

*And You shall attend to the duties of the Sanctuary
And the duties of the altar, that terrible cross
That no wrath may come upon those who belong to Me
You shall bear it, and of them, there shall be no loss*

*Behold, I have taken You from among all the firstborn
Only You are the First-begotten of Me
Your body shall be bruised, and it shall be torn
But through it, You shall make holy those for My Sanctuary*

II. Pictures of Christ

The division of the land is an obvious anticipation of Christ's dividing the inheritance to the saints. The dividing is said to be by Eleazar (Whom God Helps), Joshua (The Lord is Salvation) the son of Nun (Propagate, or Increase), and the fathers of the tribes.

In Numbers 27, it noted that Eleazar would inquire before the Lord for Joshua at the judgment of the Urim, meaning Lights. Although it cannot be known for certain, it seems likely based on that Numbers passage that this is what is used as the lot for determining the land divisions.

In type, Jesus is both the High Priest of the New Covenant and the Leader of the people of God, filling both roles. It indicates that He is the One who obtains the revelation from God and who then exercises the authority over what God has determined.

Once the will of the Lord is known, Jesus in His Mediatorial Role, then Jesus, in His role as the Savior, carries through with the action. And both of these anticipate Christ in His deity who both knows and then performs the counsels of God.

As noted in verse 3, the combination of the tribes east and west of Jordan comes to thirteen land allotments. The number reflects the state of the people, steeped in rebellion, apostasy, and so on. However, in the same verse, the Levites are mentioned, noting that they have no inheritance among Israel.

And yet, that must be taken in light of the other verses that indicate they do have an inheritance, just not a land inheritance. Their inheritance is the Lord. Within Levi are the priests and the Levites. The priests anticipate Christ in His priestly role. The Levites anticipate Christ representing the Firstborn.

The offerings to (and of) the tabernacle have all been seen to anticipate Christ, He is the first and best of all of those things offered. In Christ, God has given them as a gift to the world. Levi, being the fourteenth inheritance, is like the glue that makes everything else bind together.

In Levi, as Bullinger noted, is the double measure of spiritual perfection and the anticipation of the incarnation. As noted in verse 3, despite Israel's rebellion and apostasy in the earthly realm, because of Levi, the Lord has placed His stamp upon Israel in the spiritual realm.

This is only an anticipation of Jesus who actually performs these functions. He is the One who makes the inheritance both possible and complete for Israel, and thus for all people.

In verse 4, it mentioned Joseph being divided into two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. In remembering the meaning of the names, the anticipations of Christ are seen.

Joseph is derived from two words that indicate "He Shall Add" and "Take Away." Joseph then anticipates Christ who takes away man's reproach and then adds him to God's people. He is then divided into Manasseh and Ephraim.

Manasseh means "To Forget" but it also means "From a Debt." He pictures Christ who came to pay Adam's debt and who, in the process, allows that debt to be forgotten before God.

Ephraim means "Twice Fruitful", but it also means "Ashes." He pictures Jesus. He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of both Jew and Gentile, but His work also meant that sin was judged in Him; thus the ashes, signifying His afflictions.

The specific inclusion of the names of Joseph and his sons is given as a reminder of what the Lord has done and how it is revealed in the assignment of the tribal inheritances. Without this reminder, the perfection of the numbering of the tribes for the land inheritance would not be properly aligned as it should be.

But with its inclusion, the typology for our own spiritual inheritances is revealed. And then it immediately gave the reminder that Levi had no part in the land. Because Levi, who anticipates Christ, has the Lord as their inheritance, there is no need for a land grant.

Likewise, the only thing Christ is said to inherit is found in Hebrews 1:4 where "He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." This is a note that through His resurrection, He has proved that He is the Son of God and thus the full inheritance of the Father belongs to Him.

In other words, just as the Lord is Levi's inheritance, so the Lord is Jesus' inheritance. What belonged to the Lord from Israel passed to and through Levi. What belongs to the Lord from redeemed humanity passes to and through Jesus.

In verse 4, it noted that despite not having a land inheritance, Levi was given cities to dwell in. This was detailed in Numbers 35. These cities are interspersed throughout all of Israel on both sides of the Jordan.

As seen, the allocation of these will be detailed later in Joshua, but the sense of this is that if Levi anticipates Christ in so many ways, this must as well. And that is stated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6, which says –

“I will dwell in them
And walk among *them*.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16

The actual residing of Levi among Israel was to keep the people's focus, understanding, and thoughts concentrated on the Lord. They were to minister to the people in the things of the Lord, keeping them properly educated in the law and so forth. Someday the fulfillment of that will be seen when we dwell in heaven and Christ dwells in us and walks among us.

Everything mentioned about Levi throughout the books of Moses and now into Joshua is given to help us understand the work of Christ on our behalf and then to point us to our relationship with God because of Him.

Every detail concerning Levi, as a tribe, their duties, concerning their inheritance, all of it, is given in anticipation of Christ to come. It is an incredible thing to consider, but it is not unexpected. God used this imperfect tribe that is a portion of the imperfect people known as Israel to reveal to us the perfection of Christ Jesus.

What an amazing thing He has done and is doing in His word as we travel through it. From one turn of the page to the next, there is a continuous stream of wonder and delight. Thank God for His precious word and thank God for Jesus Christ who is revealed in that word. Indeed, thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” Romans 3:21, 22*

Next Week: Joshua 14:6-15 *What is recorded in the Bible about Caleb is pretty swell... (He Wholly Followed the Lord God of Israel) (30th Joshua sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

No Part to the Levites

These are the areas which the children of Israel
Inherited in the land of Canaan, land where they could
-----sing and dance
Which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of
-----the fathers of the tribes
Of the children of Israel distributed to them as an inheritance

Their inheritance was by lot
As the LORD had commanded, so he did prescribe
By the hand of Moses
For nine tribes plus Manasseh’s half-tribe

For Moses had given the inheritance
Of the two tribes and the half-tribe for their livin’
On the other side of the Jordan
But to the Levites he had no inheritance among them given

For the children of Joseph were formed tribes:
-----Manasseh and Ephraim
And they gave no part to the Levites in the land
Except cities to dwell in, with their common lands
For their livestock and their property, just as was planned

As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did
And they divided the land laying out the grid

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 14:6-15 **(HE WHOLLY FOLLOWED THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL)**

A big question for you to answer in your head is, “When was Caleb ‘saved?’” When I say “saved,” I mean it in the sense of who he typologically pictures, the Gentiles. You’ve heard the sermon verses and you can easily deduce that the answer is, “When he wholly followed the Lord.”

He believed. The other spies with him did not. The entire context of the passage was faith in the word of the Lord. No commandment was ever given. Instead, he demonstrated faith. That is the conclusion made in Hebrews 3:18 where the author uses the word “obey” synonymously with “belief.”

When did that happen? It was back in Numbers. This is said several times in several ways in the passage. And yet, it is now many years later that he is actually being granted his inheritance, even though it was promised so long before.

Are you getting a hint of yourself in this? Some of you were saved when you were young. Others a little later in life. Some may have been saved just a short while ago. But for each of us, there is the same thing to consider. We have been saved and promised an inheritance, and yet we are waiting for our inheritance to be realized.

Think on this as we continue through the verses. Maybe before we get to the explanation of them, you’ll already be able to see the meaning of much of what is being presented.

Text Verse: *“For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.” Galatians 3:18*

Going back to when Caleb was “saved.” There was a law at the time, but nobody had lived it out. Israel was under the law and headed to Canaan, but Caleb did something other than observe the law in order to be given the promise spoken of in our passage today. And, for sure, it wasn’t law observance. Numbers 13 and 14 make that absolutely clear.

Abraham was promised the inheritance before the law came about. Caleb was promised the inheritance apart from the law, even if he was among Israel who was under the law. Those Jews being bit by serpents were saved apart from any law observance. What is the

common theme among them all? Faith. Caleb's deeds followed his faith. They were not the basis of it.

Even during the time of the law, the precept of salvation by grace through faith was clearly and precisely detailed. And it wasn't demonstrated once or twice, but countless times. Pay heed to these things. Your walk with the Lord is to be one based on faith. So, have faith in all you do, and you will be pleasing to God.

This is a marvelous truth that is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. And Joshua Blessed Him (verses 6-15)

The introductory note in verse 14:1 indicated that what follows would be the division of the land in Canaan proper. This would be for the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The verses remembered that Moses had given two tribes and the half-tribe an inheritance east of the Jordan. From there it specifically noted that no land grant was given to Levi, except cities to dwell in with their common lands.

With those points explicitly detailed, the contents of verse 14:1 concerning the division of the land of Canaan is now to be dealt with. And yet, within that division, there is a matter to be resolved based upon a promise made back in Numbers 14. The fulfillment of that promise is now realized...

⁶Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal.

va'yig'shu bene yehudah el Yehoshua ba'gilgal – “And approached sons Judah, unto Joshua, in the Gilgal.” The matter to be resolved involves the tribe of Judah.

To help you understand what is being conveyed, translating the meaning of the names, it would literally state: “And approached sons Praise, unto the Lord is Salvation, in the Liberty.” With that, the words continue, saying...

^{6 (con't)} And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him:

More precisely, it reads, “And said to him, Caleb, son Jephunneh the Kenizzite.” The reason for these words is twofold. The first is because the promise was made to Caleb.

As such, that promise must be dealt with at some point. The second is that Caleb is the leader of Judah designated to administer the land division for Judah –

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷ ‘These *are* the names of the men who shall divide the land among you as an inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. ¹⁸ And you shall take one leader of every tribe to divide the land for the inheritance. ¹⁹ These *are* the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.’” Numbers 34:16-19

Hence, the sons of Judah approaching Joshua is intended to resolve both matters, but the primary one is the fulfillment of the promise to Caleb. In fact, this process will take all the remaining verses in Chapter 14 and then all of Chapter 15 to complete.

Of the names mentioned here, Caleb means “Dog.” Yephunneh means “He will be beheld.” He is also identified as a Kenizzite, a descendant of Canaan, or a son of Kenaz, which is an Edomite name.

Later in Joshua, his brother Othniel is identified as a son of Kenaz. Thus, he is of foreign birth but brought into the people of Israel and the tribe of Judah. The reference to him being a Kenizzite is to show his Gentile heritage. Of this name, Kenizzite, Abarim provides an interesting analysis worth citing –

“The name Kenizzite means Hunter or Trapper but is a name like Fisherman or Troglodyte or Tanner or Metallurgist or Technician (which was the profession of Jesus and Joseph; τεκτων, tekton). It doesn't describe physical descent but an occupational niche that would ultimately be absorbed into the worldwide market of human trade. Since the Bible is only interested in the evolution of the wisdom tradition (rather than politics or biological descent) the nature of Kenizzite should be understood to relate to wisdom.

Just like Jesus taught his disciples to be ‘fishers of men’, so should the Kenizzite be understood to be a ‘hunter of men,’ and just like the legendary Nimrod was a ‘mighty hunter before YHWH’ so were the Kenizzites known for their contribution to the greater world of human interaction and exchange that would ultimately form the crib within which the Word of God could assume human form.”

6 (con't) **“You know the word which the LORD said**

Rather than “said,” it uses the word “spoke.” There is also an emphasis in his words: *atah yadata eth ha’davar asher dibber Yehovah* – “YOU know the word which spoke Yehovah.” This spoken word was...

⁶ (con’t) **to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea.**

el Mosheh ish ha’elohim al odothai v’al odotekha b’qadesh barnea – “unto Moses, man the God, upon my sake and upon your sake in Kadesh Barnea.” The specific reference comes from Numbers 14. The twelve spies had returned searching out Canaan. Upon their return, ten of them spread a bad report about the land, but Caleb and Joshua repudiated their report –

“But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, *who were* among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; ⁷ and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: ‘The land we passed through to spy out *is* an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’ ⁹ Only do not rebel against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they *are* our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us. Do not fear them.’” Numbers 14:6-9

In response to this, the Lord spoke to Moses concerning them –

“Then the LORD said: ‘I have pardoned, according to your word; ²¹ but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD— ²² because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, ²³ they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it. ²⁴ But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.’” Numbers 14:20-24

With this in mind, Caleb next says...

⁷ I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land,

The Hebrew form of speaking is more poetic: “Son forty years, I, in sending Moses, servant Yehovah, me from Kadesh Barnea to foot the land.” This is an important point in

determining the biblical timeline when it is united with his words of verse 10. Caleb gives his age and the details of what occurred at that time.

In considering what is presented here, remember that Numbers 14 is when Israel failed to enter the promise by faith. It was a typological picture of Israel's failure to receive Jesus as their Messiah. Despite that, Caleb – a Gentile by descent – did. The typology of that is obvious.

Kadesh Barnea means "Holy Purifying Wanderings." It is at this location that Caleb proved himself a man of faith...

⁷ (con't) **and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart.**

va'ashev oto davar ka'asher im l'vavi – "and returned to him word according to which with to my heart." Despite being beautifully said in the Hebrew, the words look to a theological truth that will be explained later, but which you may already have discerned.

Caleb searched out the land, saw that it was good, and returned with a word according to the state of his heart. On the contrary...

⁸ **Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt,**

v'akhai asher alu imi him'siv eth lev ha'am – "And my brothers who went up with me dissolved heart the people." It is a new word, *masah*, signifying to melt, liquify, or dissolve. The idea then is that the collective heart of the people vanished. In complete contrast to that, Caleb says...

⁸ (con't) **but I wholly followed the LORD my God.**

v'anokhi milethi akhare Yehovah elohai – "And I, I filled after Yehovah my God." The meaning is to be taken as if Yehovah was walking on a path and Caleb literally stepped into His footprints, filling them as he went. It is a note of absolute devotion to the Lord's ways in a walk of faith.

While Israel's heart dissolved, Caleb "filled after Yehovah," and his heart was set with a proper and pleasing response when he returned with the other spies. The contrast is remarkable. Because of this...

⁹ **So Moses swore on that day, saying,**

There is no direct mention of Moses swearing in this manner, only the Lord. And more, there is no mention of a specific piece of land being promised to Caleb. But this doesn't mean neither happened.

The Lord's words to Moses were, "But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it" (Numbers 14:24). From there, Moses referred to this in Deuteronomy 1 –

"And the LORD heard the sound of your words, and was angry, and took an oath, saying, ³⁵ 'Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers, ³⁶ except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the LORD.'" Deuteronomy 1:34-36

The Lord promised that Caleb would enter and inherit. Moses repeated that. It is unnecessary for the word to record what Caleb now claims. Caleb has stated it to Joshua, and if it were not true, Joshua would have known. A similar example of this is Solomon's right to the throne.

In 1 Kings 1:17, Bathsheba stated that David had sworn to her that Solomon would reign as king after him, and yet that is not recorded elsewhere. Obviously, she would not have made the claim if it wasn't true. She was speaking to the person who made the statement! This is the same situation now being conveyed by Caleb to Joshua. Hence, Caleb continues...

⁹ (con't) **'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever,**

More precisely, it reads, "if not – the land which has trodden your foot, in her, to you shall be to inheritance, and to your sons, until everlasting." Caleb's feet filled after the Lord, and so Moses promised that where his feet had trodden, that would be his everlasting inheritance. And this is...

⁹ (con't) **because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'**

ki miletha akhare Yehovah elohai – "for you filled after Yehovah my God." Moses confirmed that Caleb had rightly pursued the Lord. Hence, Caleb was able to claim that he had done so as well. He simply repeated to Joshua what Moses had already stated.

The words he speaks here were specifically stated by Moses in Deuteronomy 1 that we just cited a moment ago.

With that affirmed, Caleb then completes giving the timeline of events for us to logically know what year this is...

¹⁰ And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years,

Rather than “said,” the word is “spoke.” Other than that, it is close enough. The Lord spoke and it was as good as done. And now, it has come to pass. Caleb carried this word with him...

¹⁰ (con’t) ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness;

The words are precise: *me’az diber Yehovah eth ha’davar ha’zeh el Mosheh asher halak Yisrael ba’midbar* – “From that time spoke Yehovah the word, the this, unto Moses, which walked Israel in the wilderness.” Rather than “while Israel wandered,” it is from the *beginning* of the time that Israel wandered. While all of Israel was faithless, Caleb demonstrated faith. As a result, he was promised the inheritance at that time...

¹⁰ (con’t) and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old.

The Hebrew has more excitement coming from Caleb – “and now, behold, I – the day – son of five and eighty years.” The words of Caleb provide the necessary information to understand the continued biblical timeline.

As explained in Joshua 11, the people left Mount Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after the exodus (Numbers 10:11). Moses then says in Deuteronomy 2 –

“And the time we took to come from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered *was* thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them.” Deuteronomy 2:14

Entry into Canaan happened at the beginning of the forty-first year since leaving Egypt (Joshua 4:19). In Numbers 13, the spies went to look over Canaan. From there we come

to the words of this verse and deduce that he was forty years old in the second year after leaving Egypt.

Being eighty-five at the end of the campaign, it means he was 39 when departing Egypt and 79 when entering Canaan. Thus, the campaign to subdue Canaan went somewhere between six and seven years. With that revealed, Caleb continues...

¹¹ As yet I *am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.*

The translation gets the point across sufficiently. In verse 13:1, it said that Joshua was old, advanced in years. That implies that he had not simply aged in years, but that he was aged from the years. On the contrary, Caleb's physical strength had essentially gone unchanged for the whole span of time.

Now that it's time to draw out the inheritances, Caleb wanted what was promised to him to be identified first. But his choice of land would not be an inheritance ready to be inhabited. Rather, it would require a man of war to subdue it. This is the reason why he mentions his abilities as he does. That is then made explicitly known with his next words...

¹² Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day;

The "mountain" means the mountainous country around Hebron. These words now give definitive evidence that even though nothing was recorded of this specific promise, it was made, nonetheless. Caleb is reminding Joshua of what was spoken by the Lord at that time.

In Numbers 13:22, the Hebrew went from the 3rd person plural to the 3rd person singular, saying "And **they** went up through the Negev and **he** came to Hebron." This indicates that Caleb is the one who reconnoitered this area and he really loved what he saw.

The narrative specifically noted this so that we would remember that this is the land Caleb had walked through. The spies all went up through the Negev. Caleb branched off and went to Hebron while others searched out other towns.

In this manner, they were able to cover much more land by dividing among cities within geographical areas. As a part of his report, he recalls the next words...

12 (con't) for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified.

As can be seen, there is more than one city in “the mountain” that is being referred to. Thus, Hebron is the main city, but it is a general area that Caleb is referring to. And more, in Chapter 10, we saw Joshua took Hebron. Hence, Hebron was either reoccupied, and there was at least one other city also reoccupied in the area or the accounts are not chronological. Either way, this is seen in Chapter 15 –

“Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, *namely*, Kirjath Arba, which *is* Hebron (*Arba was* the father of Anak). ¹⁴ Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. ¹⁵ Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir *was* Kirjath Sepher).

¹⁶ And Caleb said, ‘He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife.’” (13-16)

A note concerning multiple cities in this area is seen at the time of David as well –

“So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. ³ And David brought up the men who *were* with him, every man with his household. So they dwelt in the cities of Hebron.” 2 Samuel 2:2, 3

The Anakim dwelt there, and they continued to dwell and they are still there. But Caleb had faith that they, along with the other inhabitants, would be cleared out...

12 (con't) It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

Rather than “as the Lord said,” it reads “as the Lord spoke.” As before, the Lord spoke, and it was as if it was already accomplished. Hence, Caleb’s words do not indicate any doubt in his mind.

Rather, he is making a pious but confident statement that it would come to pass. Today, we might say, “No doubt about it. If the Lord is with me, I will get it done.” With his continued vigor, and the Lord’s presence with him, the Anakim will be dispossessed.

13 And Joshua blessed him,

This could mean either a verbal blessing followed by the gift, or the words could simply anticipate the next clause, the gift being the blessing. Probably both are combined in thought: a blessing of words accompanied by the blessing of the grant. Therefore, Joshua blessed him...

13 (con’t) and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.

This is the third note that a verbal promise was made to Caleb concerning the granting of a specific area. Caleb never explicitly mentioned Hebron, only “the mountain.” But Joshua perfectly understood the meaning and granted it to Caleb as an inheritance.

Caleb had longed for the area for forty-five years and it is now his own possession. As for the name Hebron, it means Alliance. It is the general name given to a city as well as an entire area of cities allied together.

14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day,

With these words, the area belonged to Caleb. Despite this, it is included in the overall land grant of Judah, as seen in Joshua 15. Also, the main city of Hebron will be designated as a Levitical city in Joshua 21:11. Despite these things, the general mountainous area that falls under the designation “Hebron” became Caleb’s possession...

14 (con’t) because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

yaan asher mile akhare Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “because which he filled after Yehovah God Israel.” This same sentiment has now been repeated numerous times.

The Lord said it in Numbers 14:24. Moses repeated it in Deuteronomy 1:36. Caleb said it in verse 8 of this chapter and cited Moses saying it in verse 9. Now, the author of the book restates it again. It is an absolute testimony to the character of the man and his willingness to be wholly faithful to the Lord.

With that, it next says...

¹⁵ And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba

The first mention of Hebron is in Genesis 13:18. After that, it is called Kirjath Arba in Genesis 23:2, but it qualifies that saying it is Hebron. The name Kirjath Arba is repeated in Genesis 35:27 where it was again qualified as Hebron.

Because of this, it was probably always known as Hebron, but it was eventually conquered by Arba and was renamed after him, but it still retained its original name in the memory of the people. The name Hebron is mostly used from this point on, but the last time the area is mentioned in chronological time is at the time of Nehemiah where it is again called Kirjath Arba. That is supposing it is referring to the same city.

The name Kirjath Arba means City of Four. That is then explained with the words...

^{15 (con't)} (*Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim*).

The clause is more succinct: *ha'adam ha'gadol ba'anaqim hu* – “the man the great in the Anakim, he.” In other words, it appears Arba is the name of a man for whom the city is named. As odd as the name “Four” might sound, it is not unique in Scripture.

In Numbers 31:8, there is a person named Reba, meaning Fourth. And in Romans 16:3, Quartus is mentioned. His name is Latin meaning “Fourth.” The reason for giving such a name is as simple as being the fourth one born in a family or as a servant in a house. For this, or some other reason, Arba, or Four, was considered the greatest man among the Anakim. With that noted, the chapter ends with...

^{15 (fin)} Then the land had rest from war.

This is a letter-for-letter repeat of Joshua 11:23. The word translated as “rest” signifies to be quiet or undisturbed. It comes from a primitive root signifying to repose. Hence, one can think of idleness or being undisturbed. Rather than Israel, it is the land itself that is spoken of in this manner. With the enemy subdued, there is a sense of calm and idleness left for the people to enjoy.

Why this is stated here is not readily seen. But it is included just prior to the land divisions of the tribes, signifying that the major battles were complete.

And so, even though Caleb is the main focus of this narrative, and he is the one who will be the interested figure in subduing Hebron, it is actually a campaign that was under the authority of Joshua. That seems perfectly evident when the two accounts are placed side by side –

Joshua 11: And at that time Joshua came and cut off the Anakim from the mountains: from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. ²² None of the Anakim were left in the land of the children of Israel; they remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

²³ So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.

Joshua 14: Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

¹³ And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ¹⁴ Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵ And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim*).

Then the land had rest from war.

In this, we see that the accounts are not at all chronological but categorical. Joshua completed the battles, but before that occurred, Caleb came to make his claim upon the land. Hence, when the land was to be divided, it would already be understood that Caleb had claim to Hebron.

*Have faith in your walk and you will do well
It will bring you life and joy in the presence of the Lord
It is the necessary thing to keep you from hell
This is what is shown to us in the word*

*But misdirected faith is wasted faith, it is true
So have your faith directed as God has revealed
Look unto Jesus, this is what you are to do
And when you do, you too, will be sealed*

*God asks us to believe the gospel; nothing else will do
Believe what Jesus has done and in His presence you will dwell
In your believing, God who is faithful and true
Will save your soul, so His word does tell*

II. An Explanation of the Typology

The account here, as I said a minute ago, is obviously not chronological. It fills in details of something that has already been shown as complete from Chapter 11. There, it said that the land had rest from war, and that sentiment is repeated again here.

As such, it is like Genesis 2 which fills in details not stated in Genesis 1. In Genesis 1, the creation account is completed in six days. In Genesis 2, it goes back to fill in the details about the creation of man on the sixth day. This is what is happening here. It is a common biblical style of writing.

It is important for a couple reasons. The first is that Caleb was given the promise by the Lord many years earlier and in order to not interfere with the inheritances of the tribes, his land is determined first.

Also, it needs to be dealt with before the division of the land because the Levites are given cities within Israel to minister to the people. That occurs after the divisions of the land. Thus, it is appropriate to have Caleb's land determined first, then the tribal divisions, and then the Levitical cities. When looked at this way, what is detailed here makes all the sense in the world.

Also, nothing is said when the land divisions in Chapter 15 will be decided. As this is so, it could be that they were determined earlier. If so, then Caleb's claim would be a part of Judah's land and thus they would be interested parties in the division.

Even if not, Caleb is the main figure in this process of division and so it is right that Judah should accompany him when he approached Joshua. But there is also typology being conveyed here.

The account of the Gibeonites in Joshua 9 showed us how Gentiles are brought fully and completely into the New Covenant. But this account shows us that Gentiles are also included in the inheritance of that covenant. That may seem obvious, but it could be argued that they had no inheritance by someone with an agenda.

Caleb, meaning Dog, anticipates Gentiles. Along with his name, his repeated designation as a Kenizzite reveals this as well. This would explain verse 6 that said the sons of Judah approached Joshua in the Gilgal (the Liberty).

Think of Jews coming to Jesus, curious if Gentiles are included in the inheritance. This account resolves that. His name, Dog, son of He Will be Beheld, gives us a nice picture of a Gentile beholding the Lord. The inheritance is not something reserved to Jews alone.

As for the name Kenizzite, or Hunter, as Abarim noted, it is a name based on a profession, similar to many of our own names. Hence the name symbolizes someone who seeks a form of wisdom as would a person in any such profession. A number of verses from the New Testament could be used to explain this thought, such as –

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God— and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— ³¹ that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.’” 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31

With this remembered, Caleb spoke emphatically that Joshua knew the word of the Lord spoken “to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea.”

Think of the words of the law, “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the LORD” (Leviticus 18:5). Joshua stands as Jesus here, testifying to the state of Caleb.

He knows that Caleb fulfilled the law through faith as was so carefully detailed in Numbers 13 and 14. Moses (the law) testified to this in Kadesh Barnea, or Holy Purifying Wanderings. Where Israel had failed and would remain under law, Caleb had trusted and that was credited to him for righteousness.

Verse 7 noted that Caleb was forty when he was sent from Kadesh Barnea. According to Bullinger, forty signifies “a period of probation, trial, and chastisement—(not judgment, like the number 9, which stands in connection with the punishment of enemies, but the chastisement of sons, and of a covenant people). It is the product of 5 and 8, and points to the action of grace (5), leading to and ending in revival and renewal (8).”

The Gentiles went through such a period and at the end of it received grace leading to and ending in revival and renewal. Think of Gentile salvation. This is seen in the words of Caleb, “and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart.” It is exactly what occurs when a person is saved –

“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:8-10

It would be hard to find a better statement by Caleb to match the events that occurred as they were recorded in Numbers 14, which matches what Paul says. He believed in his heart, he confessed, and he was saved.

Verse 8 spoke of the people’s (Israel’s national) rejection of the Lord, even when the Gentiles believed. As he said, “And I, I filled after Yehovah my God.” The Gentiles believed Jesus is the incarnate Lord, even when national Israel did not. They walked after Him in faith. Caleb’s words are reflective of Paul’s words –

“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised.” Romans 4:11, 12

It must be recalled that every person that approached Joshua with Caleb was saved only later, typologically seen in their having crossed the Jordan. All those in the wilderness twenty years old and above had died. National Israel’s salvation comes after Gentile salvation.

Verse 9 revealed Moses’ concurrence with Caleb’s right to the inheritance as spoken by the Lord. The law testifies to Gentile salvation because it reveals Christ’s vicarious sacrifice, fulfillment of the law, and the imputation of His righteousness to those who believe. In this case, to “fill after Yehovah” is to follow Him as Paul states –

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:3, 4

Verse 10 noted that Caleb had been kept alive forty-five years more. It is the product of nine and five. Nine is “significant of the conclusion of a matter.” Five is “the number of

grace.” It would be hard to think up anything more appropriate to the settling of an inheritance than those two thoughts.

The Gentiles were given the promise and the Lord will sustain them in salvation until the conclusion of the matter. The inheritance is guaranteed because the Lord has spoken.

With that, Caleb added the two numbers (40 & 45) together and essentially boasted that he was now eighty-five. What a cool number, because it is the product of five (grace) and seventeen, a number Bullinger was excited about. It is the seventh of the prime numbers. Hence –

“...it partakes of and intensifies the significance of the number seven. Indeed, it is the combination or sum of two perfect numbers—seven and ten—seven being the number of spiritual perfection, and ten of ordinal perfection. Contrasted together the significance of these two numbers is clear; and when united in the number seventeen we have a union of their respective meanings, viz., spiritual perfection, plus ordinal perfection, or the perfection of spiritual order.”

As such, it speaks of eternal salvation. One of several examples he gives is that of Romans 8. It...

“concludes the first great division of that all-important Epistle, and sums up the blessings of those who are dead and risen in Christ. First we have a series of seven, then a series of ten. The seven are marked off by being put in the form of a question, while the ten are given as the answer to it.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall

Tribulation, 1

Or distress, 2

Or persecution, 3

Or famine, 4

Or nakedness, 5

Or peril, 6

Or sword? 7

as it is written, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that,

Neither death (1),
Nor life (2),
Nor angels (3),
Nor principalities (4),
Nor things present (5),
Nor things to come (6),
Nor powers (7),
Nor height (8),
Nor depth (9),
Nor any other creature (10),
shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Thus is set forth the spiritual and eternal perfection of the believer's standing in Christ.”
EW Bullinger

This is just what is being conveyed by Caleb in typology. Caleb’s spiritual strength (in Christ and for his inheritance) was not diminished. It is at this point that he anticipates his inheritance and asks for it, noting the Anakim in the process.

To get the full meaning of the name Anakim, one would have to go back and review the Numbers sermons. In short, the word from which Anakim is derived means neck, or necklace, but that comes from the word *anaq* which means being fitted out with supplies, and thus furnished liberally, just as a necklace is generally made up of many pieces.

Hence, obtaining the inheritance of Anak signifies the believer is one who is furnished liberally by God for every necessary work to which he is appointed. Seeing this, verse 13 said, “and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.”

In type, it is giving an Alliance to the Gentile, the son of “He Will Behold.” In other words, the Gentile inheritance is no less than that of the Jew. With that, the author of the narrative (the Lord is the ultimate Author) proclaimed one last time that Caleb “filled after Yehovah God of Israel.” Caleb was a man of faith, and he was granted the inheritance.

Verse 15 noted the previous name of Hebron, Kirjath Arba, City of Four. Four “is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created ... It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material

things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the 'city' number" according to Bullinger.

In this case, Four is then noted as "the man, the great in the Anakim." Wycliff bizarrely translated these words, "Adam, moost greet there in the loond of Enachym was set."

But maybe his odd thoughts give us a clue as to the meaning of the otherwise difficult to pin down words. In type, I will speculate that this is referring to the second Adam (the second Man of 1 Corinthians 15:47).

If so, it typologically means that the inheritance of the Gentiles is that of the greatest Man, the One furnished most liberally of all by God for every necessary work to which He was appointed. This would then match the words of Paul –

"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."

-Ephesians 1:11, 12

Paul, writing to Gentiles, notes "we who first trusted." This would include the believing Jews as well as believing Gentiles, even before national Israel believes, which is exactly the pattern seen in these verses from Joshua.

The promise was made to Caleb in Numbers, the land is still not subdued in Joshua, and yet Caleb is granted the inheritance of the new creation before national Israel because of the work of Christ. With that, it noted that the land had rest from war. This is the same set of words from Joshua 11, and they show that Caleb's inheritance came prior to that time, and thus prior to national Israel's.

In the story of the five kings that came against Gibeon, there had to be a resolution as to how the Gentiles were brought into the covenant that was given to Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 31:31). Likewise, there had to be the clarification that Christ fulfilled all of the law, not just a portion of it. That was dealt with in the slaying of the five kings.

This account is not unlike that. Despite Gentiles being brought into the commonwealth of Israel, there needed to be a presentation of what that meant concerning the inheritance. It is explained by Paul in the New Testament, but it is typologically seen way back here in Joshua.

Every t is dotted and every i is crossed (wait, reverse that) so that we don't have to later argue about what Paul is telling us. Understanding the typology in Joshua puts to rest many points of bad doctrine and even heresy. This is the beauty of traveling through these passages together.

For now, we will close with the thought that God has everything laid out, it was told us in advance, and then it is explained elsewhere. It is absolutely certain that this came from God and not from the minds of Jewish writers. They never would have penned such things as we continuously see in Joshua.

It is a real boost to our surety in the reliability of the word of God to see these types. As this is so, be sure to trust what is explicitly stated concerning Jesus. He is the One and the Only path to restoration with God. Be wise, be discerning, and be sure to call on Him today.

Closing Verse: *“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; ¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.” Colossians 1:9-12*

Next Week: Joshua 15:1-12 *Knowing the symbolism will put you in a great moodah...*
(The Borders of the Land of Judah) (31st Joshua sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

He Wholly Followed the Lord God of Israel

Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal
And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him:
“You know the word which the LORD said to Moses
-----the man of God
Concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea when times
-----were a bit grim

I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD
Sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land
And I brought back word to him as it was in my heart
But things didn't go as I planned

Nevertheless my brethren
Who went up with me (their thinking was flawed)
Made the heart of the people melt
But I wholly followed the LORD my God

So Moses swore on that day, saying
'Surely the land where your foot had trod
Shall be your inheritance and your children's forever
Because you have wholly followed the LORD my God

And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive
As He said, these forty-five years. Yes, just as He told
Ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel
-----wandered in the wilderness
And now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old

As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me
Just as my strength was then – any battle I could win
So now is my strength for war
Both for going out and for coming in

Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD
-----spoke in that day
For you heard in that day how the Anakim were there
And that the cities were great and fortified
That means next to nothing; I couldn't care

It may be that the LORD will be with me – those dudes
-----are already dead
And I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said

And Joshua blessed him (maybe he did a happy dance)
And gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance

Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb
The son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day
Because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel
This is how he was. Yes, just that way

And formerly Kirjath Arba was Hebron's name
(Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim), so was his fame

Then the land had rest from war
That's the end of the chapter; there ain't no more

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 15:1-12 **(THE BORDERS OF THE LAND OF JUDAH)**

I went out to Boulder, Colorado, in September of 2021 to be with a friend as he buried his wife who was also my friend. I was only there a couple days and didn't see much, but one thing that I remember clearly was a rocky outcropping on the top of a mountain called Devil's Thumb.

I was told it was there but couldn't really see it until we got to the right angle, and then it became pretty obvious. It stuck right out just like a big fat thumb. There will be a similar thumb in today's passage.

You've heard the sermon passage mentioning the Stone of Bohan. We could just say, "Well, yeah, it's there to mark out the border and nothing more." And that could be true. But when the things referred to in these borders keep matching things found elsewhere in the Bible, it becomes harder and harder to simply dismiss them as coincidences.

I will admit to a bit of speculation for a couple of the names in this passage, but that is more likely my inability to properly analyze what is being presented than any lack in the biblical text.

The thing is, like all other typology, it has to match the other instances where the same things are mentioned, or we're just making things up as we go. That's not a good way to handle an evaluation of Scripture. But when it does match up, that makes it pretty certain that we are being shown more than just literal history, but typology as well.

Text Verse: *"Every word of God is pure;
He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him." Proverbs 30:5*

If every word of God is pure, then it logically follows that every word of God also has purpose. In stating that something in the word is pure, and the Bible says a lot of things, then we can be confident that God has carefully placed each word in Scripture for a reason, or several reasons.

Solomon then goes on to say that God is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Well, how does that come about? Someone could say some other supposed holy book was the word of God. So, do we just say, "Ok, then I will put my trust in the god seen in that book because someone said it?" That would be foolish.

So how do we determine if the word we have is really the word of God? By reading it, studying it, and then accepting or rejecting the premise stated in it. Paul says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).

You can't reasonably say, "This is the word of God" without actually checking it out. But once you checked it out, faith came. The word was heard, and only then was there the necessary response. To get this, think of someone printing off a stack of books with the words "The Holy Bible" on the outside but just blank pages on the inside.

See, it doesn't work. This wonderful book that we go through each week is filled with evidence that it is what it claims to be. In today's sermon, I am going on faith that the borders of Judah are telling us a story. Why? Because I have done the study. If you stick around, you'll hear this presented. Then you can decide if it fits with what you know.

Great things truly are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. This Is the Boundary (verses 1-12)

The methodical presentation of how the land is divided continues in Chapter 15. The narrative went from what was conquered under Joshua to what remained to be conquered (13:1-7). It next detailed the land inheritance of those east of the Jordan (13:8-14).

That was then further defined by detailing the land of each of the tribes east of the Jordan: Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (13:15-33). In Chapter 13, it twice noted that Levi had no inheritance, meaning land inheritance.

Chapter 14 first noted how the land west of the Jordan would be divided to the nine and one-half tribes, again noting that Levi received no land inheritance (14:1-5). Immediately after that, it detailed the inheritance to be given to Caleb (14:6-15).

With that logically presented and detailed, the division of the land to individual tribes west of the Jordan takes place. There is careful order in how each step is laid out. The first tribe's land grant is here detailed, that of Judah...

¹ So *this* was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:

v'hi ha'goral l'mateh bene Yehudah l'mishp'hotam – “And came the lot to tribe sons Judah to their families.” Of this initial division, Charles Ellicott provides a logical reason for Judah’s placement, which is otherwise unstated in the narrative—

“The question arises at this point how the position of the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh was determined. As to the remaining seven, see Note on Joshua 18:5-10. It is noticeable that Hebron appears to have been promised to Caleb (Joshua 14:12), and Shechem assigned to Joseph by Jacob (Genesis 48:21-22; Joshua 24:32). Did not this necessarily bring the tribe of Judah into the south, the neighbourhood of Hebron, and Ephraim (with his brother Manasseh) into the centre of the country?” Ellicott

His thoughts make sense. The lot is directed by the Lord. In order to keep the tribes together in a logical fashion, He determined each placement in accord with these earlier promises and also in accord with prophecies previously uttered.

In other words, and for example, Jacob prophesied that Simeon and Levi would be divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel (Genesis 49:7). The scattering of Levi has come about through their selection as ministers to the people and because they have no tribal land grant. Simeon’s scattering will come about when their land grant is placed within the borders of the already selected land grant of Judah.

Another example would be when Jacob prophesied that the Messiah would come from Judah (Genesis 49:10). To ensure this, Judah’s land grant will be in the protected southern area of the land.

While the northern tribes are exiled, Judah would remain a bastion of safety for those from any tribe who moved into that inheritance, thus preserving all tribes and allowing the Messiah to come forth as prophesied.

From this, it can be seen that everything in the Old Testament, and even into the New Testament gospels and Acts, finds its place based upon the land grants being made as determined by the Lord. As the proverb says –

“The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision *is* from the LORD.” Proverbs 16:33

As for the listing of Judah first, nothing is said regarding the order of the lots cast. It is the results of the cast lots that is the focus. The land division for these first three tribes

is stated according to the positioning of the tribes, generally going from south to north. As for Judah's land...

^{1 (con't)} The border of Edom at the Wilderness of Zin southward was the extreme southern boundary.

el gevul edom midbar tsin negbah miqtseh teman – “unto border Edom, Wilderness Tsin, southward extremity south.” This is the southern border of the land of Canaan as defined in Numbers 34. Hence, this means that Judah is the southernmost tribe. Edom means Red. Tsin means Thorn or Barb.

² And their southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea,

Not only is the land described from south to north, but it is described from east to west. These words read: *v'hi lahem gevul negev miqtseh yam ha'melakh* – “And came to them border south extremity Sea, the Salt.” This is the southeasternmost point of the land now granted to Judah. Hence, the eastern border lies along the Dead Sea, which is further described as...

^{2 (con't)} from the bay that faces southward.

min ha'lashon ha'poneh negbah – “from the tongue, the facer southward.” It is debated what this tongue is, be it a rock promontory, a salt marsh, or simply the southern end of the Dead Sea. Looking at maps of the land gives varied possibilities. As the same term is used again in verse 5 and referring to the north end of the sea, I deduce it is speaking of the southern end of the sea here.

³ Then it went out to the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin, ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea, passed along to Hezron, went up to Adar, and went around to Karkaa.

The names are: *Maaleh Aqrabim* or Ascent of Scorpions. There are scorpions in this barren area, but in Scripture, the scorpion is also used figuratively for a scourge. *Tsin* means Thorn. *Qadesh Barnea* means Holy Purifying Wanderings. *Khetsron* means Enclosure or Surrounded by a Wall. *Adar* means Wide Open Place, Honorable, or Majestic. *Karkaa* means Floor, Ground, or Pavement.

Kadesh Barnea is the area furthest south. It was first noted in Genesis 14 as En Mishpat. It is the area where Miriam died and where Moses and Aaron rebelled against the word of the Lord. At that time, it was called Meribah Kadesh.

⁴ From there it passed toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea.

Atsmon comes from *atsom* meaning mighty. That comes from *etsem* meaning a bone. The idea is that the skeletal structure is what provides strength. Thus, the place is called Mighty or Mighty One. The Brook of Egypt is Nakhal Mitsraim.

The noun *nakhal* comes from the verb *nakhal* meaning to take or get as a possession. Mitsraim, though debated, may mean Double Trouble.

⁴ (con't) This shall be your southern border.

The words of this single clause go from the third-person past tense to the second-person future tense, following the same style as Moses in Numbers 34. The reason for this isn't certain, but it is probably because this is not only the southern border of Judah's inheritance, but it is also the southern border of Israel's inheritance.

⁵ The east border was the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan.

u'gevul qedemah yam ha'melakh ad qetseh ha'yarden – “And border eastward, Sea the Salt, unto extremity the Jordan.” The meaning is that the western shore of the Dead Sea would be Judah's eastern border all the way to where the Jordan enters into the sea. At that point...

⁵ (con't) And the border on the northern quarter began at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan.

u-gevul liphat tsaphonah mil'shon ha'yam miqtseh ha'yarden – “And border side northward from tongue the sea extremity the Jordan.” The meaning is that this northern border goes to the spot where the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea. From there...

⁶ The border went up to Beth Hoglah and passed north of Beth Arabah;

va'alah ha'gevul beith haglah va'avar mitsphon l'beith ha'aravah – “And went up the border, Beth Hoglah, and passed over north to Beth Arabah.” Beith Khoglah means

House of the Partridge, but it also means House of Turning in Joy. The word comes from *khagal*, to wobble or hop. It is the same name as one of the daughters of Zelophehad.

This is a point between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin but belonging to Benjamin. It is between Jericho and the Dead Sea.

Beith ha'Aravah means House of the Plain, but it is derived from *arav*, to give in pledge. Hence, it can also mean House of the Pledge. It is ascribed to Judah in Joshua 15:61 and then to Benjamin in Joshua 18:22. Hence, it was a joint border city. Next...

6 (con't) and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.

v'alah ha'gevul even bohan ben reuben – “and went up the border, Stone Bohan, son Reuben.” Bohan is identical to *bohen*, the thumb or big toe. It was probably a thick, prominent stone that was used as a landmark and named after a son of Reuben. Maybe he was buried there or did some heroic thing there. Strong's defines the meaning as Closing, but I have no idea why.

7 Then the border went up toward Debir from the Valley of Achor, and it turned northward toward Gilgal, which is before the Ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley.

Debir means Place of the Word. This is not the same Debir as seen in Joshua 10 or the other Debir in Joshua 13. It is a third location with this name situated not too far from Jericho.

Achor means Trouble. This is most likely where Wadi Qelt is today. It received its name from the events recorded in Joshua 7 when Achan was taken out and then stoned and burned.

Gilgal (*ha'Gilgal*) means The Rolling Away, signifying the Liberty. Adummim is a plural word coming from *adam*, red, and *adam*, Adam or man. Thus, it is the Ascent of the Red Ones or Ascent of the Adams (men). That is said to be *mi'negev la'nakhal*, or from south to the wadi. The noun *nakhal* coming from the verb *nakhal* means to inherit.

7 (con't) The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh and ended at En Rogel.

En Shemesh means Fountain (Eye) of the Sun. It is identified today as the Apostle's Spring which is about a mile below Bethany; it is the only spring on the road to Jericho.

En Rogel could have a couple meanings. Rogel comes from *regel* meaning foot or *ragal*, to go about on foot. As such, it could mean Fountain (Eye) of the Fuller, because the foot is used for washing garments, or Fountain of the Traveler.

⁸ And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite city (which is Jerusalem).

v'alah ha'gevu'el ge ben hinom el ketheph haybusi mi'negev hi yerushalim – “And ascended the border valley Son Hinnom unto shoulder the Jebusite – it Jerusalem.” The word translated as valley is different than the previous verses. It is *ge*, coming from *gavah*, pride or confidence. That comes from *gaah*, to rise up, increase, etc.

The original meaning of Hinnom is pretty much lost. The few who attempt to translate it associate it with wailing. Hence, this could be paraphrased as “the exaltation of the Son of Groaning.” In the New Testament this, becomes the well-known Gehenna. It is a valley that runs along the border of Jerusalem.

Jebusite means Treading Down or Trodden Underfoot. Jerusalem can have various meanings, but Foundation of Peace is sufficient.

^{8 (con't)} The border went up to the top of the mountain that lies before the Valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the Valley of Rephaim northward.

It is supposed by some that this is referring to Mt. Moriah seen in Genesis 22:2 and 2 Chronicles 3:1, the spot where Isaac was offered up and later where the temple was built. This is said to be at the end of *emeq rephaim tsaphonah* – “depth Rephaim, northward.” The *emeq* is a deep broad valley.

Rephaim comes from either *raphah*, to sink or relax, or from *rapha*, to heal. Strong's goes with the latter. Thus, it would be the Depth of Healed Ones.

⁹ Then the border went around from the top of the hill to the fountain of the water of Nephtoah,

v'ta'ar ha'gevu'el me'rosh ha'har el mayan me nephtoakh – “And marked out the border from top the mountain unto fountain waters Nephtoah.” There is a new word here, *ta'ar*. It comes from a primitive root meaning to delineate. Hence, it means to extend, be drawn, or mark out.

There is a marking out of the area from the top of the mountain that extends to the fountain of these waters, identified as Ain Lifta which is northwest of Jerusalem. Nephtoakh means Opening.

⁹ (con't) **and extended to the cities of Mount Ephron.**

The name Ephron comes from either *opher*, a deer, or *aphar*, dust. The same name was seen in Genesis 23 and signifies Of the Dust.

⁹ (con't) **And the border went around to Baalah (which is Kirjath Jearim).**

v'ta'ar ha'gevu' baalah hi qiryat yearim – “And marked out the border Baalah, it Kirjath Jearim.” Baalah means Lady or Mistress. Kirjath Jearim means City of Forests or City of Honeycombs. This city is noted in Scripture as the residence for the Ark of the Covenant for twenty years after it was sent back to Israel by the Philistines.

¹⁰ **Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir,**

v'nasav ha'gevu' mi'baalah yammah el har seir – “And went around, the border, from Baalah westward unto Mount Seir.” This is obviously not the same Mount Seir in Edom. But the name is the same, Mount Hairy, probably given because of its hairy appearance, being covered in low brush or bushes. From there...

¹⁰ (con't) **passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (which is Chesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to Timnah.**

Mount Jearim has the same meaning as Kirjath Jearim – Mount of Honeycombs or Mount of Trees. The name Chesalon comes from *kasal*, used only in Jeremiah 10:8–

“Inasmuch as *there is* none like You, O LORD
(You *are* great, and Your name *is* great in might),
⁷ Who would not fear You, O King of the nations?

For this is Your rightful due.

For among all the wise *men* of the nations,
And in all their kingdoms,

There is none like You.

⁸ But they are altogether dull-hearted and **foolish**;

A wooden idol *is* a worthless doctrine.” Jeremiah 10:6-8

Some use the word in a manner that attempts to turn it into a good concept and thus translate Chesalon as Trust or Firm Confidence, but it appears to simply mean Mount Stupidity. Beth Shemesh means House of the Sun. Timnah means Allotted Portion. Timnah is said to be in Judah in verse 15:57, but it is said to be in Dan in verse 19:43. Hence, it too was a joint border city.

¹¹ And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward.

As seen in Chapter 13, Ekron comes from *aqar*, to pluck up or uproot. But that is from the same as *eqer*, an offshoot or descendant. Hence, the name could mean either Offshoot or Uprooted. Zephaniah will make a play on the name later in Scripture, saying, “Ekron shall be Uprooted.”

In Joshua 10:43, Ekron is said to be in the original land grant of Dan. It is a city that remained pretty much under the control of the Philistines. Wikipedia notes –

“Since the discovery in 1996 of the Ekron inscription, Ekron has been positively identified with the mound of Tel Miqne (Hebrew) or Khirbet el-Muqanna (Arabic). The tell lies 35 kilometres (22 mi) west of Jerusalem, and 18 kilometres (11 mi) north of Tell es-Safi, the almost certain site of the Philistine city of Gath, on the grounds of Kibbutz Revadim on the eastern edge of the Israeli coastal plain.”

^{11 (con't)} Then the border went around to Shicron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel;

Shicron supposedly comes from *shakar*, to become drunk. However, the root *skr* can mean either *shakar* or *sakir*, hired, *sakar*, to hire, wage, and so on. As such, it does not have to indicate being drunk, but wages. Jabneel comes from *banah*, to build, and *el*, God. Hence it is something like Built of God.

^{11 (con't)} and the border ended at the sea.

v'hayu tots'oth ha'gevul yamah – “and have been outgoings the border westward.” The meaning is seaward and thus the Mediterranean Sea. The entire northern border is thus complete. From there, the final border is described...

¹² The west border was the coastline of the Great Sea.

u-gevul yam ha'yamah ha'gadol – “And border west the Sea the Great.” The same word, *yam*, means both sea and west. This is because directions are often defined by the layout of the land as one is standing in Canaan looking east. With that, the verses today finish with...

^{12 (fin)} **This is the boundary of the children of Judah all around according to their families.**

zeh gevul bene Yehuda saviv l'misp'hotam – “This boundary sons Judah around to their families.” One can see how this clause of verse 12 complements the opening verse of the chapter. They are like bookends to the section which has been presented –

v.1 - And came the lot to tribe sons Judah to their families.

v.12 - This boundary sons Judah around to their families.

The tribe of Judah, from which will descend the Messiah Himself, is thus described according to all of the names presented. However, it is certain is that this is more than just a list of marking points to define the land where Judah will dwell.

That will be seen as we continue. God is telling us a story about the coming Messiah, if we will just pay heed...

*These are the borders of My land known as Praise
And together they have a story to tell us
It is a story that will continue on for eternal days
It is the story of our Lord, Jesus*

*Every detail gives us hints of what He has done
Or of how it is realized in each of us
The marvelous details concerning God's own Son
Glorious pictures of our Lord, Jesus*

*God has set forth these things, allowing us to see
The beautiful things that Christ has done for us
The truths are found in the gospel that He offers for free
It is the precious gift of God, the gospel of our Lord, Jesus*

II. Pictures of Christ

The borders of Judah were marked out, but Scripture doesn't say how this came about. Whether it is the same process that is detailed for the northern tribes in Joshua 18 or not, we can't know. All we are told in verse 1 is that this lot came out for Judah.

As the lot is directed by the Lord, that is sufficient for deciding the rest of the land divisions. Whether marked out by man and then decided by lot for the tribe, or whether the Lord decided the borders and then the tribe, or the tribe and then the borders, it doesn't matter. There are borders, and they form a land grant. That grant is now given to Judah.

I will give the details of each place mentioned, but I don't want to make stuff up. When my comments are speculative, I will let you know. As for these borders of Judah, or Praise, I suggest they are given as a snapshot of the work of Christ and how it applies to His people, including the state of His people.

The southern border, the right-hand border as Canaan is laid out, gives numerous references to Christ and His work. Edom's border is the first thing mentioned and it defines Judah's southern border. Edom means Red, but its letters are identical to *adam*, Adam/man. The picture of Adam and Edom in Genesis 25 was very clear, as other pictures have been since.

Christ is noted as the second Man and the last Adam, in 1 Corinthians 15 –

“And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.” 1 Corinthians 15:45

“The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven.” 1 Corinthians 15:47

This border was also said to be at the Wilderness of Zin or Thorn. In the Bible, the wilderness signifies an uncultivated area, not necessarily a barren desert. It is a place of God's grace and of closeness to God, but it is also a place of testing.

For some, such as Israel, the testing resulted in disobedience. For others, such as when Christ was tested, it is a place of fellowship through obedience. The wilderness and the law are closely connected because it is by law that testing is accomplished.

As for the Wilderness of Zin, that was seen several times as typical of Christ's cross. This is the extreme right or southern border." The implication is that because the right is the position of power, the cross is the ultimate expression of the power of God in Christ –

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18

If the message of the cross is the power of God, then it is the cross itself that demonstrates that power. The southern border was next said to begin at the southern border of the Salt Sea. Salt is a sign of the covenant, and it also signifies incorruptibility, an obvious picture of Christ's incorruptibility, proven through His death and resurrection (Acts 2:31).

Akrabbim, or Scorpions, anticipates Christ's scourging. The word scorpion is used elsewhere metaphorically in this manner. Kadesh Barnea, Holy Purifying Wanderings, is the extreme southern part of the wilderness of Zin. It anticipates the perfect work of Christ. Hezron, or Enclosure, anticipates His tomb.

Adar would signify the majestic nature of the Lord's work (Luke 9:43, 2 Peter 1:16, etc.). Karkaa (Pavement) would anticipate the Pavement (Gabbatha) where Christ was judged in John 19:13. Atsom, Mighty, speaks of the mighty nature of Christ's work.

These are not in order in the narrative, but! that only makes sense because they are north of Kadesh Barnea in the Wilderness of Zin which anticipates His cross. Hence they are anticipating the cross as the south is approached. The brook of Egypt, *nakhal mitsraim*, is the anticipation of the inheritance of those who were in Double Trouble – fallen and without God in the world.

This is the southern border. It anticipates Christ's work, the power of God unto salvation brought about through His life, fulfilling of the law, death in fulfillment of the law, and the application of those things to the people of the world.

The statement which was in a different tense than the others, “This shall be your southern border,” anticipates that the typology extends beyond Judah to all of Israel. This would then be inclusive of Gentiles who are brought into the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12). As such, it is an all-inclusive statement concerning the scope of the completed work of Christ.

With that, the eastern border was defined in verse 5 as the western border of the Salt Sea. The word *qedemah*, or eastward, was used. Qedem signifies east, but it also signifies before, earlier, and even everlasting in the Bible.

Again, it speaks of the nature of the covenant, which would be the New Covenant because the Jordan (the Descender, Christ Jesus) falls into the Salt Sea. His perfect work anticipates His incorruptible nature, the perfection of the New Covenant, and the eternal nature of that covenant.

The northern border has a lot of names in it. North is the dark or hidden direction in Scripture. We can think of it anticipating those who are hidden in Christ. In other words, the effects of the work of Christ as they apply to His people.

As just relayed, that begins at the Jordan as it falls into the Salt Sea. One must come through the Jordan (through Christ) to enter the inheritance. That is through His death, burial, and resurrection – typified by the Jordan at the mouth of the Salt (Dead) Sea.

Beth Hoglah, the House of Turning in Joy, anticipates the state of believers in their salvation. Beth Aravah, House of the Pledge, signifies the state of being sealed with the Spirit –

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God,
²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a **guarantee**
[Greek: *arrabón*/pledge].” 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22 (see also 2 Corinthians 5:5 and
Ephesians 1:13, 14)

The stone of Bohan, or Thumb, is next. Stone signifies establishment, as in setting up a pillar. It signifies permanence; that which is established is set to stand firm. It signifies resiliency and strength, as in that which is fixed and unyielding.

The thumb represents the hand and thus action. It is that which has the ability to grasp firmly. It anticipates the eternal security of the believer, something that follows naturally after the pledge of the Spirit. Adding in the name Reuben, meaning, See a Son, would anticipate the sonship of those who are in Christ. As Paul says, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26).

Verse 7 anticipates the trek believers take in Christ. It says the border went to Debir, Place of the Word, from the Valley (Depth) of Trouble. Man in Christ was in the depth of

trouble. He hears the word and believes. From there, it goes to *ha'Gilgal*, the Liberty, just as man enters into the Liberty found in Christ. The reproach is rolled away.

That is said to be before the Ascent of Adummim, or Ascent of the Red Ones (men). It is the heavenly promise noted many times in Scripture, such as Ephesians 2:6 where believers are said to be raised up and seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

This location was on the south side of the valley. The word *negev*, or parched, is used. The valley is *nakhal*, an inheritance. The meaning seems obvious. Even though we have the heavenly inheritance in Christ, until things are finished, we are still on the dry side of glory, awaiting the life that is truly life where the waters of life flow copiously and constantly.

The border then continues to En Shemesh, Fountain of the Sun, and ends at En Rogel, Fountain of the Fuller. It speaks of the eternal light of Christ (Malachi 4:2) and thus the eternal flowing of light where there will be no night (Revelation 22:5), and of the eternally purified garments such as those mentioned in Revelation 3:5.

Verse 8 continues with the effects of the work of Christ on His people. It mentions the Valley of the Son of Hinnom – the exaltation of the Son of Groaning. Christ went through His passion and because of it, He now brings each of us out of our own state of groaning –

“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:22, 23

It then mentioned the Jebusite, the Treading Down. The word is derived from *bus*, to tread down or trample. The thought is expressed in Psalm 60 –

“Give us help from trouble,
For the help of man *is* useless.
¹² Through God we will do valiantly,
For *it is* He *who* shall **tread down** [*bus*] our enemies.” Psalm 60:11, 12

Immediately after that, it said, “It Jerusalem.” The Foundation of Peace is realized because of our position in Christ.

Next, it said, “The border went up to the top of the mountain before the Valley [*ge*] of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end of the Valley [*emeq*] of Rephaim northward.” A paraphrase of the two would be “the exaltation of groaning and the depth of the healed ones.” Each again anticipates the state of believers.

The fountain of Nephtoah anticipates eternal access into glory, symbolized by the gates that are never shut in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:25). Mount Ephron is given to anticipate the gathering of those “Of the Dust,” meaning the redeemed of humanity.

As for the next two names, I mentioned I don’t want to be dogmatic. I can only speculate and tell you what I think. Baalah is a feminine word. The word *baal* means “Master.”

Hence, Baalah, means Lady, but not as we think of as a general female. Rather, we can think of Lords and Ladies. My supposition would be it refers to the church as whole, a feminine noun. This was also called Kirjath Jearim. The standard meaning is City of Honeycombs or City of Forests. However, Abarim says –

“The verb יער (*ya’ar*) isn’t used in the Bible and it’s a complete mystery what it might have meant. Noun יער (*ya’ar*) is the common word for forest or thicket, and the identical noun יער (*ya’ar*) means honeycomb. It is, of course, perfectly possible that these two nouns are not two but one, describing something general like a thing that consists of many elements, which contain energetic nutrients (either fruits or honey)...” Abarim

Therefore, this could be an explanation of the church, a group derived from many people, each filled with individual fruit of the Spirit. That’s the best I can do on this location. But it is actually supportable by the comparison of Israel to a forest in Malachi 7:14 –

“Tend Thy people with Thy staff, the flock of Thy heritage, That dwell solitarily, as a forest in the midst of the fruitful field; Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old” (JPS Tanakh)

From there, it again mentions Baalah turning to Mt. Seir, meaning Hairy. Hair in the Bible signifies awareness, especially the awareness of sin. This would fit perfectly with those in the church who are both aware of sin and have handed that sin over to Christ.

As this seems likely, the next words would then follow logically. Mount Jearim would represent the gathering of the church that is restated as “it Chesalon.” Chesalon is the

Mount *of the Foolish*, and it is well reflected by Paul's words of 1 Corinthians 1:27 (and elsewhere) where he says that God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise.

The idea of being foolish is used in an ironic way when referring to believers, but it fits the typology here. The next two references are the House of the Sun, an obvious picture of the eternal nature of the light in the New Jerusalem.

In Revelation, it does say that there will be no sun. However, seeing as how Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness and He will be there, and because He is the lamp of the light of God, the typology fits. Timnah, Allotted Portion, is exactly what believers anticipate, meaning their allotted portion in glory.

Naming Ekron, or Offshoot, again speaks of the state of believers in Christ. Shicron or Wages, seems out of place as wages are usually negatively associated with earning one's way. But when the wages are applied to Christ, such as in Zechariah 11:12, and then placed alongside the last two named places, Mount Baalah and Jabneel, the meaning seems clear.

The wages (Shicron) paid by Christ form the gathering of the church (Mount Baalah) which is Built of God (Jabneel). With that, the northern border is ended. All that is left is the west which is the Great Sea. That anticipates the state of eternally seeking after God.

Revelation 4:6 says there is a sea like glass before the throne of God. It later says there is no sea in the New Jerusalem because the sea in Scripture pictures the chaos/churning of the nations. The sea before the throne is placid like glass. There is harmony and tranquility before God. The west is the direction of the Holy of Holies and is emblematic of the throne of God. Hence, the Great Sea anticipates that.

With that, our passage for today is complete. As I mentioned, there are a few points that I feel confident enough to speculate on, but not confident enough to say with certainty.

Remember that when you listen to preachers evaluate the word. And the only way you can truly do that is to read and know the word as well. Take time to do that each day; at least two or ten times each day. And maybe get an audio Bible for your time in the car.

The more you take in the word, the better prepared you will be to walk away from people that misuse it. Above all, be sound in your doctrine about Jesus. If nothing else, be sure about that. If you get Him wrong, the rest of the Bible will be totally out of whack. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! He is the key to salvation. Without Him, there can be no salvation.

Hold fast to Jesus, the One who all of this precious word anticipates, reveals, and explains. Yes, hold fast to Jesus.

Closing Verse: *“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” 1 Thessalonians 2:13*

Next Week: Joshua 15:13-63 *More precious than the biggest heists of lootah!... (A Share Among the Children of Judah) (32nd Joshua Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Borders of the Land of Judah

So this was the lot of the tribe
Of the children of Judah according to each family:
The border of Edom at the Wilderness of Zin
Southward was the extreme southern boundary

And their southern border began at the shore of the Salt Sea
From the bay that faces southward
Then it went out to the southern side of the Ascent of Akrabbim
Passed along to Zin, yes Zin-ward

Ascended on the south side of Kadesh Barnea
Passed along to Hezron, how about that, ha?
Went up to Adar
And then around to Karkaa

From there it passed toward Azmon

And went out to the Brook of Egypt
And the border ended at the sea
This shall be your southern border, so don't feel jipped

The east border was the Salt Sea
As far as the mouth of the Jordan (which rhymes with Gordon)
And the border on the northern quarter
Began at the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan

The border went up to Beth Hoglah
And passed north of Beth Arabah, there and then
And the border went up to the stone
Of Bohan the son of Reuben

Then the border went up toward Debir from the Valley of Achor
And it turned northward toward Gilgal, where the troops rally
Which is before the Ascent of Adummim
On the south side of the valley

The border continued toward the waters of En Shemesh
And ended at En Rogel (let's not hear any haw or hem)
And the border went up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom
To the southern slope of the Jebusite city (which is Jerusalem)

The border went up to the top of the mountain
That lies westward before the Valley of Hinnom
Which is at the end of the Valley
Of Rephaim northward, where Rephaim roam

Then the border went around from the top
Of the hill to Nephtoah's fountain of water (flowing to the brim)
And extended to the cities of Mount Ephron
And the border went around to Baalah (which is Kirjath Jearim)

Then the border turned westward from Baalah to Mount Seir
Passed along to the side of Mount Jearim – oohrah!
On the north (which is Chesalon)
Went down to Beth Shemesh, and passed on to Timnah

And the border went out to the side of Ekron northward
Then the border went around to Shicron, as you can see
Passed along to Mount Baalah, and extended to Jabneel
And the border ended at the sea

The west border was the coastline of the Great Sea
This is the children of Judah's boundary

According to their families all around
This was Judah's piece of ground

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 15:13-63 **(A SHARE AMONG THE CHILDREN OF JUDAH)**

The account today has verses that will be very closely repeated in Judges 1. When this happens in the Bible, it is telling us that really important information is being conveyed. This doesn't negate the other information in the Bible but highlights the material worthy of repetition.

There are some differences between the accounts here and in Judges 1, and there is lengthy debate concerning which account is the original, or which is in the right chronological location, and so on. It is the kind of thing you might read, and just continue on saying, "I wonder why it mentions this twice?" But you never dig any further.

I admit that has been me for the past many years. I never took my own advice and paid extra heed to what is being presented. Notice what Charles Ellicott remarks –

"Which is its original place? In Judges it is connected with the continuation of the conquest of Canaan by the tribe of Judah after Joshua's death, and there we read they slew (literally, smote) Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi. If this is the death, and not merely the defeat of the Anakim (the Hebrew word is not absolutely decisive), we have two stages in the conquest of Hebron described ... It would seem, then, that the entire conquest of the Anakim was not effected at once, but begun by Caleb and Joshua in Joshua's lifetime, and completed by the tribe of Judah, under the leadership of Caleb, after Joshua's death." Charles Ellicott

He tries to reconcile the two as both being different accounts. However, he later appears to give up on that notion and says –

"Upon the whole, it seems most reasonable to conclude that the proceedings by which Caleb secured his inheritance, and fulfilled the promise of Joshua 14:12, have been recorded here for the sake of completeness, though not necessarily belonging to this time." Ellicott

Text Verse: *"May God enlarge Japheth,
And may he dwell in the tents of Shem;
And may Canaan be his servant." Genesis 9:27*

What Ellicott appears to be saying is that though he isn't sure about the two accounts being separate, he tends towards the notion that they are one account and the insertion of them here is not that it is separate but "for the sake of completeness."

Looking at the surrounding text here in Joshua, that seems evident, and it will be explained as we go. Context matters, and the context of this passage is that of inheritance. If we think on that, then what is said about Caleb is obviously also dealing with an inheritance.

It has something to do with Noah's blessing upon Japheth and Shem. I will not give a detailed explanation of that when we get there in the passage today, so you'll have to go back and watch the early Genesis sermons or the recorded Bible studies to get an answer to that, but the two are connected.

Everything is interconnected in this word. We just need to figure out how. And in all honesty, we can read and study for the rest of our lives and still not see it all. We have fifty-one verses to go through today, and you will see that I do not even attempt to explain all but a few of them. We may never leave Joshua if I did.

Instead, I am giving you what is most relevant to understanding the overall picture of what is going on. Other details will be drawn out as we continue through the word and refer back to make a necessary connection someday.

For now, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Blessing for Achsah (verses 13-19)

¹³ Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah,

As a reminder, Caleb means Dog, Yephunneh means He will be Beheld, and Judah means Praise.

Because the division of the land is what is being described, it naturally follows that this section would be recorded here in Joshua, regardless of when the events actually took place. In Joshua 13:1 it said that Joshua is old. His time is drawing near.

The land which remained to be conquered is detailed (13:1-7). Then the division of the land east of Jordan is repeated, indicating the matter is accomplished (13:8-14). That included the subdivisions of land by tribe (13:15-33).

Next, the division of the land west of the Jordan is introduced (14:1-4), but before it actually occurs, the inheritance of Caleb is settled (14:6-15). With that carved out, the borders of Judah are given (15:1-12). Then comes the naming of the cities within those borders (15:20-63).

But Caleb will, at some point in the future, carve out a particular division of this inheritance as indicated in these intervening verses. Though this is future, the details are logically placed here, before the naming of the cities of Judah, to ensure that the matter is settled and recorded.

One might ask, “Why would this account be placed here now if the actual events occur when it is recorded in Judges?” Rather, the exact opposite question would arise if it wasn’t: “Why wasn’t this record placed in the land division of Judah to clarify the exception?”

This is because it is the land division that is being dealt with. If we have an amendment to a land grant today, it would naturally be affixed to the original land grant documents regardless as to when it occurred. As such, these words now are that affixed amendment. Caleb was given his inheritance –

“Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

-Joshua 14:12

Those anticipated events occur later in Judges 1, but they are logically placed in Joshua 15. As such, the words here in Joshua 15:13 are further detailing Caleb’s inheritance as spoken forth in Joshua 14.

To show that Caleb’s land grant, including this division, is included in Judah’s inheritance and not cut out of it as a separate and independent parcel, we read –

“And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ¹⁴ Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of

Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁵ And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim*)." Joshua 14:13-15

Only after that were the borders of Judah described (15:1-12). Within those borders, a further division of Caleb's inheritance is stated, demonstrating that it is a part of Judah, not a piece of land cut out of Judah. Joshua gave Caleb the son of Jephunneh a share among the children of Judah...

¹³ (con't) **according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua,**

This is in accord with Joshua 14:6, "You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea." His request, based on that, was to be granted...

¹³ (con't) **namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (*Arba was the father of Anak*).**

As a reminder, Kirjath Arba means City *of* Four and Hebron means Alliance. We are reminded now that Arba, or Four, is the father of the Anaq. Rather than referring to a single person, Anak, it speaks of the clan: *eth qiryath arba avi ha'anaq hi khevron* – "Kirjath Arba, father the Anaq, it Hebron."

As for the grant itself, this is in accord with Joshua 14:12 where Caleb said, "Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day." From there, the words of Joshua 14:13-15 (cited above) confirmed the grant. At the time of that request, Caleb said –

"...for you heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said." Joshua 14:12

That hopeful anticipation is now detailed, even though the events occur in Judges 1. The record states...

¹⁴ **Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.**

Rather than “drove out,” it reads: *v’yoresh mi’sham Kalev eth sh’lovoshah bene ha’Anaq* – “And disinherited from there Caleb three sons the Anaq.” The meaning is that he killed them (disinherited), and he assumed their land (inherited).

Sheshai means Whitish. Akhiman means My Brother is a Gift. Talmai means Plowman. Anak means Long Neck or Necklace. As they are called “the Anak,” they are a clan of people known for their unusually long or thick necks, or the adornments worn on their necks.

These three were already named in Numbers 13, many years before. Hence, the Pulpit Commentary may be correct when they say, “This also must not be pressed literally. Possibly these men were three chiefs of the Anakim.”

In other words, saying “the three sons of the Anaq” could be a way of speaking of those who descended from them, each being a clan. Or they may be sons bearing the same names as their fathers. As the order of the names is different now, it may explain that.

¹⁵ Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher).

After dispossessing the Anakim, Caleb turned his sites on Debir, or Place of the Word, a place noted as having been called Kirjath Sepher. The word *sepher* is singular and means book. However, to get the right idea, you would call it “Book City,” and thus “City of Books,” a name obviously connected to Place of the Word. It was the place where the scrolls of writings were maintained, like a library today.

It was evidently important because of this, and Caleb defers to the former name when planning its attack. This is total supposition, but perhaps they wanted to capture the scrolls in order to get a better understanding of the layout of the land, the structure of cities, etc., by obtaining any such documents maintained there. So important was this mission that a great honor is offered...

¹⁶ And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife.”

va’yomer kalev asher yakeh eth qiryath sepher ul’khadah v’natati lo eth akhsah biti l’ishah – “And said Caleb, ‘Who strikes Book City and takes her – and I will give to him Achsah my daughter to wife.’” Achsah comes from *ekes*, meaning a fetter (Proverbs

7:22) or an anklet (Isaiah 3:18). That comes from *akas*, to shake bangles as seen in Isaiah 3 –

“Moreover the LORD says:

‘Because the daughters of Zion are haughty,

And walk with outstretched necks

And wanton eyes,

Walking and mincing *as* they go,

Making a jingling with their feet,

¹⁷ Therefore the Lord will strike with a scab

The crown of the head of the daughters of Zion,

And the LORD will uncover their secret parts.” Isaiah 3:16, 17

The offering of a daughter in this manner is not unusual. Throughout Kings and Chronicles, intermarriages are noted where one king gives a daughter to another, such as in 1 Kings 3:1. It is also something Saul promised to the victor over Goliath –

“So the men of Israel said, ‘Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel; and it shall be *that* the man who kills him the king will enrich with great riches, will give him his daughter, and give his father’s house exemption *from taxes* in Israel.’” -1 Samuel 17:25

As for the prize named Achsah, she goes to...

¹⁷ So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife.

The wording here seems to place Caleb’s father as Kenaz and not Jephunneh. This is not right. The Hebrew could mean either Othniel or Kenaz is Caleb’s brother. Othniel is Caleb’s brother, both are sons of Jephunneh. The words *ben qenaz*, or “son of Kenaz,” mean “descendant of Kenaz,” and thus, he is – like Caleb – a Kenizzite as noted in Numbers 32:12.

His name means either Force of God or Lion of God. The NAS uses a different root which would signify Burning of God. Because he is the one to prevail over the city, Achsah goes to him, her uncle, as wife.

The meaning behind Kenaz, or Hunter, was explained in Chapter 14. It signifies a person who seeks after wisdom.

The purpose of the words is to show that both Caleb and Othniel are reckoned as descendants of this Gentile, Kenaz, and Achsah is thus accounted under both in this regard and yet she is being given a set inheritance within Judah as will be described.

18 Now it was so, when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field.

v'hi b'boah va'tsithehu lishol me'eth abiha sadeh – “And it was in her coming and she poked him to ask from her father field.” The word *suth* comes from *shayith*, a thorn. Hence, it figuratively signifies to poke or entice.

The meaning is that in her coming to Othniel as wife, she used that as opportunity to get him to either ask Caleb directly or to have him allow her to ask personally for a field. In Judges 1, the term *ha'sadeh*, or **the** field, is used. Thus, it is a particular field she has in mind. With that...

18 (con't) So she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you wish?”

va'titsnakh me'al ha'khamor va'yomer lah kalev mah lakh – “And jumped down from upon the donkey, and said to her, Caleb, ‘What to you?’” The difficulty here has ended in a wide variety of translations. The word *tsanakh* is found in only two accounts, this one and that of Jael in Judges 4 –

“Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it **went down** into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.” Judges 4:21

What seems the best explanation of this comes from Adam Clarke, where he says, “she hastily, suddenly alighted, as if she had forgotten something, or was about to return to her father's house.”

One can imagine the scene. She is being conducted to the house of her new husband. She leans over and says, “We really need that field with the water. Let me ask him for it.” With that, she jumps down as if she refuses to go further unless she gets what she wants. Caleb is caught completely off guard and asks, “What’s the matter with you?” And then...

19 She answered, “Give me a blessing;

va'tomer t'nah li berakhah – “And answered, ‘Give to me blessing.’” The words mean, “Give to me a gift.” She wants something tangible from him. With that, she explains what...

19 (con't) since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water.”

ki erets ha'negev n'thatani v'nathatah li guloth mayim – “For land the south given me, and give to me springs water.” The word *negev* means south, but it comes from a word meaning parched. Therefore, the land is almost pointless to possess unless water is available.

The word translated as springs, *gullah*, is new. It comes from *galal* meaning to roll. Thus, the water comes up as round and bubbling. Stanley described it in the 1860s, saying –

“Underneath the hill on which Debir stood is a deep valley, rich with verdure from a copious rivulet, which, rising at the crest of the glen, falls, with a continuity unusual in the Judæan hills, down to its lowest depth. On the possession of these upper and lower ‘bubbings,’ so contiguous to her lover’s prize, Achsah had set her heart.” Stanley’s *Lectures*, i. 264.

19 (con't) So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

va'yiten lah eth guloth iliyoth v'eth guloth takhtiyoth – “And gave to her springs upper and springs lower.” The word translated as upper, *ili*, is only found in this account. It comes from *alah*, to ascend. Thus, they are upper springs. The word signifying lower, *takhti*, comes from *takhat*, under. Thus it is the lower or lowest springs.

The account of Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah with the lands they possess is specifically stated here, just before the naming of the cities of Judah, to show what was rightfully theirs is to be reckoned within the overall inheritance of Judah.

*Rolling waters, bubbling forth to us
Providing life in a parched land
They tell us of the glories of Jesus
Who alone sits at God’s right hand*

*The water of the word is what washes us
With it, we are cleansed and sanctified
It is these waters that tell us of Jesus*

Of His perfect life, and that for us He died

*We possess it because it was granted to us
And so, we carry to others this precious word
These rolling, bubbling waters reveal Jesus
It is through them that the salvation message is heard*

II. Cities Within Judah's Land Grant (verses 20-63)

²⁰ This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families:

zot nakhalath mateh bene yehudah l'mishp'hotam – “This inheritance tribe sons Judah to their families.” Some translations make this a closing summary of verses 1-19 based on the borders provided minus the land given to Caleb. That then flows into the naming of the cities. As such, verses 13-19 are essentially a parenthetical insert for clarity.

Others take it as an opening statement concerning the cities that belong to Judah. As Hebron and Debir are listed as cities within Judah in the coming verses without any noted exceptions for Caleb, it seems likely that the first option is correct. As for the land, Cambridge notes –

“The territory of Judah, in average length about 45 miles and in average breadth about 50, was from a very early period divided into four main regions—(i) the South; (ii) the Lowland; (iii) the Mountain; (iv) the Wilderness.” Cambridge

From here through verse 63, these four main areas will be noted with some descriptions of their terminating lines. There will be 112 cities in the counting, plus Ekron, Ashdod, Gaza, and Jerusalem, thus totaling 116 cities. However, the naming of the cities will not match the numbers given. Of these lists, I will provide only a few comments along the way.

There may be a million typological patterns or hidden meanings, but those, if they exist, will be left for someone else to figure out. The main point of listing the cities is to specifically define what belongs to Judah. It is a necessary historical record. Therefore, we will review the verses without giving the meaning of the names.

²¹ The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the border of Edom in the South, were

More literally, it reads, “And were the cities extremity to tribe sons Judah until border Edom in the southward.” The meaning is that this list includes everything to the border of Edom and that is in the southern area of the inheritance.

Cambridge notes, “The South was the undulating pasture country which intervened between the hills, the proper possession of the tribe, and the desert country which marks the lower part of Palestine.” Their cities are –

²¹ (con’t) **Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²² Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³ Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵ Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hezron (which *is* Hazor), ²⁶ Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷ Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, ²⁸ Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Bizjothjah, ²⁹ Baalah, Ijim, Ezem, ³⁰ Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, ³¹ Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³² Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities *are* twenty-nine, with their villages.**

A few things of note: One is that Simeon will receive its inheritance within the borders of Judah. This will fulfill prophecy, but it also explains why some of the cities will be listed here and again in Simeon’s grant later.

Also, one city, Ziklag, is listed for both, but it was never subdued by Israel. It belonged to the Philistines. However, it was granted to David as a gift by Achish, king of Gath, in 1 Samuel 27:6.

Also, though it says 29 cities, depending on how they are listed, (such as “Hazor, Hadattah” or “Hazor-Hadattah,”) there are always more than 29. Various reasons have been suggested, such as 1) clerical error; 2) cities that were given but which were not possessed at that time; 3) joint cities that belonged to Judah and to Simeon; 4) some cities were known by more than one name; 5) some named locations were smaller hamlets or villages; or 6) other cities were later added while the original figure was maintained.

Some of the reasons given are ridiculous. Others may sufficiently explain the disparity.

³³ **In the lowland:**

Of this, Cambridge says –

“The Lowland, or, to give it its proper name, the Shephelah, was a broad strip of land lying between the central mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. From the edge of the

sandy tract which fringes the immediate shore it stretched up to the bases of the hills of Judah—the garden and granary of the tribe—and formed the lower part of the maritime plain which extended along the whole seaboard of Palestine from ‘the river of Egypt’ to Sidon.”

The cities of this area are...

³³ (con’t) **Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah,** ³⁴ **Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam,**
³⁵ **Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah,** ³⁶ **Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim:**
fourteen cities with their villages;

There are fifteen names even though the list says fourteen. However, in this listing, there is an article before Enam, *v’ha’enam*, or “and the Enam.” Enam means “Two Springs.” As such, Tappuah and Enam may be describing the same location – “Tappuah and the Two Springs.” If so, then the number fourteen is solved. If not, there is some other logical reason as stated before.

³⁷ **Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad,** ³⁸ **Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel,** ³⁹ **Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon,**
⁴⁰ **Cabbon, Lahmas, Kithlish,** ⁴¹ **Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah:** **sixteen cities with their villages;**

In verse 40, the name is either Lahmas or Lahmam. The letters for *s* and *m* are very similar in Hebrew and some manuscripts have one or another. Either way, the original exists and so there is no error in Scripture based on this.

Also, one of our dogs, a white chihuahua with ruby eyes is named Naamah (Pleasant). She is, mostly. But at times...

⁴² **Libnah, Ether, Ashan,** ⁴³ **Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib,** ⁴⁴ **Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah:** **nine cities with their villages;**

The cities are named and their number matches. Let’s go on...

⁴⁵ **Ekron, with its towns and villages;** ⁴⁶ **from Ekron to the sea, all that *lay* near Ashdod, with their villages;** ⁴⁷ **Ashdod with its towns and villages, Gaza with its towns and villages—as far as the Brook of Egypt and the Great Sea with *its* coastline.**

The word translated as towns is *bath*, daughter. Hence, it is a daughter to the main city. Also, the cities being mentioned are in the feminine and it is more consistent to do as

King Jimmy did, saying something like, “and her daughters and her villages.” In doing this, other passages in Scripture are more fully appreciated when they are given a feminine aspect.

⁴⁸ And in the mountain country:

u-ba’har – “And in the mountain.” Cambridge says –

“The Mountain, or ‘the Hill Country,’ though not the richest, was at once the largest and the most important of the four. ‘Beginning a few miles below Hebron, where it attains its highest level, it stretches eastward to the Dead Sea and westward to the Shephelah, and forms an elevated district or plateau, which, though thrown into considerable undulations, yet preserves a general level in both directions.’”

⁴⁸ (con’t) Shamir, Jattir, Sochoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kirjath Sannah (which *is* Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven cities with their villages;

The cities are named and their number matches...

⁵² Arab, Dumah, Eshean, ⁵³ Janum, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron), and Zior: nine cities with their villages;

The Masoretic Text has an R instead of a D here, saying Rumah instead of Dumah. The letters are very similar in Hebrew. Other than that, the cities are named and the number matches...

⁵⁵ Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten cities with their villages;

Again, the numbers match what is named...

⁵⁸ Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon: six cities with their villages;

The cities are named and numbered without controversy...

⁶⁰ Kirjath Baal (which *is* Kirjath Jearim) and Rabbah: two cities with their villages.

Again, all is good with the description...

⁶¹ In the wilderness:

ba'midbar – “in the wilderness.” Cambridge says, “...which here, and here only, is synonymous with Arâbah, represents the sunken district adjoining the Dead Sea.”

⁶¹ (con't) Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi: six cities with their villages.

Six cities numbered accordingly. And finally...

⁶³ (fin) As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

It is singular – “As for the Jebusite.” It is referring to the people group as a whole. A similar statement is made in Judges 1 –

“But the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; so the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.” Judges 1:21

Jerusalem was a border city, partly belonging to both Judah and Benjamin. It is, however, an interesting foreshadowing of the importance of the city to be so markedly noted at the end of these verses. It is also a sure note that this was not a later addition after the time of the kings when this could not have been a true statement. It was accomplished at the time of David.

Also, Bethlehem is noticeably missing from these, but eventually, it will become a city of the greatest importance.

*The inheritance is within part of the commonwealth
And so, any can receive what it contains
But you cannot obtain it by trickery or stealth
Rather, those can never remove your chains*

*To have the freedom found in the waters that bubble
You must pay heed to that word
It is the remover of every care and trouble
When you accept the message you have heard*

*And it is not one spring, or seven, or three
No, the streams are numbered at only two
It is in them together that you can be free
Just these two springs will work; nothing else will do*

III. Explaining the Achsah Typology

Translating the names of verse 13 sets the tone – Now to Dog the son of He Will Be Beheld he gave a share among the sons of Praise. We have seen that Caleb anticipates Gentiles. The words signify that believing Gentiles who come to Jesus are given an inheritance among the commonwealth of Israel (sons of Praise).

This is “according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua [Jesus].” Verse 13 continued with the naming of the city. That inheritance was already explained in Chapter 14 and the meaning of the typology can be reviewed there. However, verse 14 adds in the note, “Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.”

Those names are given to explain the position of those who are a part of this joining together (Hebron/Alliance). Sheshai, or Whitish, looks to the purification of the believer because of Christ. Ahiman, “My Brother is a Gift,” is the relationship of the believer to Christ. Christ is the Gift. Talmai, or Plowman, looks to the one who puts his hand to the plow and doesn’t look back. In other words, a believer in Christ.

Verse 15 then noted going up to Debir (formerly Kirjath Sepher). Jesus is the Oracle, the Place of the Word. But He is to be found in the scrolls (as seen in the City of the Books) that speak of Him. Caleb is going there to dispossess the inhabitants and gain possession of it.

Verse 16 notes that whoever attacks the City of the Books and takes it will get Achsah, Caleb’s daughter, as wife. Her name means Anklet, an adornment of the foot. The foot signifies possession. She is the reward for the one who obtains the City of the Books. And the victor in verse 17 is Othniel, the son of Kenaz, brother of Caleb.

Othniel, or Force of God, is also the son of Kenaz, or Hunter. That was explained in Chapter 14 by Abarim as a name based on a profession, similar to many of our own names. Hence it is someone who seeks a form of wisdom like any such profession would.

In his case, it would be as a hunter of men in the sense that he is seeking the wisdom not only for himself, but for others as well. Thus, Othniel is typifying those who expend themselves in the pursuit of the knowledge of God and in conveying that to others.

It is to him that Achsah (Anklet) is given. As an adornment of the foot, she would indicate open and showy possession. But in receiving her after his victory over the City of the Books, he also inherits more. At her prodding, not only will there be a possession of parched land, but there is also request for, and granting of, bubbling waters.

The whole picture can be seen: Caleb signifying the Gentiles being brought into the commonwealth of Israel (Joshua 9), is also guaranteed the inheritance (Joshua 14). But there is more. Caleb possesses the inheritance. The City of Books is subdued.

It is the Bible that tells of Jesus that eventually comes under the responsibility and care of the Gentiles. This is something anticipated back in Genesis 9. Achsah is the prize, the “showy possession,” for the victory. But it is not just a lifeless inheritance that is obtained.

Rather, the waters given to Achsah (and thus to Othniel) are reflective of the living oracles of God, the two testaments, signified by the upper and lower springs – the New and Old Testaments. It is these that bubble up and provide life in the otherwise parched land of existence. They become the possession of the Gentiles.

And yet, that is still within the commonwealth, the borders of Judah. And so, it cannot be said that these are denied to the Jews. The commonwealth of Israel has never ceased to exist. It is the Gentiles who have been grafted into it.

The word has never been unavailable to the Jews, but these oracles have become the passion and possession of the Gentiles. The mantle of the spiritual blessing has gone to them while Israel as a nation has fallen away. Again, this is prefigured in the blessing upon Japheth by Noah in Genesis chapter 9.

This is what is being conveyed. Gentiles are not in any way subservient within Israel, and in many ways, they have taken the lead role for an extended amount of time.

While the Jews have frittered away the last 2000 years, the Gentiles have been hunting for souls and bringing them to Christ, teaching the word, searching out the riches of the word, and – above all – glorying in the Lord Jesus who is revealed in the word.

The account of Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah, with the lands they possess, was specifically placed just before the naming of the cities of Judah to show what was rightfully theirs is to be reckoned within the overall inheritance of the sons of Praise, the commonwealth of Israel.

God is telling a story to us through this word, and He is providing insights into the future, revealing the ongoing narrative in typology, and allowing us to see and understand these things, confirming that we are on the right path as we continue.

For example, Achsah was not given three springs. But Mormonism would necessitate that with “The Book of Mormon – Another Testament of Jesus Christ.” I’m sorry for them, but God has already shown, in advance, that this is not what is going on in the redemptive narrative.

He has methodically been covering every base for us to see what is and what is not acceptable. Nothing is left out, nothing is overlooked, and everything finds its place later that is hinted at in advance.

Do we have a sure word? We sure do.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!” Acts 28:28*

Next Week: Joshua 16:1-10 *One lot wasn’t enough, so it would seem...* (The Inheritance of Joseph – Ephraim) (33rd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

A Share Among the Children of Judah

Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh

He gave a share among the children of Judah

----- (but this was no setback)

According to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua

Namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron

----- (Arba was the father of Anak)

Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there
Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak
-----them he didn't spare
Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir
(formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher)

And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it
-----thus risking his life
To him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife

So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it
-----while keeping his life
And he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife

Now it was so, when she came to him
That she persuaded him to ask her father for a field
-----who could resist that cute little dish?
So she dismounted from her donkey
And Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?"

She answered, "Give me a blessing
Since you have given me land in the South
----- (a land fit for kings)
Give me also springs of water"
So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs

This was the inheritance of the tribe
Of the children of Judah according to their families as we know:
The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah
Toward the border of Edom in the South, toward the south
-----it does go

Were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah
Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, Ziph, Telem, Bealoth (we're not done yet)
Hazor, Hadattah, Kerioth, Hezron (which is Hazor)
Amam, Shema, Moladah, Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet

Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Bizjothjah, Baalah, Ijim, Ezem
Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah

----- (we'll be done in a bit)

Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon

All the cities are twenty-nine, with their villages – that's all of it

In the lowland: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, Zanoah, En Gannim

Tappuah, Enam, Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, Sharaim

Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim

Fourteen cities with their villages – a lot it would seem

Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel

Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, Cabbon, Lahmas, Kithlish

Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah

Sixteen cities with their villages – more than one could wish

Libnah, Ether, Ashan, Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib

Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah – a lot of reading to do

Nine cities with their villages

Ekron, with its towns and villages too

From Ekron to the sea, all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages

Ashdod with its towns and villages – where the swimming is fine

Gaza with its towns and villages—

As far as the Brook of Egypt and the Great Sea with its coastline

And in the mountain country: Shamir, Jattir, Sochoh

Dannah, Kirjath Sannah (which is Debir)

Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, Goshen, Holon, and Giloh

Eleven cities with their villages – hold on! The list's end is near

Arab, Dumah, Eshean, Janum, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah

Humtah, Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron), and Zior

Nine cities with their villages

Hold on... just a bit more

Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah

Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah too

Ten cities with their villages

Don't you fret! We're almost through

Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon:
Six cities with their villages also
Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearim) and Rabbah:
Two cities with their villages, though you may not believe me
-----there's just a bit more to go

In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah
Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi – the last to be named
Six cities with their villages
If your head is swimming, I'm not to be blamed

As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem
The children of Judah could not drive them out, sad to say
But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah
At Jerusalem to this day

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 16:1-10 **(THE INHERITANCE OF JOSEPH – EPHRAIM)**

In the weeks before typing this sermon, a new technology was introduced. It is so important information-wise that it is believed to be as big of a leap forward as it was from flipping through the Yellow Pages to doing an online search.

What's more, it isn't limited to simply searching out information, but developing new ways to produce information. In other words, we may have an idea that we would like to express and this program is capable of producing it. For instance, I'd like it to search out acrostics in the Bible.

In the past, that was limited to doing a personal word-by-word check of each letter in an entire text. That is a long, tedious, and laborious task, even for a very short passage. That was shortened immeasurably some years ago by a code that was written to have a computer do the exact same thing in a few hours.

With this new technology, it may be possible to first write a code that could not only do this almost instantaneously, but it may be able to go beyond that to a code that compiles those acrostics into meaningful sentences with little or no human involvement.

Sergio and I thought of this same thing at basically the same time. Maybe it is something that can be put together. If so, it would speed up the process of uncovering the Bible's mysteries in a way that was once unfathomable.

Text Verse: *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."* -Ephesians 1:15-21

The text verse today is like a short explanation of what is being seen in the ten verses set before us. If you come back and read these words again after the sermon, I think you will

agree. The thing about it is that I was able to do all of this research in a bit under eleven hours.

I never had to get up from the desk to find a book to help me with the Hebrew. I didn't need to flip through a book by Abarim explaining the meaning of names in the Bible. No map of Israel needed to be unfolded and poured over. All of these resources were at the tip of my fingers.

But these things were necessary just a few years ago. The same work would have not been possible for me to do in this manner in order to present the same sermon on it. Instead of eleven hours, I doubt it could have been done in eleven days of eleven hours each.

I had a hot pad on my back, a heater by my feet (it was a cold day), and some gummy bears to eat instead of being hunched over a pile of books with a wood fire to tend to. We live in an amazing time, at least from an information perspective. And information is what I have for you today.

There is an analysis of the verses, an explanation of the meaning of the words, and then a presentation of what they are telling us about the coming of the Messiah.

Great things such as these are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Borders of the Tribe of Joseph (verses 1-4)

Chapter 15 dealt with the borders of the land of Judah, the inheritance of Caleb within those borders but separate from them as a personal inheritance, and then the cities contained within those borders.

With that complete, the account now turns to the inheritance of the great house of Joseph, the favored son of Israel. His name means He Shall Add, with a secondary meaning of Take Away.

It is he who received the right of the firstborn, the double portion. This is specifically noted in 1 Chronicles 5:2, where it says, "yet Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him *came* a ruler, although the birthright was Joseph's."

Joseph's two eldest sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were adopted by Jacob/Israel as described in Genesis 48. Their inheritance in Canaan includes both Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The first task is to decide the borders of Joseph's inheritance inclusive of both sons. That begins with...

¹ The lot fell to the children of Joseph

va'yetsa ha'goral livne yoseph – "And went out the lot sons Joseph." The word *yatsa* signifies to go or come out. As such, it is likely that the lots are either in a pot and dropped out, or they are cast out of the hand. From there, the lots were read as to how they wound up.

Another possible meaning is that the words "went out" are speaking of the actual borders to be described. They "went out" to the children of Joseph from one point to another. This, however, is unlikely based on the other uses of the word. Either way, the lot went out to indicate the border.

^{1 (con't)} from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the waters of Jericho on the east,

mi'yarden yerikho l'me yerikho mizrakhah – "from Jordan, Jericho to waters Jericho eastward." Jordan means Descender. Jericho means Place of Fragrance. As for this southern border itself, it is not the northern border of Judah as one might expect. Rather, it will be the northern border of Benjamin that will be between Judah and Ephraim.

Hence, even though Benjamin's lot will come out later, it will be in the highly favored position which includes the area of Jerusalem on Judah's northern border.

As for the words "to waters of Jericho," that means to the stream which is in the area of Jericho which comes up at the fountain now known as Ain es Sultan. It is the waters that are healed in the account of Elisha in 2 Kings 2. From there, it flows into the Jordan. Next, the description says...

^{1 (con't)} to the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the mountains to Bethel,

The translation is wrong. The word "to" is not in the Hebrew *ha'midbar oleh mirikho ba'har beit el* – "the wilderness, ascending from Jericho in the mountain Bethel." With the clauses taken together, the error in translation becomes evident –

“...from Jordan, Jericho to waters Jericho eastward, the wilderness, ascending from Jericho in the mountain Bethel.” Thus, the words “the wilderness” are given to describe the condition of this portion of the lot, not to define the border. This is evident from the words of Joshua 18:12 when referring to Benjamin’s northern border –

“And the border is to them at the north side from the Jordan, and the border hath gone up unto the side of Jericho on the north, and gone up through the hill-country westward, and its outgoings have been at the wilderness of Beth-Aven.”
Joshua 18:12 (YLT)

Bethel means House of God. With this initial border defined, it...

² then went out from Bethel to Luz,

The seemingly simple words are actually very complicated: *va’yatsa mi’beith el luzah* – “And went out from Bethel unto Luz-ward.” The problem is that elsewhere, Luz and Bethel are noted as the same place, such as –

“And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.” Genesis 28:19

“So Jacob came to Luz (that *is*, Bethel), which *is* in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who *were* with him.” Genesis 35:6

Without being dogmatic, Adam Clarke may be right, saying –

“It is very likely that the place where Jacob had the vision was not in Luz, but in some place within a small distance of that city or village, ... and that sometimes the whole place was called Beth-el, at other times Luz, and sometimes, as in the case above, the two places were distinguished. As we find the term London comprises, not only London, but also the city of Westminster and the borough of Southwark; though at other times all three are distinctly mentioned.” Adam Clarke

Luz means Almond, but it comes from the verb, *luz*, meaning to turn aside, often in a negative way. Here are examples of both –

“My son, let them not depart [*luz*] from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;

²² So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.” Proverbs 3:21, 22

“Because you despise this word,
And trust in oppression and perversity [*luz*],
And rely on them,
¹³ Therefore this iniquity shall be to you
Like a breach ready to fall,
A bulge in a high wall,
Whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant.” Isaiah 30:12, 13

Hence, it can mean Departure, but it also means Twisted or Perverse. From there the border...

² (con't) **passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth,**

v'avar el gebul ha'arki Ataroth – “and passed over unto border the Archite, Ataroth.” Ataroth means Crowns. Archite comes from *arak*, to be long or to prolong. Thus, it means Long or Prolonging. This would be the home of Hushai the Archite noted as David's friend and a wise counselor in 2 Samuel 15. Next...

³ **and went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites,**

v'yarad yamah el gevul ha'yaphleti – “And went down westward unto border the Japhletite.” From a northerly and then a southwesterly movement, the border now heads westward. The name Japhleth comes from *palat*, to escape or deliver. Hence, it means He (God) Will Deliver. Next...

³ (con't) **as far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to Gezer; and it ended at the sea.**

ad gevul beith horon takhton v'ad gazer v'hayu tos'oto yamah – “unto border Beth Horon, Lower, and unto Gezer, and its outgoings seaward.” Beth Horon means House of the Hollow and also House of Freedom. Gezer means Part or Portion.

⁴ **So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.**

v'yinkhalu bene yoseph menasheh v'ephrayim – “And inherit, sons Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim.” It is a concluding statement concerning the land granted to Joseph which

includes both sons, remembering that Manasseh has land on both sides of the Jordan. But this is specifically the land allotted within the borders of Canaan.

Ephraim means both Twice Fruitful and Ashes. Manasseh means both He Shall Forget and From a Debt.

Of this parcel, Cambridge says, “The territory assigned to ‘the house of Joseph’ may be roughly estimated at 55 miles from east to west, by 70 from north to south.”

*He shall add to the inheritance granted to Him today
By being productive and working with His hand
The crops will sprout, and the people will say
“Look at the bounty! Isn’t it grand?”*

*He shall do this when He takes away
The reproach we bore, that clung to us
In Him there is a brand-new day
For those who call out to Jesus*

*The borders have been drawn out
And they have a story to tell us
In reading that story, we will raise a shout
To the marvelous workings of our Lord Jesus*

II. The Borders of Ephraim (verses 5-10)

⁵The border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*:

Now that the borders of the land allotted to Joseph have been determined, it must be divided among his two sons adopted by Jacob/Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh. Of them, the first portion to be delineated will be the younger son, Ephraim. That begins with...

^{5 (con’t)}The border of their inheritance on the east side was Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon.

There is very little information on the borders of the areas given to Joseph. The words are short, abrupt, and seem incomplete. They are also difficult to pin down. As for these words, they read: *vayhi gevul nakhalatam misrakhah Atroth adar ad beith khoron elyon* – “And was border their inheritance eastward Ataroth Addar unto Beth Horon, Upper.”

Ataroth Addar means Crowns of Greatness or Majestic Crowns. Here, a distinction is made between Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon in verse 3. It is believed to be a bit eastward of Lower Beth Horon. Next, it says...

⁶ And the border went out toward the sea on the north side of Michmethath;

v'yatsa ha'gebul ha'yamah ha'mikh'm'thath mi'tsaphon – “And went out the border the seaward the Michmethath from north.” As difficult as the words were to translate in verse 5, Keil says of these words, “the first clause of Joshua 16:6 is perfectly inexplicable, and must be corrupt.”

Almost every translation varies, trying to somehow clear up what is being conveyed. If nothing else, at least the name Michmethath can be defined. Strong's says it is apparently derived from an unused root meaning to hide. Thus, it means Concealment or maybe Hiding Place. As it is prefixed by an article, it would be The Hiding Place. Next...

^{6 (con't)} then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh, and passed by it on the east of Janohah.

v'nasav ha'gebul mizrakhah taanath Shiloh v'avar oto mi'mizrakh yanokhah – “And went around, the border, eastward Taanath Shiloh, and passed over it from east Janohah.” The word Taanath comes from *ta'anah*. It signifies an occasion such as was used in Judges 14 –

“But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD—that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.” Judges 14:4

The name Shiloh, as used here, is not speaking of the coming Messiah. It is derived from *shalah*, to be quiet or at ease, and thus something like Tranquility. The two words together can be defined as Discovered Haven.

The name Janohah is derived from *yanakh*, to put or place. That, in turn comes from *nuakh*, to rest. Hence, it means Rest or He Will Give Rest.

⁷ Then it went down from Janohah to Ataroth and Naarah, reached to Jericho, and came out at the Jordan.

v'yarad mi'yanokhah Ataroth v'na'aratah, u-paga birikho v'yatsa ha'yarden – “And descended from Janohah, Ataroth and Naarah-ward, and impinged in Jericho and went out the Jordan.” The Ataroth here is believed to be different than the one mentioned in verse 16:2. Again it means Crowns. The name Naarah is identical to *naarah*, a girl or young woman who is of marriageable age. Hence, it means Girl.

⁸The border went out from Tappuah westward to the Brook Kanah,

mi'tapuakh yelek ha'gevul yamah nakhal qanah – “From Tappuah goes the border westward brook Kanah.” Tapuakh comes from *naphakh*, signifying to breathe or blow. Thus, it may be Breath. It also means Love Apple, being identical to *tapuakh* found in Proverbs 25:11 and several times in the Song of Solomon.

The word translated as “brook,” *nakhal*, is a torrent, but it is the same as *nakhal* meaning an inheritance which is used in the next sentence of this verse.

The name Kanah comes from *qaneh*, reeds. Hence, it is the brook of reeds. But the reed is used as a measuring stick coming from the verb *qanah*, to acquire or possess. Hence, I would translate the two words together as Inheritance of the Possessor. Of this border, it next says...

^{8 (con't)} and it ended at the sea.

v'hayu tots'otav ha'yamah – “And its outgoings the seaward.” The border ends at the Mediterranean Sea. Of the borders described, and as complicated as they actually are to understand and properly delineate, Charles Ellicott gives a brief and concise summary of what has been presented –

“We thus obtain for the territory of Ephraim four boundary-lines—viz.: (a) the plain of Jordan on the east; (b) the line of hills bordering the Shephelah on the west; (c) the brook Kanah, and the line passing through Taanath-shiloh and Janohah to Jordan on the north; and (d) the north border of Benjamin (Joshua 16:1-3, and Joshua 18:12-14) on the south.” Ellicott

^{8 (con't)} This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their families.

zoth nakhalath mateh bene ephrayim l'misp'hotam – “This inheritance tribe sons Ephraim to their families.” The borders, as difficult to trace as they may be, are defined by the locations set forth in these past few verses.

With that, a special note concerning cities not within these borders is given to ensure there is no confusion as time passed. Properly rendered, verse 8 should probably end with a semi-colon and verse 9 then provides explanation...

⁹The separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

v'hearim ha'mibdaloth livne ephrayim be'tok nakhalath bene menasheh kal he'arim v'hatsrehen – “And the cities, the separated, sons Ephraim in midst inheritance sons Manasseh all the cities and their villages.”

Here is a word found nowhere else in Scripture, *mibdalah*. It comes from *badal*, to divide or separate. Thus, it is “the separated” cities. Taken together with the previous verse, the whole thought should essentially read –

“This *is the* inheritance *of the* tribe sons *of* Ephraim to their families, and the cities, the separated, *belonging to the* sons *of* Ephraim in midst *of the* inheritance *of the* sons *of* Manasseh – all the cities and their villages.”

The meaning is that there were certain cities within the borders of Manasseh that will belong to the inheritance of Ephraim. A specific note concerning them is found in the next chapter –

“And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, that *lies* east of Shechem; and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah. ⁸ Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim. ⁹ And the border descended to the Brook Kanah, southward to the brook. These cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh. The border of Manasseh *was* on the north side of the brook; and it ended at the sea.” Joshua 17:7-9

The same is true with Manasseh having cities that were within the borders of Issachar and Asher.

It is speculated by some that because Ephraim was the larger tribe, they needed these cities. Others suppose it is a way of maintaining the brotherly bond between the two by having this arrangement. Charles Ellicott provides a reasonable explanation while using an understandable example –

“This fact would manifestly tend to produce a solidarity among the several tribes, and to prevent disunion by creating common interests. The interest of the stronger tribes would be served by completing the conquest of the territory assigned to the weaker. And the general formation thus produced would resemble that which was known by the name of the *testudo*, or tortoise, in Roman warfare. When a body of soldiers approached the wall of a town which it was intended to assault, they sometimes held their shields over them, overlapping like scales, each man’s shield partly sheltering his own, and partly his neighbour’s body, so that no missile could penetrate. Thus it may be said not only of Jerusalem, but of all the tribes in the land of their possession, that they were built as a city that is compact together, and at unity in itself: united by joints and bands, so that if one member of the body politic should suffer, all the members must suffer with it.” Ellicott

With the borders now fully expressed for Ephraim, the chapter ends on a failing note, one not unique to the tribes of Israel. The same thought was seen concerning Judah in verse 15:63 and it will be seen again as we progress...

¹⁰ And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer;

v’lo horishu eth ha’k’naani ha’yoshev b’gazer – “And no dispossessed the Canaanite, the dwelling in Gezer.” In these words, there is a difference between what was said in verse 15:63 and what is now presented. Of the Jebusites, it said that Judah could not drive them out. However, here, it simply says they did not drive them out.

Though seemingly the same on the surface, it does not appear that they actually should be considered comparable. This is because of the next words...

¹⁰ (con’t) but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day

va’yeshv ha’k’naani b’qerev ephrayim ad ha’yom ha’zeh – “and dwell the Canaanite in midst Ephraim until the day, the this.” Not only could Judah not drive out the Jebusites, but compare the two statements –

Judah – “and dwell the Jebusite with sons Judah in Jerusalem until the day this.”

Ephraim – “and dwell the Canaanite in midst Ephraim until the day, the this.”

It may just be an excuse to make the sermon longer, or it may be that the wording is purposeful. Judah couldn't drive them out; they were in a fortified location as will be noted in 2 Samuel 5 and that location is on the border of Judah and Benjamin.

On the other hand, nothing is said about any difficulty here. Further, they are in the midst of Ephraim, meaning they could be isolated and eventually starved out. And more, it says...

^{10 (fin)} **and have become forced laborers.**

vayhi l'mas obed – “And become to a burden work.” It appears that this is a marriage of convenience for Ephraim and one of inconvenience, but acceptable tolerance, to the Canaanite. It is exactly what the Lord warned against and commanded not to occur. It is an early foreboding of bad times ahead.

*Words that seem obscure or even wrong
Are set before us and we wonder why
But like the beauty of a heavenly song
They contain treasure that money cannot buy*

*In them there is a story waiting to be drawn out
Wonderful words that reveal amazing things to us
They are waiting to be seen as if ready to shout
About the glorious work of our Lord Jesus*

*Thank You, O God, for this precious word
Thank You for the delightful treasures waiting for us
When they are read out and we have heard
We will again thank You for our precious Lord Jesus*

III. Pictures of Christ

The first three verses of the chapter dealt with the overall lot that fell to Joseph (He Shall Add/Take Away). In verse 1, it was described as from Jordan (Descender) Jericho (Place of Fragrance) to waters Jericho (Place of Fragrance) eastward (to arise or appear). That is

then explained as the wilderness (a place of testing, but also of closeness to God) ascending from Jericho (Place of Fragrance) to Bethel (House of God).

Verse 2 says the border then went out from Bethel (House of God) toward Luz (Departure) from there it passed over unto the Archite (Long/Prolonging) at Ataroth (Crowns).

From there verse 3 says the border descended westward unto the Japhletite (He – God – Will Deliver) and continued unto the border of Lower Beth Horon (Lower House of Freedom) and to Gezer (Part/Portion) and ended at the sea.

With that, verse 4 noted that the children of Joseph (He Shall Add), Manasseh (He Shall Forget/From a Debt) and Ephraim (Twice Fruitful/Ashes) took their inheritance.

The verses anticipate the details of Christ's coming, and the scope of His work as seen in the three named: Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh.

Joseph anticipates Christ who takes away man's reproach and who then adds him to God's people. Manasseh pictures Christ who came to pay Adam's debt and who, in the process, allows that debt to be forgotten before God.

Ephraim looks to Jesus. He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of Jew and Gentile, but His work also meant that sin was judged in Him, thus the ashes, signifying His afflictions.

It is Jesus who descended from heaven bringing the water of life, signified by the waters of Jericho, in His appearing. He went through the wilderness, the testing, and yet He remained in closeness to God through it.

Bethel here anticipates Christ Jesus, the man in whom God dwells as is noted in John 2:19, where He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." His body is the House of God. From there, He went to the cross, symbolized by Luz (Departure).

But the cross could not hold him, symbolized by the Archite (the Prolonging) –

“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,

He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong [*arak*] *His* days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.” Isaiah 53:10

In this, the crowns were bestowed, the crown of the cross and the crown of eternal life, among many others (Revelation 19:12).

The trek then went to “He (God) Will Deliver” (the Japhletite), perfectly explained by the 22nd Psalm –

“He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him;
Let Him deliver [*palat*] Him, since He delights in Him!” Psalm 22:8

God did deliver Him, and He came out of the tomb, the Lower House of Freedom. From which He was granted His part among the living. From there the border ended at the sea, westward, the place where God resides, ever westward.

It was actually at this time that the note about the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance. That was described already, but it was because of this work of Christ as outlined in the borders that the symbolism of the names is fully understood.

Logically, their explanation fits right here in the order in which were presented, but I explained them prior to provide a basis to understand the subsequent verses in advance.

With that, it then turned to the borders of Ephraim (Twice Fruitful/Ashes).

The border was eastward (arise/appear) Ataroth Addar (Majestic Crowns) unto Upper Beth Horon (Upper House of Freedom). From there it went out westward (toward the sea) on the north (hidden) side of Michmethath (Hiding Place).

From there it went eastward (arise/appear) to Taanah Shiloh, (Discovered Haven) and passed by on the east of Janohah (He Will Give Rest). Then it descended from there to Ataroth (Crowns) and Naarah (Girl) and reached to Jericho (Place of Fragrance) and came out at the Jordan (Descender).

Then it went out from Tappuah (Breath) westward to Brook Kanah (Inheritance of the Possessor) and its outgoings were seaward.

It pictures the effects of Christ's work for His people. Those who arise to the call of the gospel are given their majestic crowns of life (Revelation 2:10) and righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8) which are imperishable (1 Corinthians 9:25).

The border going west is the effect of the gospel, drawing us to God (who is ever west) while we are hidden in the Hiding Place, meaning Christ (Colossians 3:3). Going eastward to Taanah Shiloh is the arising of the Discovered Haven, the place for those who come to Christ. This is offered by Christ, symbolized by Yanokhah (He Will Give Rest).

The border then went down to Atroth (Crowns, signifying the rewards of coming to Christ) and Naarah (Girl, the church – a female entity of marriageable age) reaching to Jericho (heaven), coming out at the Jordan, the descending of Christ for His church (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

From there Tappuah signifies the breath of eternal life that comes at that time as we move toward God (westward) to the Inheritance of the Possessor – eternal life in Christ is realized, accompanied by eternally moving toward God, symbolized by the outgoings of the border being seaward.

The final verses mentioned the cities, though not named, including cities in Manasseh. It also noted that all of the Canaanites were not dispossessed. This is a historical note about the situation in which Ephraim found itself, and it will be a part of the continued lesson of life under the law.

Symbolically, it may (total speculation) signify that there are unconverted in the church who will always be there until the end. They may serve the church, but they are not of the people of God. Regardless of that, the borders of the two tribes form a grand picture of Christ and His work.

The borders of Ephraim form another marvelous picture of the effects of His work in the people of the church. The patterns form up in exactly the manner that would be expected of an evaluation of these things.

And some of the words, and how they are used later in the Bible to refer to the coming Messiah completely surprised me. I would think "I wonder if this word is what is being referred to in the Psalms." Upon checking, it is exactly what I thought might be the case. This happened again and again, as it does in sermons like these.

Each piece fits and then builds upon something else so that when we enter the New Testament, the foundation has been laid and we can then compare it to what is presented there. It never gets old because it is so beautifully woven together.

Because of this, be assured and reassured that you are following the right path. God has set it all down for us to see, and also to build up our confidence concerning Christ Jesus. How blessed we are to see such things.

And if you are just hearing about the Lord being hidden in the Old Testament, check it out. You will find out it is so. Jesus said it was all about Him. Put your trust in this wonderful Lord who has revealed such marvelous things to us.

Call on Jesus and be a part of what God is doing in the world. And time is short. So do it today!

Closing Verse: *“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” John 5:39*

Next Week: Joshua 17:1-13 *Pretty great stuff, I must say. In fact, it is the best...* (The Inheritance of Joseph – Manasseh (West)) (34th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Joseph – Ephraim

The lot fell to the children of Joseph from the Jordan by Jericho
To the waters of Jericho on the east as well
To the wilderness that goes up
From Jericho through the mountains to Bethel

Then went out from Bethel to Luz
Passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth, as we know
And went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites
As far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to Gezer it did go

And it ended at the sea, and that not by chance
So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim

-----took their inheritance

The border of the children of Ephraim
According to their families was thus as we continue on
The border of their inheritance on the east side
Was Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon

And the border went out toward the sea
On the north side of Michmethath
Then the border went around eastward to Taanath Shiloh
And passed by it on the east of Janohah

Then it went down from Janohah
To Ataroth and Naarah it then went
Reached to Jericho
And came out at the Jordan, this was its extent

The border went out from Tappuah
Extending quite nicely
Westward to the Brook Kanah
And it ended at the sea

This was the inheritance
Of the tribe of the children of Ephraim
According to their families
A nice patch of land it would seem

The separate cities for the children of Ephraim
Were among the inheritance
Of the children of Manasseh
All the cities with their villages where they could sing and dance

And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer
But the Canaanites dwell, something rather dumb
Among the Ephraimites to this day
And forced laborers they have become

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 17:1-13 (THE INHERITANCE OF JOSEPH – MANASSEH (WEST))

A portion of our verses today deal with the five daughters of Zelophehad. They were introduced in an offhand manner in Numbers 26, and then they were brought to the forefront of the narrative in Numbers 27.

The particular issue concerning them was that of inheritance of land. It was a complicated matter that had to be settled by the Lord. The Lord's decree was given, and it completely resolved the matter for them at the time.

However, the decree concerning the inheritance brought another issue to the surface that needed a resolution. If not resolved, the daughters' inheritances could easily cause problems for their entire tribe, and – by extension – the tribal rights of the entire nation.

One thing would lead to another. Without a suitable resolution, there would eventually be breakdown in the structure of the nation. Small things can lead to major problems if not thought through.

It isn't that the Lord wasn't aware of these details in advance. Rather, He knew exactly what the consequences of such a matter would be. But to ensure that these things were written directly into the law, He allowed the people to think through the issues and come forward for His judgment.

Text Verse: *"I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."* Acts 26:17, 18

When Paul spoke about his conversion and the purpose of it, the Lord gave him several reasons for the ministry he had been chosen for such as opening the Gentile's eyes, turning them from darkness to light, and so on. But the main purposes for the individual were forgiveness of sins and the granting of an inheritance.

The idea of an inheritance is having something bestowed at a particular time for an heir. The daughters of Zelophehad were told they would be granted an inheritance in the name of their father. Later, it was resolved that certain conditions had to be met in order for that inheritance to be granted.

Now, because they had met those conditions, the inheritance awaits them. This is such an important issue that these girls' situation has been given more time in Scripture than many other figures of seemingly greater importance.

The details are methodically recorded in order to show us a part of what God has done in Christ in typology. Because of Him, we have the opportunity to obtain the inheritance set aside for those who meet the conditions set forth.

The ladies came forward to claim their inheritance. They didn't go forward and say, "We hope we still have this available to us." They cited the law and that was that. Nothing was said of their individual lives after meeting the stated conditions because those details are irrelevant. They did what was expected of them, and the matter was resolved.

How many people have met the stated conditions for receiving the inheritance, received the guarantee provided, and yet walk about in absolute insecurity in their minds concerning what is granted? They hold the guarantee! It was made by God who does not lie. All they need to do is claim it when the time comes.

If you are somehow troubled as to whether or not your salvation is secure, that is because you misunderstand what God did. It is not because Christ's work is somehow lacking. Don't let anyone disqualify you from the joy of knowing, one hundred percent, that you are saved if you have called on Jesus. Trust the word! You are.

Hints of this state in which you stand because of Jesus are found today in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Lot for the Tribe of Manasseh (verses 1-6)

¹ There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh,

v'hi ha'goral l'mateh m'nasheh – "And was the lot to tribe Manasseh." Manasseh means He Shall Forget, but also From a Debt. He was the first son of Joseph and was born in Egypt. He and his brother Ephraim were adopted as sons of Jacob for inheritance rights.

Half the tribe of Manasseh has already received an inheritance east of the Jordan as was meticulously recorded several times. Of him, it says...

¹ (con't) **for he *was* the firstborn of Joseph:**

There is an emphasis in the words: *ki hu bekor yoseph* – “For HE firstborn to Joseph.” Despite having already received an inheritance east of the Jordan because of the valor of Machir, as recorded in Numbers and as restated by Moses in Deuteronomy 3:15, he was also granted land along with the other tribes west of the Jordan.

The reason for the emphasis is that despite Ephraim receiving the blessing of Jacob over Manasseh as recorded in Genesis 48, he was to receive the double portion based on the rights of the firstborn. That double portion is restated next for clarity...

¹ (con't) ***namely* for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead,**

Machir means Salesman. Gilead means Perpetual Fountain. As a historical point, though this is speaking of Machir, it means the family of Machir. They are being referred to as Machir for the purpose of inheritance. Machir died long ago. Further, one might think this is referring to Machir's son, Gilead, recorded in Numbers 26 –

“The sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir begot Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the Gileadites.” Numbers 26:29

However, the name in this verse in Joshua is prefixed by an article: *l'makhir bekor m'nasheh avi ha'gil'ad* – “to Machir firstborn Manasseh father the Gilead.” Therefore, this is not speaking of his son Gilead, but of the land of Gilead – the Gilead.

What appears to have happened is that Machir named his son Gilead before the land of Gilead was taken in battle. 1 Chronicles 7:14 says that Manasseh bore Machir by a concubine from Aram. This would explain why he then named his own son Gilead, which was in the land of Aram.

Gilead is the border area between Syria and Canaan. Machir may have called Gilead this to honor the union between the two people groups from which he came. It also explains why this is said in Numbers 32 –

“And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who *were* in it. ⁴⁰ So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it.” Numbers 32:39, 40

The same place from which Machir's son was named – because of the union between his father and mother, Manasseh and Manasseh's Aramitiss concubine – became their possession. It appears he was determined to obtain this land because of its connection to his genealogy. Thus, it next says...

^{1 (con't)} **because he was a man of war; therefore he was given Gilead and Bashan.**

Gilead means Perpetual Fountain. Bashan means Place of Fertile Soil. There is again an emphasis in the words: *ki hu hayah ish milkhamah vayhi lo ha'gil'ad v'ha'bashan* – “for HE was man war and was to him the Gilead and the Bashan.” Thus, the term “father of the Gilead” refers to his status as the possessor of this land.

Likewise, the words “father of Gilead,” without the article, means that he is the father of the person named Gilead. He was a man of war, intending to obtain this land. He fought and subdued it, and so Moses gave it to him. But he also named his son after the land. That covers what belonged to this tribe east of Jordan. Next, the second portion will be detailed...

² **And there was a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families:**

Here, a verb is used in place of a noun: *vayhi livne m'nasheh ha'notarim l'mishp'hotam* – “And was to sons Manasseh, the remainings, to their families.” As Machir obtained an inheritance east of the Jordan, and as these families intended to enter Canaan proper, giving them an inheritance west of Jordan fulfills the double portion requirement given to the firstborn son.

^{2 (con't)} **for the children of Abiezer, the children of Helek, the children of Asriel, the children of Shechem, the children of Hephher, and the children of Shemida;**

Abiezer means My Father is Help. Khelek means Portion or Smooth. Depending on the root word used, Asriel means God Has Filled with Joy or Vow of God. Shechem means Shoulder. Khepher means either Well (from dig) or Shame. Shemida means Knowing the Name or Fame of Knowledge.

^{2 (con't)} **these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.**

The original is more precise: “these sons Manasseh, son Joseph, the males, to their families.” The word “sons” here means “descendants” because it is accepted that Manasseh had only one son, Machir. Therefore, these are probably grandchildren of Manasseh and sons of Gilead.

Despite that, the reason for this specificity is realized in the next verses. It is a problem that arose during the wilderness wanderings and the resolution of it required Moses to go directly to the Lord for a decision to be made...

³ But Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters.

Because inheritances are given through the male, this would cause a problem when the women married. If they married outside of the tribe of Manasseh, then the land would transfer to the son of the father and thus away from the tribe of Manasseh.

As Hopher was one of the six main families, the tribe could ostensibly lose one-sixth of their land to other tribes. This could be the case at any point in Israel’s future if a father had only daughters. The inheritances would become so convoluted that tribal lands would no longer truly exist. Tselophehad means Shadow of Fear.

^{3 (con’t)} And these *are* the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

Mahlah means Infirmary. Noah signifies Shaky Girl or Wandering. Hoglah means Turning in Joy. It is akin to the word *khag* which is a festival. Milcah means Queen. Tirzah means Well-pleasing or Delight.

Now that the inheritance is ready, the matter previously brought before Moses and settled at the word of the Lord is brought forth again to ensure that what was decided will come to pass...

⁴ And they came near before Eleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying,

These five women are coming to ensure the promise of the Lord would be accomplished. They were obedient to marry within their tribe. In so doing, their children would receive a portion in the name of their father within the tribe also...

⁴ (con't) **“The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers.”**

This was recorded in Numbers 27 –

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ⁷ ‘The daughters of Zelophehad speak *what is right*; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father’s brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them. ⁸ And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter. ⁹ If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father’s brothers. ¹¹ And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the relative closest to him in his family, and he shall possess it.’ And it shall be to the children of Israel a statute of judgment, just as the Lord commanded Moses.” Numbers 27:6-11

The only caveat is that these ladies had to marry men within their tribe. That judgment comprises the contents of Numbers 36. After it was rendered, it then said –

“Just as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad; ¹¹ for Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to the sons of their father’s brothers. ¹² They were married into the families of the children of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father’s family.” Numbers 36:10-12

With their obedience noted, it next says...

⁴ (con't) **Therefore, according to the commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among their father’s brothers.**

This was a huge amount of land and so any deviation would have caused an immense upheaval in the tribal land grant to Manasseh. But with the decisions of the Lord rendered, the grant would remain forever unchanged. Therefore...

⁵ **Ten shares fell to Manasseh,**

va’yiplu khavle m’nasheh asarah– “and fell cords Manasseh ten.” Here the word *khevel* or “cord” is used. Cords were used for measuring long distances. Hence, it is metaphorically used to speak of a tract of land. Ten individual tracts were measured out according to the families of Manasseh.

At first, the number of parcels seems to make no sense. How could there be six sons named, but ten divisions of the land? It is because Hephher, having no sons, is divided among his five daughters. Thus, there are the parcels of his five brothers and five parcels for his daughters. This was...

^{5 (con't)} **besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side of the Jordan,**

These ten shares, along with those adjoining them on the other side of the Jordan pretty much span the total breadth of the land inhabited by Israel. They almost appear like wings in the midst of the other tribal grants because of the vast amount of land they encompass. The number of parcels being ten is then explicitly explained, which is...

⁶ **because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons;**

ki benoth m'nasheh nakhalu nakhala betok banav – “for daughters Manasseh inherited an inheritance in midst his sons.” The record of the entire process of this event is extremely precise since the matter first arose in Numbers 27.

The meticulous nature of chronicling this land division for the daughters is most remarkable, but it sets the precedent for all time concerning this issue and it shows the importance of both maintaining the name of the dead as well as maintaining the integrity of the tribal inheritances according to their original layout. With this settled, the division of Manasseh on both sides of the Jordan is mentioned one last time...

^{6 (con't)} **and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.**

v'erets ha'gil'ad hayethah livne m'nasheh ha'notarim – “And land the Gilead had sons Manasseh, the remainings.” The same verb used in verse 2 when referring to those west of the Jordan is now used of those east of the Jordan. The implication is that the tribe is not a whole without considering both allowances. Together, they form the double portion of the oldest son of Joseph who was then adopted by Jacob as his own.

*An inheritance awaits us that is sure and true
It is given to all who come forward and receive
It was secured by Christ Jesus, Faithful and True
It is ours for the taking if we just believe*

Calling on Jesus is what is good in God's sight

*The inheritance is ours, though we did nothing it to receive
Eternal life, dazzling and bright
Is ours for the taking if we just believe*

*Don't fail to come forward; hear the plea
It is waiting if you will but receive
You and all the saints, around the glassy sea
It is yours for the taking if you just believe*

II. The Borders of Manasseh (verses 7-13)

7 And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, that *lies* east of Shechem;

The actual borders of Manasseh's inheritance in Canaan are the subject of the next verses. Verses 7-10 detail the southern borders, beginning in the east. Verses 10 and 11 define the northern and eastern borders.

The first border begins at Asher or Happy. This is not the tribe of Asher, but a location known as such. It then goes to Michmethath, meaning Concealment or maybe Hiding Place. As it is prefixed by an article, it would be The Hiding Place. This location rests, as the Hebrew reads, "upon the face of Shechem." Hence, its location stands before Shechem.

7 (con't) and the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah.

More literally, it reads, "and went the border unto the right, unto dwellers En Tappuah." Tappuah comes from *naphakh*, signifying to breathe or blow. It means Love Apple and also breath. Being preceded by En, or Spring, it means Spring of the Love Apple or Eye of the Apple or Spring (Eye) of Breath. The word for eye and spring are identical in Hebrew.

Saying "to the inhabitants of En Tappuah" is a bit odd, but it means that the city itself did not belong to Manasseh. Rather, the border went as far as those residing in the country around Tappuah where there was a spring. That is seen in the next words...

8 Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh *belonged* to the children of Ephraim.

The wording is a bit more precise: *lim'nasheh hayethah erets tapuakh v'tapuakh el gebul m'nasheh livne ephrayim* – “To Manasseh had land Tappuah, and Tappuah unto border Manasseh to sons Ephraim.” There is land in the area of Tappuah that belonged to Manasseh, but the city and maybe any land outside of it, right up to the border of Manasseh, belonged to Ephraim.

⁹ And the border descended to the Brook Kanah, southward to the brook.

The name Kanah comes from *qaneh*, reeds. Hence, it is the brook of reeds. But the reed is used as a measuring stick coming from the verb *qanah*, to acquire or possess. Hence, I would translate the two words together as Inheritance of the Possessor. Of this border, it next says...

^{9 (con't)} These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh.

It is debated if this means the cities already mentioned (Asher, Michmethath, En Tappuah, and Tappuah), or if it is referring to cities on the border that descended to the river from the previous clause. Either way, the point is that there are cities that were filled with those from the tribe of Ephraim within the borders of Manasseh. This was already seen in Joshua 16:9.

^{9 (con't)} The border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook;

The meaning is that even though the cities of Ephraim are north of the brook, the border of Manasseh goes to the north side of the brook. Thus, the Ephraimite cities lie within the border of Manasseh, which is north of the brook. It may be confusing, but it is being stated explicitly so that the details are recorded, and the ownership of the cities is defined.

^{9 (con't)} and it ended at the sea.

v'hi tos'otav ha'yamah – “And his outgoings the sea-ward.” It means that the border continues until it reaches the sea.

¹⁰ Southward it was Ephraim's, northward it was Manasseh's,

Again, to ensure the border is perfectly understood, it restates the matter in another way, using the brook as a reference: *negbah l'ephrayim v'tsaphonah lim'nasheh* –

“Southward to Ephraim and northward to Manasseh.” This despite the location of cities that are occupied by people of Ephraim.

10 (con’t) and the sea was its border.

It is speaking in the masculine of Manasseh as a person: “And was the sea his border.” The land represents the person, Manasseh, as much as the tribe fills the land. Next...

10 (con’t) Manasseh’s territory was adjoining Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.

There is an emphasis in the words: *u-b’asher yip’geun mi’tsaphon u’b’yisakhar mi’mizrakh* – “And in Asher impinged (certainly) from north, and in Issachar from east.”

The border of Manasseh followed the sea from Ephraim as far as Asher where they impinged upon one another. It then went eastward until it reached Issachar. From there, it went around Issachar and would have come to the Jordan where it went southward to Ephraim.

11 And in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beth Shean and its towns, Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns

Issachar means He is Wages. Beth Shean means House of Ease or House of Security. Ibleam means Devouring the People or The People Flow Forth. Dor means To Dwell, but it is identical to the word translated as generation, as in the time period of one’s dwelling. En Dor would be the Spring of Dor.

The meaning of Taanakh is uncertain. Some think it is derived from an Egyptian word; others from an Arabic word. There is no corresponding root word found in Scripture. Megiddo comes from *gadad*, to penetrate or cut. Hence it signifies Invading or Intruding.

11 (con’t) —three hilly regions.

The words are complicated: *sh’loshet ha’naphet* – “three the *naphet*.” *naphet* is variously translated as counties, regions, coastal districts, heights, villages, etc. Some translations punt and make it a name “The third is Napheth.” It comes from *noph*, meaning height. So it is probably the three heights or hilly regions.

The point of the verse is to show that just as Ephraim had cities within Manasseh, so Manasseh had cities within Asher and Issachar. The repeated words “the inhabitants” means that contrary to the word of the Lord, those who dwelt in the cities and their villages were not exterminated as stated in the law...

¹² Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants* of those cities,

v’lo yakh’lu bene m’nasheh l’horish eth he’arim ha’eleh – “And no able sons Manasseh to dispossess the cities, the these.” This is the same thing said of Judah in Joshua 15:63. Saying they were not able almost makes it seem excusable. That continues to be the perception in the next words...

^{12 (con’)} but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land.

va’yovel ha’k’naani la’sheveth ba’arets ha’zoth – “And determined the Canaanite to dwell in land the this.” They were determined, so Manasseh had no choice but to live with them. This shows both a lack of trust in the power of the Lord, and an unwillingness to ask the other tribes to simply assist them in destroying the natives. This is perfectly evident from the next words...

^{13 (fin)} And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

The word Canaanite is singular and there is an emphasis in the Hebrew: “And was when strong, sons Israel, and gave the Canaanite to forced labor, and dispossessing no dispossessed him.” If they were able to make these people submit to forced labor, then they were able to exterminate them. They just didn’t.

Like the tribe of Ephraim, this became a marriage of convenience for Manasseh and of inconvenience, but acceptable tolerance, to the Canaanite.

*Giving thanks to God who has qualified us
To be partakers of the inheritance
It is a done deal through our Lord Jesus
Of losing it, there is just no chance*

*He has delivered us from the power of darkness
And He has conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love
Without Christ, there would be no hope; what a mess*

But because of Him, assurance of glory rains down from above

*In Him we have redemption through His blood
And in Him there is the forgiveness of all of our sins
Come to Christ and be immersed in the cleansing flood
Come to Christ who for you the victory wins*

III. An Assured Inheritance

The first verse of the chapter reintroduced Machir and his inheritance east of the Jordan. That was stated again to ensure that there is no doubt that the inheritance west of the Jordan is distinct from that east of it.

Verse 2 begins to detail this inheritance of Manasseh, which means To Forget but it also means From a Debt. Mentioning him anticipates Christ who came to pay Adam's debt and who, in the process, allows that debt to be forgotten before God.

The verse also mentions that Manasseh is the son of Joseph, or He Shall Add. Christ is the One who adds those to be saved. Joseph also means Take Away. Christ is the One who takes away the reproach of those He saves.

The inheritance west, in Canaan, is given to six sons of Manasseh. The number six signifies man, especially fallen man. These six sons anticipate Christ who came in the form of sinful man. But the focus is on the fifth son, Khepher, or Shame.

Five is the number of grace. Khepher anticipates Christ who bore our shame in order to redeem us. From there, Zelophehad, or Shadow of Fear, is named. He had no sons, only daughters, and they are named in the text.

He anticipates people who have no inheritance. Thus they live in the shadow of fear. And yet, the Lord guaranteed them an inheritance by His word and according to law.

That same Lord who secured the inheritance through His work also fully rendered the payment for the inheritance. He grants it to those who, seemingly deprived of it, are exalted to the obtaining of it.

The law provided the path for Zelophehad's name to be continued and to ensure that the inheritance would not fail. This is seen in the names of those in his family. Zelophehad represents those born in sin, in the "shadow of fear." As Hebrews says –

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:14, 15

This state of fear of death, brings forth Mahlah, or the sickly, infirm person, bound in sin. There is a state of pain because of the fallen condition in which man exists. Such a person, like Cain, is left in a land of wandering, represented by Noah. This lasts until the person finds Christ.

At that time, Hoglah, or Turning of Joy, enters into the picture. And in that turning of joy in obtaining the inheritance, Royalty is bestowed upon that soul, represented by Milcah, or Queen. In Revelation 1, this is recorded –

“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5, 6

In this state, and as inheritors of the divine promises of God found in Christ, His people are found well pleasing to God, represented by Tirzah.

These five came before Eleazar, or Whom God Helps, and Joshua, or The Lord is Salvation, who is the son of Nun, meaning Propagate or Increase. The names tell the story. They reflect the Lord in the various roles He serves in order to increase the family of God, securing the inheritance for them.

The daughters remind these men that the Lord commanded Moses to give them an inheritance among their brothers. This implicitly expresses the doctrine of eternal salvation. They were given the promise, the conditions were met, the law was satisfied according to the word of the Lord, and they have come to collect the inheritance.

It is well reflected in Ephesians 1:14 where the giving of the Holy Spirit upon belief in the completed substitutionary work of Christ brings about the guarantee, the pledge of salvation. It is a pledge granted to the one saved and payable by the One who gave it.

This explains why verse 3 began with a listing of the genealogy of Zelophehad, naming Hopher, Gilead, Machir, and Manasseh. Those of Manasseh on both sides of the Jordan descend from Manasseh’s son Machir. The root of Machir is *makhar*, to sell.

It is used in Isaiah 52, just before the words about the coming Suffering Servant, saying –

“For thus says the LORD:
‘You have **sold** yourselves for nothing,
And you shall be redeemed without money.’” Isaiah 52:3

It is man who sold himself and Jesus who redeemed us. That then explains why the chapter began with the inheritance east of the Jordan. Machir inherited the Bashan, the Place of Fertile soil, and the Gilead, the Perpetual Fountain. Being the only son of Manasseh, he actually inherits both land grants which went to Manasseh as the firstborn of Joseph.

The fertile soil is the word of God. The perpetual fountain anticipates the Spirit ceaselessly coming forth. This is how the inheritance comes about: hearing the word and receiving the Spirit. The inheritance west of the Jordan was then noted as being ten shares. Ten “implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete” (Bullinger).

The inheritance is not wanting in any way. It is complete. This is why it specifically recorded that it was “because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons.” Without this, the inheritance would be incomplete. But it is perfect. It is a resounding note of the wholeness of the work of Christ.

With this understood, the verses after that defined the borders of Manasseh, each anticipating the work of the Lord in one way or another, as has been the case with the previous tribal allotments.

They also noted the overlapping cities with the tribes they border. Each of these certainly has typological fulfillments. The meaning of which will surely include the work of Christ and its effects on His people, focusing on the guaranteed inheritance of the saints. This is certain because many of the same names were used as in Chapter 16. Historically, the record is necessary to properly define the land, the borders, and the possessions for the tribal inheritances.

As for the final verses that detail Israel’s failures concerning the inhabitants they did not drive out, those are necessary to explain why things in Israel later continued to fail as they did. Each of these recorded failures is actually a violation of the law. As such, it shows the collective guilt of the people.

Because of their guilt, the Lord would send corrective measures which temporarily returned them to the right path, but time and again, they fell back into their waywardness. As such, each cycle only further emphasized Israel's need for a Messiah.

The nation could not save itself, nor could any individual within the nation save himself. The law highlighted the fallen nature of man and the guilt he bears for failing to measure up to God's perfection.

But remember, these people had received their inheritance. Despite that, the failures continued. That is a lesson all by itself for each of us. We have received our inheritance in Christ, and yet we – like Israel – still fail the Lord. We need His salvation until the inheritance is finally realized in its fullness.

It is faith in Jesus that grants the inheritance, and it is Jesus' sustaining salvation that guarantees it will come. This is the lesson of Israel. God covenanted with them, and He has continued to sustain them all these years because of His faithfulness.

In Christ, God has covenanted with us, and He is faithful to uphold that, even when we fail. Thank God for Jesus who makes this possible. We have a sure and marvelous hope set before us because of what He has done and what He continues to do. Yes, thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *"Cast your burden on the Lord,
And He shall sustain you;
He shall never permit the righteous to be moved."* Psalm 55:22

Next Week: Joshua 17:14-18 *Out of nothing, just a clean slate...* (You Shall Create) (35th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Joseph – Manasseh (West)

There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh
For he was the firstborn of Joseph, a deal not too bad
Namely for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh
The father of Gilead

Because he was a man of war, he got his war game on
Therefore he was given Gilead and Bashan

And there was a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh
According to their families, as the record does convey

For the children of Abiezer, the children of Helek, the children
-----of Asriel
The children of Shechem, the children of Hephher, and the children
-----of Shemida also
These were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph
According to their families as the records show

But Zelophehad the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead
The son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only
-----daughters, boo hoo
And these are the names of his daughters:
Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah too

And they came near before Eleazar the priest
Before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying
“The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance
-----among our brothers”
So they were conveying

Therefore, according to the commandment of the LORD
-----such was His druthers
He gave them an inheritance among their father’s brothers

Ten shares fell to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan
Which were on the other side of the Jordan, a place not so bad
Because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance
-----among his sons
And the rest of Manasseh’s sons had the land of Gilead

And the territory of Manasseh
Was from Asher to Michmethath, ooh rah
That lies east of Shechem
And the border went along south to the inhabitants of En Tappuah

Manasseh had the land of Tappuah
But Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children
-----of Ephraim, according to the book
And the border descended to the Brook Kanah
Southward to the brook

These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh
That's how it turned out to be
The border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook
And it ended at the sea

Southward it was Ephraim's, northward it was Manasseh's
And the sea was its border
Manasseh's territory was adjoining Asher on the north
And Issachar on the east according to the tribal order

And in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beth Shean
-----and its towns
Ibleam and its towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its towns as well
The inhabitants of En Dor and its towns, the inhabitants of Taanach
-----and its towns
And the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns—three hilly regions
-----locations pretty swell

Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants
-----of those cities
But the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land
-----so Manasseh failed, no doubt
And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong
That they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not
-----utterly drive them out

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise

Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 17:14-18 (YOU SHALL CREATE)

On sermon typing day, my friend Sergio will often send me twenty messages in a row, just to be as annoying as possible. But that's ok, I do the same to him while he is trying to do his video work. Other than him, I have contact with absolutely no one from the time I start till the time I finish. This has been true for years. An exception to this is truly an exception.

While studying the text for this sermon, there were some rather amazing inaccuracies in the translation of the verses. I noted to Sergio how fascinating the passage was and a few minutes later he came back with some comments on the first verse.

I responded with some analysis from verses 15 and 16. He came back with a dubious, "Yes that sounds right." But after going through it a bit more, he said, "Yes. Wow. Incredible." To make sure he wasn't funning me, I asked if he really agreed with my conclusion and his response was, "Can't believe you paid attention."

In other words, while translators are spending their time trying to make a translation sound good and understandable, they will often miss the actual meaning of the words. Feeling good about this, I told Sergio that I actually just ran my thoughts through AI and that is what popped out. After that, I spent the morning playing solitaire.

Ok, that didn't happen, but for fun, Sergio asked his AI resource for a sermon on our verses today. About one minute later, he sent me this –

"In Joshua 17:14-18, we see the story of the tribe of Joseph, specifically the half-tribe of Manasseh, who were given a large portion of land on the west side of the Jordan River. However, instead of being satisfied with the land they had been given, they complained and asked for more. This passage reminds us that it is easy to become discontent and never feel satisfied with what we have been given. It is important to remember to be grateful for the blessings that we have received, rather than constantly striving for more. Let us strive to cultivate an attitude of gratitude and trust in God's provision for our lives."

Being a little weak, he strengthened the parameters, asking it to "write a short sermon paragraph in an expository style about Joshua 17:14-18. Focus on the meaning of the Hebrew words and how this passage points to Jesus."

Thirty seconds later, I got this –

“In Joshua 17:14-18, we see the tribe of Joseph, specifically the half-tribe of Manasseh, requesting more land from Joshua. The Hebrew word used for "more" in this passage is ‘od,’ which can also be translated as ‘still’ or ‘yet.’ This implies that the half-tribe of Manasseh already had a significant amount of land, but they were not satisfied and wanted more. This passage serves as a reminder of our own tendency to always want more, even when we have already been blessed with so much. However, this passage also points us to Jesus, who came to fulfill the desires of our hearts. In Philippians 4:19, Paul writes, ‘And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.’ Just as God provided for the Israelites, He also provides for us, and we can trust that He will give us what we truly need. Let us seek to find contentment in Jesus and trust in His provision for our lives.”—AI

Well, so much for letting AI do the work. Hopefully what is presented today will be a bit better than that.

Text Verse: *“And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:
‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
27 For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.’” Romans 11:26, 27*

It’s hard to understand how anyone can read the words of Paul and come to any other conclusion than that they are referring to national Israel of the future. But that is exactly what many think. It is stupefying to even imagine.

Our passage today will deal with this issue in detail. But having heard the verses from the NKJV, or almost any other version, you probably would never guess it. But look at some of the variations in translation you will see today –

**then go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants. NKJV*

**Go up, to you the forest and create to you, there in land the Perizzite and the Rephaim. CG*

**since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you. NKJV*

**for hastened to you Mount Ephraim. CG*

*The mountain country is not enough for us. NKJV

*Not found (meaning able to attain) to us the mount. CG

Reading the differences in these two translations is almost like reading an entirely different account. One thing is for sure, either one is right, and one is wrong, or they are both wrong, but both cannot be right.

What is the Lord telling us, and why is what is being said so hard to understand? The reason is what we are looking for. Translators will tend to reject things that don't seem to make sense, even if that is the obvious translation of what is presented.

But in following this strategy for translation, a lot of meaning will be missed. I think you'll agree by the time we finish. If not, and if you prefer something a little easier to listen to, let me know and I will have the AI put out 25- page sermon for you next week. That will take about 10 minutes and I'll have the rest of the day to play solitaire.

Be sure to let me know what you decide. 10 minutes or 10 hours, I leave it up to you 😊. I hope you will go with the 10 hours. Such great treasure is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. For Hastened to You Mount Ephraim (verses 14-18)

¹⁴ Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying,

Here is a united voice of those of Ephraim and Manasseh. Together they form the voice of their father Joseph. The right of the firstborn was granted to him by Jacob, meaning a double portion. As such, this is making a play on the name Joseph.

Joseph or Yoseph, comes from the verb *yasaph*, to add. Thus, his name means He Shall Add. However, there is another meaning to his name based on his mother's declaration at his birth –

“Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.
²³ And she conceived and bore a son, and said, ‘God has taken away [*asaph*] my reproach.’ ²⁴ So she called his name Joseph, and said, ‘The LORD shall add [*yasaph*] to me another son.’” Genesis 30:22-24

She not only used the word *yasaph*, to add, but also the word *asaph*, to gather or remove. As such, his name means He Shall Take Away as much as it means He Shall Add. This duality of name meanings extends to both of Joseph's sons as well. Ephraim and Manasseh each have dual meanings.

As for the double portion of the firstborn having been granted to him, that goes back to Jacob's blessing upon his sons in Genesis –

“And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.” Genesis 48:5

During this blessing, Jacob placed the younger, Ephraim, above the older, Manasseh –

“So he blessed them that day, saying, ‘By you Israel will bless, saying, “May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!”’ And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.” Genesis 48:20

Immediately after that, he then spoke of the surety of the double blessing to Joseph –

“Then Israel said to Joseph, ‘Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.’” Genesis 48:21, 22

Because of this, the events of these verses in Joshua 17 take place. One can see the hidden pun of this opening clause by translating the names in it – *vaydaberu bene Yoseph eth Yehoshua* – “And spoke sons He Shall Add to the Lord is Salvation.”

The sons of He Shall Add are coming to get a little more added...

¹⁴ (con't) **“Why have you given us *only* one lot and one share to inherit,**

Rather, the preposition is singular: *madua nathatah li nakhalah goral ekhad v'khevel ekhad* – “Why given to me inheritance – lot one and portion one?” The *goral*, or lot, is the casting of the grant itself. The *khevel*, or cord, is the measurement of that lot into a granted portion of land.

The two tribes of Joseph speak with one united voice. Because of their words, one might wonder if they had been out drinking all night or something.

A little background will help explain. First, the numbers of the tribes at the first census were 40,500 for Ephraim and 32,200 for Manasseh (Numbers 1:32-25). It is true that together they outnumbered every tribe except Judah, but individually, they were not exceptionally large in number.

At the second census, the numbers of Manasseh were more than Ephraim. Ephraim was 32,500 and Manasseh was 52,700. Together, they could be considered a large tribe, being 8700 larger than the largest tribe of Judah.

However, one-half of Manasseh wanted land east of the Jordan. This was granted. Taking them out of the total, the number left to occupy the grant west of the Jordan would be comparable to one of the middle or even smaller sized tribes.

And more, it may be that the land grant of Judah was significantly larger than that of Joseph's land west of the Jordan, but Simeon will be incorporated within Judah's land grant. And even more to the point, Judah's land contains vast areas that are barren wilderness.

On the other hand, the land given to the sons of Joseph is rather large in proportion to their numbers and it contains some of the most fertile and productive land to be found within the borders of Canaan. Add in the giant swath of land east of the Jordan that was immensely good land for pasturing flocks, and they had more than any other tribe, by far.

What would cause them to claim they had insufficient land, or only one inheritance is hard to guess. Maybe they had been drinking too much the night before. Or it could be, based on what they will say in the coming verses, that they are claiming the only inheritance they have is what has been given to the half-tribe east of the Jordan. Whatever it is, a review of their recorded inheritance is needed.

The lot for both was introduced in Joshua 16:1-4. From there, the land of Ephraim was detailed in verses 16:5-10. After that, verses 17:1-13 detailed that of Manasseh. The land for both was decided and then it was divided between the two.

It is possible that they felt jipped by getting one lot which was then divided, or only Manasseh is speaking out the complaint because it had grown so much during the

wilderness wanderings while Ephraim had diminished. As such, they felt they were due more land. But neither of these will seem to fit with the protestations they lay before Joshua.

The entire discourse is unreasonable based on what was just reviewed. And yet, they are presenting it as if there is an obvious deficiency in their allotment. It could be that because Joshua is of the tribe of Ephraim, they thought he would bear with their complaint and give them a note of favoritism. He will, however, remain steadfast in showing impartiality. Their complaint is...

¹⁴ (con't) **since we *are* a great people, inasmuch as the LORD has blessed us until now?"**

Again, it is singular: *va'ani am rav ad asher ad koh ber'khani Yehovah* – “And I, people great until which, until now, has blessed me, Yehovah.” This is the only time that Yehovah is mentioned in this passage, and it appears that they are claiming that what they have been apportioned is not a blessing from Him at all.

They have been blessed up until now, but that doesn't seem to include what they have been handed at this time. Their words are laughable in comparison to their numbers and in relation to what they have been allotted.

What they claim is obviously not correct, but something has motivated them to speak as they have, and Joshua immediately perceives what it is. He addresses it directly and he does it by using their own words...

¹⁵ **So Joshua answered them, “If you *are* a great people**

There is a strong emphasis as he repeats their claim right back to their ears: *va'yomer alehem Yehoshua, im am rav attah* – “And said to them, Joshua, ‘If people great, you...’”

They made the claim. If it is so, and if the land they have is supposedly insufficient for them, then there must be a problem within the land that they are unwilling to address. Instead, they want more (or other) land so that they can avoid that issue altogether. Joshua knows this and subtly uses their boasting to highlight their cowardice...

¹⁵ (con't) ***then go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the giants,***

aleh lekha ha'yarah u-beretha lekha sham ba'erets ha'perizi v'ha'rephaim – “Go up, to you the forest and create to you, there in land the Perizzite and the Rephaim.”

The problem isn't the amount of land at all. The problem is the inhabitants in the land. The tribes have boasted of their size, supposedly necessitating more land and so Joshua hurls their words back at them – “If you are so great, you don't need more land, you need a backbone.”

In his statement, he uses the word *bara'*, or create. It is the first use of this word in Scripture not connected to God and it appears intentional. There is another word he could have used, *khatav*, meaning to cut wood. But he goes beyond that and says, “Go create something out of the forest. Make it usable you great people. God, through the lot, created a portion for you. Now go create something out of it.”

The need for a backbone is twofold. First, they need to get to work with their creating. And second, Joshua seems to poke at them that they need to do it “there, in the land of those settled-in people, including the dreaded giants.”

There is an obvious failure of these people to rely on the Lord. He had promised to go before them, and He had done so, never failing them in the process. With the land allotted by Him, all they needed to do was trust and act.

As for the people groups, Perizzite comes from *perazi*, a hamlet dweller. Thus, it means something like Villager or Dweller in an Open Country. Rephaim comes from a word meaning to sink down or relax or from a word meaning to heal. If the latter, then it indicates that their size came from being invigorated in some way, probably through special inbreeding.

Joshua has identified their failing and he has told them what to do about it. Their complaint about land really comes down to accessibility...

¹⁵ (con't) **since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you.”**

Rather than “too confined,” as if that is all that is being referred to, it is Joshua speaking about the speed in which they will be able to subdue the mountainous area: *ki ats lekha har ephrayim* – “for hastened to you Mount Ephraim.” Mount Ephraim is being used as a synecdoche referring to all of the mountainous area apportioned to them.

In this, Joshua uses the word *uts*, to hasten to labor. It appears to be another poke at them. “Look at how easy Mount Ephraim is. You will have it all cleared out in no time. You just need to get to work and put a little effort into your inheritance.” With that, the moaning of Joseph continues...

¹⁶ But the children of Joseph said, “The mountain country is not enough for us;

Not living up to their name, He Shall Add, Joseph moans against Joshua’s words. Further, their answer is not that the mountain country isn’t enough. Rather, they are refuting Joshua’s claim that they can attain it speedily: *lo yimatse la’nu ha’har* – “Not found to us the mount.”

The meaning is not that the mountainous area is not enough for them, as if they needed more. Rather, the word is *matsa*, to find or attain. They are saying that they cannot overtake it. The people living there are too strong, they have settled into the area and are fortified, and there will be no way to drive them out.

Joshua said that the sons of Joseph will hasten to attain it and they claim that it is unattainable. They are wallowing in their own incompetence and ineptitude while failing to trust in the unseen hand of the Lord. With that, the moaning goes further...

¹⁶ (con’t) and all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron,

It is all singular: *v’rekhev barzel b’kal ha’k’naani ha’yoshev b’erts ha’emeq* – “and chariot iron in each the Canaanite, the dweller in land the valley.” It is a total exaggeration. Though they possessed chariots, these men claim that each and every Canaanite in the area had one, making it sound like they were as common as front doors on houses.

As such, they grumble that not only can they not attain the mountainous country, they also could never defeat those in the valley. The Canaanite was too strong, and they could never drive him out. Unlike the mountainous area where the people were dug in and fortified, these people were in the open areas.

This is where chariots are suitable and effective. Any obstruction at all would render them useless, but in open areas they are quite lethal. However, despite being a fearful weapon of war, it is not something beyond their ability to defeat.

In the battle of Joshua 11 by the waters of Merom, Joshua handily defeated the vast army and burned their chariots with fire. They knew this and yet they peevishly whine about the sizeable and beautiful grant of land they had been provided.

The entire passage demonstrates a complete lack of faith in the Lord and the promises He has made. Of the armies with chariots, they continue their grouching with the words...

¹⁶ (con't) ***both those who are of Beth Shean and its towns and those who are of the Valley of Jezreel.***"

la'asher b'beith sh'an u-b'noteha v'la'asher b'emeq yiz'rael – "to who in Beth Shean and her daughters and to who in Valley Jezreel." The term "daughters" means towns. Thus, it speaks of the smaller towns that fall under the protection of the mother city.

The entire clause speaks of utter defeat. Not only are they afraid of the main city, but they are irritable about even attacking the little towns around it. And those in the valley, open and exposed in the wide expansive area, are thought to be too tough for them to handle because of their chariots.

As for the names, Beth Shean means House of Ease or House of Security. Jezreel means God Sows. Being prefixed with *emeq*, or valley, it would be the Depth of God Sows, the *emeq* being a deep, broad valley.

Despite their whimpering, Joshua remains unaffected...

¹⁷ **And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—saying,**

Rather than "spoke," it uses the word "said." Further, the chronicler says his words are directed "to the house of Joseph." They have come to him with a complaint about their inheritance and so he addresses them as one.

His words confirm what I said earlier. Their initial complaint, which continues here, is that their only inheritance is that already given to the half-tribe east of the Jordan. What they have been granted west of the Jordan is unattainable and so they are left with that single land grant – whiners...

But, remaining undeterred, Joshua pokes them with great and emphatic words, even greater than they claimed themselves...

17 (con't) **“You are a great people and have great power;**

am rav atah v'koakh gadol – “People great, you! And power whopping!” They came to Joshua with a claim that they were a great people, meaning numerous. Joshua has used the same word, *rav*, in the sense of powerful.

They obviously didn't get it the first time, and so he adds in superlatives to almost mock them at their wincing attitude. The thing is, they cannot refute him. He has never failed in a battle, is of their same stock (meaning of the house of Joseph), and has had the Lord with him.

They are the entire house of Joseph, they are numerous, and they have accompanied Joshua into battle, having learned the skills he possesses. And more, it would be blasphemous for them to claim the Lord is not with them as well. They know this, and they know Joshua knows they know it. Hence...

17 (con't) **you shall not have *only* one lot,**

lo yihyeh l'kha goral ekhad – “No shall be to you lot one.” Their griping has left Joshua entirely unaffected. What is east of Jordan is for the half-tribe of Manasseh. What is west is for Ephraim and half of Manasseh. And that land west of the Jordan is sufficient for both of them.

The matter is decided, the challenge is set before them, and it is their task to secure what has been decided by the lot. The land has been marked out, and now it is time for them to act. And so, Joshua continues...

18 **but the mountain country shall be yours.**

ki har yihyeh lakh – “For mountain shall be to you.” As in verse 15, the word *har*, or “mountain,” is referring to the entire mountainous area of the land grant. It is given to the house of Jacob. And it is attainable...

18 (con't) **Although it *is* wooded, you shall cut it down, and its farthest extent shall be yours;**

ki yaar hu u-bereto v'hayah lekha tots'otav – “For forest it, and you shall create, and shall become to you its outgoings.” Joshua implies that the forest will sufficiently provide for them. With the wood, they can fashion weapons, they can build houses, and so on.

In other words, it should not be considered an obstacle, but a benefit. In cutting down the forest, they will also have the benefit of workable fields. The land is good, it is available, and they will be able to subdue it.

There is a formative process that must take place, but when it is accomplished, their goal of possessing a second lot will have been obtained. Joshua's words are direct, but they are also encouraging. All of this would belong to them.

Many scholars say the "outgoings" refer to fields and plains that border the wooded area, but what seems more likely is that it is referring to the sea which borders the inheritance on the west. The Canaanites dwelt throughout the land, even to the seacoast. That will belong to them as well because, as he says...

18 (con't) for you shall drive out the Canaanites,

It is again singular: *ki torish eth ha'k'naani* – "For shall disinherit the Canaanite." They have been granted their inheritance from the Lord by lot. They are to disinherit those in the land in order to receive it. Joshua has remained fixed and resolute in his words. They are capable despite the force they will face...

18 (con't) though they have iron chariots

Rather than "though," Joshua makes a statement of fact: *ki rekev barzel lo* – "For chariot iron to him." It seems almost like he is trying to intimidate them, and without his previous words, one would wonder what he was talking about. But Joshua has already told them that they are able, that they will prevail even against iron chariots, and even more...

18 (fin) and are strong."

The passage ends with Joshua making a strong and emphatic statement that seems contradictory to the intent of the matter: *ki khazaq hu* – "For strong, he." Not only does the Canaanite possess chariots, but he is a strong foe. Despite this, the house of Joseph will prevail.

The final verse of the passage contains five statements, each beginning with *ki*, or for –

*For mountain shall be to you.

*For forest it, and you shall create, and shall become to you its outgoings.

- *For shall disinherit the Canaanite.
- *For chariot iron to him.
- *For strong, he.

Each is based on what was previously stated. This because of this:

“No shall be to you lot one. Because mountain shall be to you. Because forest it, and you shall create, and shall become to you its outgoings. Because shall disinherit the Canaanite. Because chariot iron to him. Because strong, he.”

*Behold, I create something new
 Something glorious lies ahead that you will see
 Believe that what I say, I will do
 You can put your full confidence in Me*

*I shall create it and it shall be done
 There will be a new order of things on that day
 As sure as is the rising of the sun
 So there is surety in what I now say*

*What you cannot imagine is what I will do
 Though you disbelieve now, it shall come about
 My word is faithful, and it is true
 Be confident in this and have no doubt*

II. Pictures of Christ

The inheritance of the half-tribe of Manasseh is east of the Jordan. In Joshua 12:1-6 it was noted that this was an inheritance obtained prior to national Israel’s salvation. In this case, a review of the events leading to the inheritance after Israel’s salvation is being detailed.

The passage deals with the house of Joseph, or He Shall Add, with a secondary meaning of Take Away. Joseph was to receive a double inheritance. If the land for the half-tribe of Manasseh is one inheritance, then there needs to be another.

The thing about this section is that it does not have to be chronological to what has already been said. Beginning it with “Then” as some translations do gives a time order sense, but it actually begins with “And.”

Because of this, the lot for their land could have been thrown at the time of their coming forward. The inheritances noted in Chapter 16 and the first half of this chapter could simply be categorical, just as has repeatedly occurred in Joshua. The inheritances are defined, and then background information is filled in.

That seems likely, but it is speculation. The reason it seems likely is that their claim to only one inheritance having been given them seems to presuppose it. Regardless of that, the matter is now addressed.

Joshua anticipates Christ, the Lord is Salvation. But each named tribe does too. The inheritance east of the Jordan is prior to Israel's national salvation. Whether it pictures the church or just individual Jews within the church isn't the issue because the Jews are a part of the church. It (with them) is an inheritance.

Putting aside the whining of the house of Joseph, which is certainly historical and accurate, the point of the words is that there is a second inheritance for Joseph due to the birthright. Likewise, there is a second inheritance for Christ due to His right to Israel, something testified to thoroughly in the books of Moses, the prophets, and so on.

The negative attitude of those who come to Joshua implies the difficulty of the task. Despite Jesus not being negative about the events, the difficult nature of providing an inheritance to national Israel is being seen.

In fact, to much of the church, it appears to be an impossibility. So the tenor of the words explains the reality of Israel's current situation. It seems impossible that it could ever be the case.

In verse 15, the naming of the Perizzites and the Rephaim highlights this. Rephaim, as seen in Joshua 12, anticipated those who follow false prophets. That is about as accurate a description of Israel today as anyone could imagine – any word from the Lord is ok as long as it isn't from Jesus.

Joseph, He Shall Add (and Take Away), picturing Jesus, is to add national Israel to His promised inheritance. He is to "create" land (fertile soil which is useable) out of these people groups. A seemingly impossible task.

Joshua (Jesus) lets it be known that the job is a snap – it is hastened labor to obtain "Mount Ephraim." As has been seen in previous sermons, a mountain (*har*) is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people.

The meaning is that Ephraim (Twice Fruitful) representing this second inheritance will hasten to come about.

Verse 16 noted that the sons of Joseph said they could not attain to this. That is the historical record. It may be doubted that the Lord Jesus will bring about the restoration of national Israel, but it will come about. Despite the staggering amount of apostasy and false prophets, through Christ, it will happen.

From there, another obstacle, the Canaanites, is mentioned along with their iron chariots. Canaanite signifies Humbled, Humiliated, or even Subdued. Iron represents strength, be it in binding together, in government, in hard service, in bondage, etc.

Chariots, like horses, are a source of pride –

“Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.
⁸They have bowed down and fallen;
But we have risen and stand upright.” Psalm 20:7, 8

Israel is a land of humiliated people, trusting in self and in doctrines that are strongly bound together, such as in the culture and religious aspects of life. Saying these are in the *emeq*, or deep broad valley, signifies that they are deeply engrained and completely pervasive in them.

The two locations, Beth Shean and the Valley of Jezreel, signify Israel’s confidence and state of ease in their false ways and God sowing into their lives the just due they deserve–

“It shall come to pass in that day
That I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.” Hosea 1:5

Like most prophecies, Hosea’s has an immediate fulfillment and a future one. Also, the writings of Hosea prophesy both the casting off of Israel, “You are not my people,” (Hosea 1:8) and the calling again of Israel, “You *are* my people,” (Hosea 2:23).

Verse 17 mentioned Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh all as one. It is the three two-fold workings of Christ seen previously in Joshua. Joseph anticipates Christ Who takes away man’s reproach and Who then adds him to God’s people. Manasseh pictures Christ who

came to pay Adam's debt and who, in the process, allows that debt to be forgotten before God.

Ephraim looks to Jesus. He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of Jew and Gentile as well as the church and national Israel. But His work also meant that sin was judged in Him, thus the ashes, signifying His afflictions.

To them Joshua acknowledges that they are great and whoppingly powerful. Of course, Christ can prevail over the failings of Israel. Therefore, "you shall not *only* have one lot." The double inheritance belongs to the Lord.

With that, the fivefold repetition of "For" was proclaimed.

For mountain shall be to you. The centralized people group of Israel shall be His.

"Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁶ "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel, his companions.' ¹⁷ Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand."

-Ezekiel 37:15-17

For forest it. It is a forest, a cluttered and unusable land that needs to be created –

"For behold, I create [bara] new heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;

For behold, I create [bara] Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing,

And her people a joy.

¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem,

And joy in My people;

The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her,

Nor the voice of crying." Isaiah 65:17-19

In creating this, it "shall become to you its outgoings." In other words, the entire extent of Israel, to the very last person, will be holy.

For shall disinherit the Canaanite.

“In that day ‘HOLINESS TO THE LORD’ shall be *engraved* on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.” Zechariah 14:20, 21

The reason for disinheriting those who oppose Him is **For chariot iron to him**. Those who trust in self and in their firm unyielding false doctrines will either have those doctrines removed from them, or they, meaning those who trust in self, will be removed. Either way, nothing that is false will ever afflict Israel. This must be removed, **For strong, he**.

The meaning is obvious. Falsities are strong, dangerous, invasive, and pernicious. Those who teach them will be removed. Those who hold to them will be corrected or destroyed. This is what the double inheritance of the house of Joseph anticipates.

The inheritance is not merely the church that is saved during the church age. National Israel is the inheritance of Jesus as well. He was promised this, and it is His by inheritance.

The verses today are an explanatory statement of this fact. The thing about the passage that most strikes me is that without a correct translation of the Hebrew words, a completely different meaning is derived, which has nothing to do with what is actually being conveyed.

Hence, to really understand what is being said, one needs to go beyond reading several versions of the word (which is a good start), and go line by line through the text contemplating each word. It is a long, laborious, and tedious task, but what treasure is to be found in the word!

In such a study, we can be assured and reassured of the integrity of Scripture, the soundness of doctrines and the unsound nature of others, and so on. There are innumerable teachers and denominations that reject any future plan for, or significance of, national Israel. But they will be corrected in their thinking someday.

They have failed to understand what God is doing and why, but through a close evaluation of names, places, and obscure words, it all comes more clearly into focus. Above all, let us hold fast to the most fundamental truth of any. All of Scripture is about Jesus.

Without Him nothing in life makes sense and nothing in His word or this world has clarity. But with Him, our lives have purpose and meaning. And the word, it comes alive when we look for Him in its pages. Thank God for this tender and precious word and thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen and amen.

Closing Verse: *“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”*

-1 Peter 2:9, 10

Next Week: Joshua 18:1-10 *It was a whopping gathering. You can bet it was so... (Israel Assembled Together at Shiloh) (36th Joshua Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

You Shall Create

Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying
“Why have you given us only one lot and one share to inherit
Since we are a great people
Inasmuch as the LORD has blessed us until now?
----- surely more land we merit

So Joshua answered them, “If you are a great people
Then go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself
-----this you shall do
There in the land of the Perizzites and the giants
Since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you”

But the children of Joseph said, “The mountain country
-----is not enough for us
And all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley
-----have chariots of iron, as you know well
Both those who are of Beth Shean and its towns
And those who are of the Valley of Jezreel”

And Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph
To Ephraim and Manasseh, saying
“You are a great people and have great power
You shall not have only one lot. Hear what I am conveying

But the mountain country shall be yours
Although it is wooded, you shall cut it down, it’s where you belong
And its farthest extent shall be yours
For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have
-----iron chariots and are strong”

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 18:1-10 **(ISRAEL ASSEMBLED TOGETHER AT SHILOH)**

People can be maddening. There are lots of ways they can be maddening: politically, poor driving, throwing stuff on the ground instead of simply putting it in the trash, and so on. People are often maddening.

Today, there is another way people can drive one another mad: when they are on the internet. Using this tool, people can hide away and eviscerate others without a care. They hide behind keyboards and say things they would never think of saying eye to eye.

This is as true with supposed Christians as anyone else. They can twist Scripture, sermonize, and so much more, all without having a clue about what the Bible actually says.

On the Monday I typed this sermon, I checked my email to see if there was anything pressing before beginning sermon prep. If there is ever an email from someone I haven't seen before, I will usually at least open it and see what it says, even if I don't answer it until later. The very first email I opened said –

“Hi, I came across your website, and from there I was taken to your Youtube channel. The LORD told me to contact you. Your ‘Jesus Freak’ head covering is offensive and disrespectful to the LORD; and, it is worldly. We serve a Holy GOD and those who want to work for Him are servants and not "freaks!" GOD expects us to bring our best and be our best, especially when we are ministering to others since we are the LORD'S representatives. You can afford more than a t-shirt. You should have at least a short or long sleeve dress shirt or a casual shirt; and, some dress pants or casual pants. Be the best representative that you can be. May GOD guide you!”

Trust me, this isn't just going to be me whining about a nasty email. This will be tied in with the content of today's sermon. Hold on and you will see.

Text Verse: *“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Colossians 1:28*

It was actually quite propitious that this person emailed me on Monday morning. I at least got a sermon introduction for the passage out of the exchange. Weeee! It all works out sometimes. 😊

As for the email itself, despite the obvious logical fallacies and the unclear thinking that goes along with them, there was nothing sent along from Scripture to support the inane conclusions that were made. Rather, I had to correct this person on several points, the most obvious of which is that the Lord never said a word, as in having spoken, to this person. That is what the Bible is for.

But even if He did (which He didn't) He wouldn't say something contrary to the word He has given us. I reminded this person about 1 Timothy 2:11, 12, gave a couple of other pointers, and requested her not to email again.

Without addressing the points made, this person is filled with self, legalism, and really doesn't care about the word. Like most people that want to destroy others, after they have attempted to do so, they then turn around and act as if they have done nothing wrong in the process. In fact, the person closed with a note of supposed encouragement. The attitude is like that of the adulteress in Proverbs 30:20.

Instead of saying things without knowledge or living without knowledge, we need to be fully equipped in all aspects of our lives, especially our spiritual lives. That will actually be seen in today's passage, a great part of His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Survey the Land (verses 1-7)

¹ Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh,

v'yiqahalu kal adath bene Yisrael Shiloh – “And assembled whole congregation sons Israel, Shiloh.” The word translated as “assembled” is *qahal*. It signifies to gather as an assembly, being derived from the noun *qahal*, meaning an assembly.

The word translated as “congregation” is *edah*. It is referring to the main assembly of people. The nouns, *edah* and *qahal* were used in the books of Moses in a precise manner, but they are almost synonymous.

The Greek translation of this verse uses the words *ecclesia* (a called-out assembly) and *sunagóge* (the place, or people gathered together, normally in a religious manner), saying, “And an assembly (*ecclesia*) was held, all the congregation (*sunagóge*) of the sons of Israel in Shiloh.”

This is surely the sense of the Hebrew as well. The idea we should get from this first clause is that the congregation has been assembled around the main part of its religious life, meaning the tabernacle now located at Shiloh.

With the tribal lands having been settled for those tribes east of the Jordan along with Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh west of the Jordan, and with the land relatively subdued in those areas, this is the first noted permanent move of the congregation as a whole.

The congregation has, until this point, been situated in Gilgal. However, that is along the Jordan almost tucked away in a corner of the land. This move is now made to centralize the focus of Israel's religious and governmental life within the borders of Canaan. And so, the move is made from Gilgal to Shiloh.

Shiloh is about 25 miles north and just a bit east of Jerusalem and about 10 miles directly south of Shechem. It falls within the already delineated borders of the tribe of Ephraim.

The name Shiloh, as used here, is not speaking of the coming Messiah, even if a connection to Genesis 49:10 may be made. The name is derived from *shalah*, to be quiet or at ease, and thus its meaning is something akin to Tranquility.

It is a fitting name for the situation. Twice, in Joshua 11:23 and in 14:15, it specifically says that the land rested from war. Therefore, the move from Gilgal (Rolling Away/Liberty) to Shiloh (Tranquility) is made. That this is a religious assembly of the congregation is seen in the next words...

¹ (con't) **and set up the tabernacle of meeting there.**

va'yashkinu sham eth ohel moed – “And caused to dwell there Tent of Meeting.” There is a lack of precision in many translations here. It is not the “tabernacle of the congregation” (KJV) or the “tabernacle of meeting” (NKJV) or any other such variation. It states, “Tent of Meeting.”

To understand the difference, it says in Exodus 39:32, “Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished.” There, two descriptions are given, *mishkan ohel moed* – “tabernacle, tent of meeting.”

The tabernacle is the dwelling place, and the tent is what covers the dwelling place. The two are noted separately and yet belonging one to the other. Here, the focus is on the

tent that covers the tabernacle. It is the part of the edifice that the congregation would see from the outside. This is settled in Shiloh because...

¹ (con't) **And the land was subdued before them.**

v'ha'arets nikbash liphnehem – “And the land was subdued to their faces.” The word is *kabash*, meaning to subdue or bring into bondage. It can be used in a positive way signifying victory or subjugation by the subject, or a negative way with the exact same thought but reversed, meaning subjugation upon the subject.

Its first use in Scripture was in Genesis 1:28, and the parallel to that along with the work of Christ shouldn't be missed –

“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it [*kabash*]; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

-Genesis 1:28

Man was given dominion over the earth, something that was never realized in its proper sense. Hence the story of Israel's entry into Canaan is given as a typological example of what was spoken in Genesis. But Joshua is given as a typological anticipation of the more complete work of Christ. With that, the passage next says...

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

The Hebrew is more precise: “And remained in Israel which not had divided their inheritance – seven tribes.” This then is the subject of the passage. Despite the land resting from war as well as the Tent of Meeting now dwelling in Tranquility, there is a state of tranquility lacking among the tribes.

As for the word translated as “tribe” here, it is *shevet*, and refers more to the governmental or political nature of the tribe. This will be used in verses 2, 4, and 7.

However, when the land is actually designated for each tribe, the word *mateh*, also translated as “tribe,” will be used. That speaks more of the genealogical or family nature of the tribe. For now, these seven political bodies need to be settled. Therefore...

³ Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: “How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you?”

The word “neglect” is *raphah*. It has a variety of significations, but one of them is to be idle or lazy. This is probably Joshua’s intent. In Exodus 5, when Israel was under the bondage of Egypt, they asked to be allowed to sacrifice to the Lord in the wilderness. In response to that, Pharaoh called them lazy or idle. This is probably the same sense that Joshua now uses.

The Lord brought them out from bondage, through the wilderness, and into the land. He had gone before them to subdue their enemies, even giving them rest, and yet they had not gone on to obtain their inheritances. Instead, they lolled around the Tent of Meeting in a semi-nomadic life. The land was before them and it needed to be subdued, and yet, they just kept on loafing their lives away. Hence, Joshua says...

⁴ Pick out from among you three men for *each* tribe, and I will send them;

More precisely it reads, “Give out to you, to tribe, three men to the tribe, and I will send them.” There is a lot of unnecessary speculation on these words. They are simple and direct.

And yet, one valid point of speculation is whether Joshua is speaking to the seven tribes noted in verse 2 or all of the tribes as indicated in the words of “the children of Israel” in verses 1 and 3. The answer is not given and so suggestions are that it is either 21 men (3 from each of the 7 tribes who have not yet received their land grant) or 36 men (3 from each of all 12 tribes).

It could even be that Levi was included because they will dwell in some of the cities, and it is the cities that are to be surveyed as noted in verse 9. If so, then the number would be 39 men. It is impossible to know, but these are several options.

I would go with all of the tribes because the whole congregation was addressed in the opening of the passage. Further, it would provide additional manpower to accomplish the task and it would provide a full sense of fairness and impartiality. From there...

^{4 (con’t)} they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come *back* to me.

Precisely, it reads: “and shall rise, and walk in the land and write it to mouth their inheritance and come to me.” With these words, one might argue that it is only speaking of the seven tribes because it refers to “their inheritance.”

But that is just the point. They have not yet received their inheritance. It is what the seven tribes will receive, and so it is still possible that all the tribes participated in the survey. It is not critical, or the word would have told us, but it is also good to think the matter out as to what is being said. They shall survey the land...

⁵ And they shall divide it into seven parts.

There is nothing said here of equality of size or number of cities. However, the cities – as will be seen – are the prime consideration of the divisions. But still, there had to be a consideration concerning the type of land, the quality of the land, the amount of arable land, the number of rivers or brooks or whether it was on the ocean or Sea of Galilee, etc.

This is pretty obvious when looking at the divisions on a map. Whatever they determined would be a suitable basis for division is what would then be brought back to Joshua. However, there is a curious thing about the next words...

^{5 (con't)} Judah shall remain in their territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall remain in their territory on the north.

Yehuda yaamod al g'bulo mi'negev u-beith Yoseph yaamdu al g'bulam mi'tsaphon – “Judah shall stand upon his border from south, and House Joseph shall stand upon borders from north.” The meaning here is not referring to the land of Canaan as if Judah is the southernmost border and the House of Joseph comprises the northernmost border.

Rather, this is from the reference point of where the people are now in Shiloh. As that is within Ephraim, and Manasseh is north of Ephraim, Joshua is speaking of the present borders in relation to his current location.

As such, all of the other area that has not yet been designated as land belonging to the remaining tribes is to be divided into seven parts. This includes where Benjamin and Dan will eventually be which is between Ephraim and Judah.

The curious thing, however, is that when the seven divisions are made, one of them will be within the borders of Judah that have already been decided. Nothing is said of this, and yet, the next chapter will clearly indicate that it is so –

“The inheritance of the children of Simeon *was included* in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the children of Judah was too much for them. Therefore the children of Simeon had *their* inheritance within the inheritance of that people.” Joshua 19:9

Therefore, it would appear that this determination must have been made prior to what is being said here. If the land is to be divided into seven parts (verses 5 & 6), and if that was what happened (verse 9), then the decision for this to have been done is already made, even if it has not been explicitly stated. Because of this, it is another good indication that all of the tribes were involved in the survey, not just the seven awaiting their lot.

⁶You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts and bring *the survey* here to me,

Again, it is specific: “And you shall write the land, seven parts, and bring to me here.” There are to be seven divisions of the land, and yet one of the divisions is within Judah. One way the land could fall within Judah while having not been previously decided is if Judah were to have said during the surveying, “We have too much land, let’s measure out a portion from our inheritance.” Another would be based on the words of a scholar named Ritter –

“The result of this examination, which was unquestionably a more careful one than that made by the spies of Moses, was that the unsubdued territory was found to be too small for the wants of seven tribes, while that apportioned to Judah was seen to be disproportionately large. To remedy this difficulty a place was found for Benjamin between Judah and Ephraim, and the portion of Simeon was taken out of the southern portion of Judah, while both Judah and Ephraim had to give up some cities to Dan.”
Ritter

That such a grievous error as Ritter suggests seems highly unlikely. However, the curious thing is that nothing is said either way about this in the survey itself. And yet, it is integral to the entire history of the people, and it will also fulfill a prophecy made by Jacob hundreds of years earlier –

“Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of cruelty *are in* their dwelling place.
⁶ Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united to their assembly;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.
⁷ Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.” Genesis 49:5-7

Being the priestly tribe without a land inheritance, Levi is set aside to be scattered in Israel. Simeon’s designation within Judah will result in the same thing. They will essentially be assimilated into Judah and mostly not bear their own identity. The land is to be surveyed, including this odd and unstated addition...

⁶ (con’t) **that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.**

The address is to all (you, pl.) but the word “lot” is singular: *v’yariti la’khem goral poh liphne Yehovah elohenu* – “And I shall cast to you a lot here before Yehovah your God.”

This is probably not speaking of a single stone, but rather it may be like using the word “blessing” in the singular even while talking to many, as is seen in Exodus 32:29. As such, the Lord’s decision is one, even if it is realized in seven parts just as the Lord’s blessing is one, falling on many.

It is an interesting way of expressing things. But it is not unlike what a preacher might say – “I have a word to speak before God for you.” It is one word, but it is received by each.

⁷ **But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance.**

This is stated as a reason for dividing the remaining land among seven tribes. Obviously, Judah and “the house of Joseph” are already excluded based on verse 5. But to be clear on the remaining tribes, as one necessarily needs to be when dealing with possessions, Levi is again noted as being excluded from an inheritance.

The priesthood entitles them to the tithes and offerings along with the Levitical cities within the borders of the inheritances. As such, they have no need for a tribal inheritance. They will be reaping from the land vicariously through the efforts of the people. Those belong to the Lord, and they are to be distributed among them as outlined in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

This sentiment was already seen in Chapters 13 and 14. Placing the three side by side will more fully help to see the precept –

Only to the tribe of Levi he had given no inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as He said to them. (13:14)

But to the tribe of Levi Moses had given no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as He had said to them. (13:33)

For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. ⁴ For the children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property. (14:3, 4)

But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance. (18:7)

^{7 (con't)} **And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.”**

Like the exclusion of Levi, which included the reason for it, this must be noted to ensure that no later claims could arise by the named tribes. As seen in verse 2, the word used here is *shevet*. It is the political aspect of the tribe.

The precision of the wording is evident in which words are used to ensure that nothing can later bring the inheritances into question. During the time of Moses, the inheritance of those two and one-half tribes was granted, and their limits were fully determined.

*The inheritance is waiting for you
But first, each part must be defined*

*Then each shall inherit what is due
After the borders have been aligned*

*According to the Lord's decision, it shall be divided
All will be handled fairly in this way
Each will receive what He has decided
And the inheritance will be set on that day*

*Who can argue against His decision?
When the matter is established and done
He will determine it with perfect precision
When it is settled through the work of the Son*

II. Joshua Divided the Land (verses 8-10)

⁸ Then the men arose to go away;

va'yaqumu ha'anashim va'yeleku – “and arose the men, and walked.” Joshua spoke and the men did as he directed. This is a preemptory statement to that which follows...

^{8 (con't)} and Joshua charged those who went to survey the land, saying,

vay'tsav Yehoshua eth ha'hol'khim likh'tov eth ha'arets lemor – “And commanded, Joshua, the walkers to write the land, saying.” Joshua repeats the command of verse 6 at the time of the men's departure.

They were selected by the elders and given instructions as to what they were to do. But to ensure that nothing was missing or misrepresented when they were selected, Joshua personally charged them to conduct the survey.

^{8 (con't)} “Go, walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me,

l'ku v'hithhaleku ba'arets v'kithvu otah v'shuvu elay – “Walk. And walk in the land, and write her, and return unto me.” The meaning is obvious. They are to head out and continue throughout the entire land, meticulously writing out all they see and to then return. The purpose of this is so...

^{8 (con't)} that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.”

As before, “lot” is singular, but the address is plural: “And here I will cast to you (pl.) lot before Yehovah in Shiloh.” The lot will be cast and the decisions that are rendered will be from the Lord.

⁹ So the men went, passed through the land, and wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities;

Here, the division is explicitly said to be by cities. Unless unstated, this is something that was not previously done. This then may be the reason for putting Simeon within the borders of Judah. The number of cities within Judah was quite large, but this still doesn’t explain why the narrative fails to mention it.

If this is the reason for it, then it would also be the reason for the instances where some cities within the borders of one tribe were given to other tribes.

Regardless of that, the exclusion of Judah and the house of Joseph in verse 5, along with the note concerning dividing the inheritance of these seven tribes into seven parts, just makes the matter more curious. But there is no note of complaint by Judah and so the matter was obviously resolved before the lot was cast.

^{9 (con’t)} and they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh.

The Hebrew is more precise: “and they came in, unto Joshua, unto the camp, Shiloh.” Whether the survey was only in the lands not yet settled, or whether it included the cities of all of the tribes west of the Jordan, the task was complete, and the men went directly to Joshua with what they had recorded...

¹⁰ Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD,

As before, the word “lot” is singular. How this was done isn’t given any detail for us to consider, but what seems likely is that representatives of the seven tribes would have been there, and the survey of the land would have been there as well.

One by one they were matched up according to the lot, and that settled the matter from that time on. To speak against the lot would be to speak against the Lord who directs the lot. The matter was handled in a perfectly fair manner and in accord with the wisdom of the Lord.

^{10 (fin)} **and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions.**

Of this, John Gill incorrectly states –

“...the land that was divided into seven parts, he distributed to the seven tribes, as the lot came up for them, and then divided these several parts according to the families and households in each tribe.” Gill

Here, the term “divisions” is to be considered synonymous with “tribes.” The land divisions were by lot cast before the Lord. Thus, it was divided without regard to size of tribe or number of families within a tribe but according to His sovereign decision.

From there, the land would have been further divided by family, but this was probably a tribal matter. Nothing is said of Joshua being involved in the divisions by family. As the Lord’s representative though, Joshua is given the credit for being the one to divide the land, even if it was the Lord who determined the lot.

*What is the mystery that has been hidden?
But which is now revealed in His saints
The knowledge of it was once forbidden
But now it is available to all without restraints*

*It is Christ in you, the hope of glory!
It is what God has done for each of us
The inclusion of both Jew and Gentile in the gospel story
Because of the work of the Lord Jesus*

*It is Him we preach for all to hear
Warning and teaching in all wisdom that God bestowed on us
That every man, whether far away or near
May be presented a perfect man in Christ Jesus*

III. Spiritual Perfection

The narrative before us focuses on the seven unclaimed inheritances. The clear meaning is that there have been five inheritances already secured: Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah. Two of them make up the house of Joseph, but they are deemed as individual tribes.

Five is the number of grace; it is being given what you don't deserve and it is Divine favor. But there is a lack. Seven tribes are needing their inheritance. Seven is the number of spiritual perfection. It can be deduced that this passage is referring to those who are saved by grace, but who have not attained spiritual perfection.

This would go along with the move from Gilgal to Shiloh. Gilgal, or Liberty, was where the Israelites camped when they came through the Jordan, the Descender. Since then, numerous pictures of the work of Christ described how that occurred.

No reason was given for the move to Shiloh, or Tranquility, just as no reason was given for selecting Gilgal after crossing through the Jordan. It is simply what occurred. We can, therefore, assume that the Lord wants us to see a new aspect of His workings for Israel in this move.

This seems more likely because verse 1 notes that the whole congregation assembled at Shiloh. It doesn't only speak of the seven tribes but all of Israel. Thus, it seems to be an indication that though grace has been received, spiritual perfection is still lacking.

Shiloh is where the Tent of Meeting is set up. That is the part of the edifice seen from the outside. And so, it is a picture of Jesus in his humanity. Various interior aspects of the tabernacle reflect His deity. The land being subdued before them (verse 1) indicates that Jesus accomplished everything necessary for their salvation and ability to progress to spiritual perfection.

That was the word *kabash*, to subdue or bring into subjection. Despite that, there is the note (verse 2) of the lack in the seven tribes that must be corrected. The inheritance is theirs, the land is subdued, but the state of tranquility is lacking, represented by the move to Shiloh.

It is obvious that this is a self-inflicted wound by Joshua's words of verse 3. They have idled away the time instead of moving forward. Again, this has to be an indictment on all of the tribes because the words are "to the children of Israel." The seven are not singled out in this regard. It is one thing to receive grace, and it is another to do something with it.

Hence, a survey of the land (verse 4) is to be conducted. Nothing is definitively said concerning which tribes are to put forth three men each. Hence, I have argued that it would be all 13 of them. I would even include Levi in this because they will receive cities,

even if they don't receive an inheritance. They are a part of the whole congregation of the children of Israel.

That is total speculation on my part, but with Levi, there would be 39 men – the number of Old Testament books. Thus it would fit well with becoming spiritually perfect in Christ. You need to not only know the New Testament, but the Old Testament, just as Jesus indicates in John 5 when he says that the Scriptures, meaning the Old Testament Scriptures, testify of Him.

But this would also fit with what they are to do, which is to write out a survey of the land. It would be a full and detailed explanation of what is needed to go from grace to spiritual perfection. As such, Israel is being shown the manner in which that is to come about.

Verse 5 said that the writing should divide the land into seven parts. There are several ways in which the 27 books of the New Testament are divided: five major divisions, two major divisions, and so on. I would go with seven distinct divisions –

*Though there are four gospels, one is unique from the other three. There are the synoptic gospels and then John. It is really 3+1. That is 2 divisions.

*Acts is unique. That is 3 divisions.

*Paul's 13 epistles are all carefully set together. Even if they can be further subdivided, they are all one unit. That is 4.

*Hebrews is certainly written by Paul, but it is both unsigned and unique. That is 5.

*The other epistles are individual to some extent and can be subdivided, but they are close enough to also be in one category. That is 6.

*Revelation is unique. That is 7.

Verse 5 continued with the two major divisions from the perspective of Shiloh – Judah from the *negev*, or south, and the house of Joseph from the *tsaphon*, or north. *Negev* signifies parched. It is a land without water. *Tsaphon* signifies that which is hidden or treasured away.

It forms an all-encompassing statement of anyone from within the borders concerning salvation where one goes from being parched, first receiving the water of life, to being hidden in Christ. The names reflect the state of Christ. Judah is Christ, the Praise of God. Joseph reflects Christ, the One to Take Away (*asaph*) man's reproach and He Who Adds (*yasaph*) him to the fold of God.

Verse 6 reiterated the need to survey the land in seven parts, thus indicating the need for spiritual perfection.

Verse 7 carefully explained why this was needed. Judah and the house of Joseph are excluded based on verse 5, but so are Levi and the other tribes west of Jordan. Again, it is to show that even though there are already inheritances, no distinction was made in verses 1 & 3. Rather, the need is for the whole congregation of the children of Israel.

Verse 8 twice repeated the thought of writing out the inheritance. In fact, it is mentioned five times in these few verses. Five, being the number of grace, perfectly fits with the contents of the New Testament. There is the law and there is grace. The law is given, and grace is then explained.

Verse 9 noted that this writing was in seven parts. The grace is defined in the spiritual perfection that is obtained from understanding and applying that which is revealed in the New Testament. Verse 9 then repeated the fact that Joshua was in Shiloh. He anticipates Jesus granting Tranquility (Shiloh), just as Jesus is the One who granted Liberty, (Gilgal).

Verse 10 notes the casting of the lots at Shiloh before the Lord and that it was Joshua who divided the land to the children of Israel. It is the Lord's word, and it is Jesus who defines and expresses it. The state of spiritual perfection, the man "perfect in Christ," as our text verse today said, is to be attained through this word.

Like the previous chapters of Joshua, this one also highlights the victories of the Lord. But it also brings forth the obvious need for us to apply those victories to our lives. Jesus did the work for man to be saved. We are to accept it and believe.

Jesus fulfilled the law. We are to live by the grace of Christ, not go reinserting what was hung on His cross. Jesus defines the borders of our salvation and the state of our lives within that salvation. We are to live in accord with that.

Jesus has bestowed grace upon us, but without knowing the details of what He has done, how can we become mature in Him? And so, that is defined in Scripture as well. The process of it was detailed in advance for us to see and understand.

Yes, these things really happened in Israel, but we can know 100% that they apply to Christ in typology. How else can it be explained that Simeon wound up in the territory of

Judah without a full explanation of why unless God was purposefully withholding that information to provide us typological hints of greater truths?

As this is so, we can see from today's passage that not only do we need to know who Jesus is, something that could simply be passed down by word of mouth, which is often the case even today, but we need to then become mature in our knowledge of Christ by knowing His word.

Salvation is great, and it is the defining moment in a believer's life, but it is just the start. Without entering into the means of obtaining spiritual perfection, meaning an understanding of Scripture, our lives are left rudderless and unsure.

Our boat cannot ever be sunk in Christ, but it sure can go in odd directions without having the proper equipment to drive it along. As such, and as this passage is dealing with the New Testament, something that our sermons have never been solely focused on:

- 1) How can you know what is being talked about in these sermons unless you know they are referring to Christ?
- 2) How can you expect to mature if you don't know what the sermons you are listening to are truly relaying to you, meaning their anticipation of Christ?
- 3) You will stagnate in maturing in the Lord unless you listen to and study the Old and New Testaments.

Consider these things. And yet, even considering that we do not refer to the New Testament a lot in these Sunday sermons, I would challenge you to read your Bible – both Old and New Testaments.

Also, you should take up a daily New Testament commentary. There are a billion out there, the best of which is found at the Superior Word website, but others will help as long as they are theologically sound.

Lastly, I would challenge you to attend at least one New Testament Bible study each week. As they can be seen online, you don't even need to attend a church. The best weekly Bible study on the planet can be seen streaming live at the Superior Word YouTube channel.

Others are out there as well and will suffice as long as they are based on a proper analysis of the word. But you really can't know that unless you already have a good understanding of the word. Hence, read your Bible daily.

Don't be like that person referenced at the beginning of the sermon. Be a wise, prudent, and understanding person who is focused on a right knowledge of the word. Don't be legalistic and don't be unduly judgmental. Instead, be ready and willing to be yourself while at the same time being like Jesus.

Do everything to the glory of God and you will do well. Amen.

Closing Verse: *"For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³ Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴ Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires." James 3:2-4*

Next Week: Joshua 18:11-28 *What type of land through the lottery did he win...?* (The Inheritance of Benjamin) (37th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Israel Assembled Together at Shiloh

Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel
Assembled together at Shiloh, a meeting quite grand
And set up the tabernacle of meeting there
And before them was subdued the land

But there remained among the children of Israel
----- (and this not by chance)
Seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance

Then Joshua said to the children of Israel:
"How long will you neglect, as you are inclined to do
To go and possess the land
Which the LORD God of your fathers has given you?"

“Pick out from among you three men for each tribe
And I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land
Survey it according to their inheritance
And come back to me; do just as I have planned

“And they shall divide it into seven parts
Judah shall remain in their territory on the south
And the house of Joseph shall remain
In their territory on the north, according to the words of my mouth

“You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts
And bring the survey here to me
That I may cast lots for you
Here before the LORD our God, so shall it be

“But the Levites have no part among you, such is the word
For their inheritance is the priesthood of the LORD

“And Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh
Have received their inheritance, their just reward
Beyond the Jordan on the east
Which gave to them Moses the servant of the LORD

Then the men arose to go away
And Joshua charged those who went to survey the land, saying
-----so they would know

“Go, walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me
That I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh”

So the men went, passed through the land
And wrote the survey in a book, all the places they did go
In seven parts by cities
And they came to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh

Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD
And there Joshua divided the land
To the children of Israel
According to their divisions, just as the Lord had planned

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 18:11-28 (THE INHERITANCE OF BENJAMIN)

The tribes that have received their inheritance west of the Jordan so far are located either south of Jerusalem, meaning the land of Judah with Jerusalem as its northern border, or land given to Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh whose southern border is somewhat farther north.

This leaves an area of land not yet granted to the tribes of Israel between them. It goes from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

It is implied that this land will be granted based on the lots. However, not all of it will go to one tribe. Rather, it will be divided into two separate parcels. The first half of this land will be allotted in the verses today to Benjamin.

There is a lot of history that will come out of this tribe as the pages of Scripture unfold. Their location pretty much ensured that this would be the case. The story of the life Benjamin, Jacob's twelfth and final son, began in Genesis 35 –

“Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored *in childbirth*, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷ Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, “Do not fear; you will have this son also.” ¹⁸ And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that *is*, Bethlehem). ²⁰ And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.”

-Genesis 35:16-20

Those few verses are filled with hints of the coming Christ. As is seen in them, Benjamin's mother, Jacob's beloved Rachel, died in childbirth. As she was dying, she named him Ben Oni, Son of Suffering. However, Jacob called him Benjamin, Son of *the* Right Hand.

Text Verse: “Then He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’ ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:25-27

For those who are paying attention, it is obvious that Jesus is revealed in the words of Genesis 35. The story of the birth of Benjamin anticipated the state of Christ's coming – first to suffer and then to enter His glory. Luke's gospel records that beginning with Moses, Jesus explained how all of the Old Testament prophesied of Him.

For all we know, He could have started with that very passage. "I just told you that Christ was to suffer and then enter His glory. See, it is written of Me right in the story of the birth of Benjamin." It's just speculation, but Jesus could have started with any of an innumerable number of verses and told what was coming.

Maybe along the way as they walked, He could have continued with Benjamin. "Do you know that the very borders of the tribes tell the story of My coming? Just look at the borders of Benjamin." From there, He could explain what you will review today.

God has woven the story of Jesus Christ so intricately into His word, that without studying the word from that lens, almost everything of value is missing. There are great moral and historical truths that can be pulled out of the word, but even those things would be unnecessary apart from the coming of Jesus.

Ultimately, it makes no difference where Benjamin is situated if Jesus never came. Likewise, any moral lesson in Scripture is actually pointless without Jesus.

We can be as moral or as godless in living our lives as we want, and it makes no ultimate difference without Him. If our final end is to return to the grave and perish, then let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Without Jesus, we might as well use up our lives in the most hedonistic and self-serving way possible.

But we don't even need to think that way, do we? Christ came, and He showed us a far more glorious and eternal path to walk. In learning about the borders of Benjamin, we will learn about the Person of Jesus Christ and what He means to us.

Get ready, great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Borders of Benjamin (verses 11-20)

With the instructions of Joshua 18:1-10 to survey and divide the remaining land among the final seven tribes complete, those verses ended with, "Then Joshua cast lots for

them in Shiloh before the Lord, and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions” (Joshua 18:10).

From that point, the narrative continues with the designation of the first lot...

¹¹ Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families,

Benjamin was the twelfth son of Jacob and the second son born to his beloved Rachel. As for the wording here, it has not been seen before: *va’yaal goral mateh bene Binyamin* – “And ascended lot tribe sons Benjamin.” In the casting of the lots for land division, this word, *alah*, or “to ascend,” is only used now and with the tribe of Zebulun (Joshua 19:10).

Elsewhere, it either says the lot “was,” or the word *yatsa*, to go or come forth, is used –

Judah there was (15:1)

Manasseh east there was (17:1)

Manasseh west there was (17:2)

Benjamin arose (18:11)

Zebulun arose (19:10)

Sons of Joseph came out (16:1)

Simeon came out (19:1)

Issachar came out (19:17)

Asher came out (19:24)

Naphtali came out (19:32)

Dan came out (19:40)

There is no indication why *alah*, or ascended is used. It would be logical that both names are typologically anticipating Christ. Benjamin means “Son of *the* Right Hand” and Zebulun means “Glorious Dwelling Place.”

As Jesus is the Son who ascended to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), which is in His Glorious Dwelling Place (Revelation 21:3), the use of *alah* anticipates the ascension of Jesus. As for the ascending of Benjamin’s lot...

11 (con't) and the territory of their lot came out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

The words closely follow the Hebrew with one exception. It is more precise, saying that the lot is “between the children of Judah and between the children of Joseph.” The placement of Benjamin between these already established allotments is both logical and fulfills previous prophecy.

It is logical because it places Benjamin next to his brother Joseph the other son of Rachel (the allotments to Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph) and next to Judah who had offered himself as a substitute for Benjamin before Pharaoh in Genesis 44. The closeness of the bonds is highlighted by the placement.

It also fulfills prophecy as spoken in Moses’ blessing –

“Of Benjamin he said:
‘The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him,
Who shelters him all the day long;
And he shall dwell between His shoulders.’” Deuteronomy 33:12

Though too long to repeat, the explanation of the words in Deuteronomy 33 is exactly fulfilled by the placement of Joseph here. Take time today to rewatch that sermon 😊. As for the details, because of his placement here, the main borders on the south and on the north have already been marked out for Judah and Ephraim, and so much of this will be repetition...

12 Their border on the north side began at the Jordan, and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north,

Benjamin’s northern border is the southern border of Ephraim. More precisely, it begins on the side northward “from” the Jordan [the Descender] and ascends to the “shoulder” of Jericho [Place of Fragrance] from the north...

12 (con't) and went up through the mountains westward;

v’alah ba’har yamah – “and ascends in the mountain, westward.” The mountain means the hill country. From there...

12 (con't) it ended at the Wilderness of Beth Aven.

v'hayah totsotav midbarah beith aven – “And his goings out, Wilderness Beth Aven.” Beth Aven was noted as a city nearby but distinct from Bethel in Joshua 7:2. Beth means “house.” Aven comes from *aven* meaning wickedness, trouble, vanity (meaning idols which are vain), iniquity, and so on. And so it means something like “House of Wickedness.”

¹³ The border went over from there toward Luz, to the side of Luz (which is Bethel) southward;

More exactly, it reads, “And passed over from there the border Luz-ward unto shoulder Luz-ward, southward – it *is* Bethel.” Luz was seen in verse 16:2. It is a city near to, but separate from, Bethel. It means Almond, but it comes from the verb *luz*, meaning to turn aside, often in a negative way. Hence, it can mean Departure, but also means Twisted or Perverse. Bethel means House of God.

Elsewhere in the Bible, either Luz or Beth Aven is united explicitly, or in thought, with Bethel as being one city, but they are technically three separate cities.

^{13 (con't)} and the border descended to Ataroth Addar, near the hill that *lies* on the south side of Lower Beth Horon.

The second clause more precisely reads, “upon the hill which *is* from *the* south to Lower Beth Horon.” Ataroth Addar means Crowns of Greatness or Majestic Crowns. Lower Beth Horon means Lower House of the Hollow or Lower House of Freedom.

¹⁴ Then the border extended around the west side to the south, from the hill that *lies* before Beth Horon southward;

The word *yam* can mean both sea and west. The KJV and some other versions say sea instead of west here. That is incorrect. The land of Benjamin does not reach to the Mediterranean Sea. The NKJV does a good job in this clause. Next...

^{14 (con't)} and it ended at Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearim), a city of the children of Judah. This *was* the west side.

More precisely, “and its goings out unto Kirjath Baal.” Kirjath Baal means City of Baal or City of the Lord. Kirjath Jearim means City of Forests or City of Honeycombs. It is noted as belonging to Judah, thus marking the southwest corner of Benjamin.

15 The south side *began* at the end of Kirjath Jearim,

Rather, it reads, “And *the* side southward *is from* Kirjath Jearim.” This explains the southern border which is Judah’s northern border.

15 (con’t) and the border extended on the west and went out to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.

Rather than “on the west,” it reads “westward.” The border travels in that direction all the way to the fountain called Nephtoah. Nephtoah means Opening. From there...

16 Then the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lies* before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which *is* in the Valley of the Rephaim on the north, descended to the Valley of Hinnom,

Two words are translated as valley. The first is the Valley of the Son of Hinnom. The word valley is *ge*, coming from *gavah*, pride or confidence. That comes from *gaah*, to rise up, increase, etc.

The original meaning of Hinnom is pretty much lost. Those who attempt to translate it associate it with wailing. Hence, this could be paraphrased as “the exaltation of the Son of Groaning.” The name in the New Testament becomes the well-known Gehenna. It is a valley that runs along the border of Jerusalem.

The second valley is *emeq Rephaim*, or Depth of Rephaim. Rephaim comes from either *raphah*, to sink or relax, or from *rapha*, to heal. Strong’s goes with the latter. Thus, it would be the Depth of Healed Ones. The border then goes...

16 (con’t) to the side of the Jebusite *city* on the south, and descended to En Rogel.

el keteph hayvusi negvah v’yarad en rogel – “unto shoulder the Jebusite southward, and descended En Rogel.” Jebusite means Treading Down or Trodden Underfoot. Jerusalem can have various meanings, but Foundation of Peace is sufficient.

En Rogel could have a couple meanings. Rogel comes from *regel* meaning foot or *ragal*, to go about on foot. As such, it could mean Fountain (Eye) of the Fuller, because the foot is used for washing garments by stamping on them, or Fountain of the Traveler.

17 And it went around from the north, went out to En Shemesh,

v'taar mi'tsaphon v'yatsa en Shemesh – “And extended from north and went out En Shemesh.” En Shemesh means Fountain (Eye) of the Sun. It is identified today as the Apostle’s Spring which is about a mile below Bethany, and is the only spring on the road to Jericho.

¹⁷ (con’t) **and extended toward Geliloth,**

Rather: “And went out until Geliloth.” The word *g'liloth* is the plural of *g'lilah*. That signifies a circuit, boundary, territory, and so on. That comes from *galal*, meaning to roll. Hence, if it is an actual name, it means Circles or Rollings. However, it may simply be referring to the same region described in Joshua 22 –

“and they come in unto the districts [*g'liloth*] of the Jordan, which [are] in the land of Canaan, and the sons of Reuben, and the sons of Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, build there an altar by the Jordan — a great altar for appearance. **11** And the sons of Israel hear, saying, ‘Lo, the sons of Reuben, and the sons of Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, have built the altar over-against the land of Canaan, on the districts [*g'liloth*] of the Jordan, at the passage of the sons of Israel.’” Joshua 22:10, 11 (YLT)

¹⁷ (con’t) **which is before the Ascent of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.**

Adummim is a plural word coming from *adom*, red, and *adam*, Adam or man. Thus, it is the Ascent of the Red Ones or Ascent of the Adams (men).

Bohan is identical to *bohen*, the thumb or big toe. It was probably a thick, prominent stone that was used as a landmark and named after a son of Reuben; maybe he was buried there or did some heroic thing there. Strong’s defines the meaning as Closing.

¹⁸ **Then it passed along toward the north side of Arabah, and went down to Arabah.**

v'avar el keteph mul ha'aravah tsaphonah v'yarad ha'aravatah – “And passed over unto shoulder against the Aravah northward, and descended the Aravah.” The Aravah is the plain that extends about one hundred miles south from the Dead Sea forming a border between Israel and Jordan. The word comes from the noun *arav*, to grow dark or become evening. This is because of the darkness of the terrain. However, that is identical to the verb *arav*, meaning to take or give in pledge.

19 And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah;

Beith Khaglah means House of the Partridge, but it also means House of Turning in Joy. The word comes from *khagal*, to wobble or hop. It is the same name as one of the daughters of Zelophehad. This is between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but belonging to Benjamin. It lies between Jericho and the Dead Sea.

19 (con't) then the border ended at the north bay at the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This was the southern boundary.

A literal rendering of this is: “And is the border unto tongue Sea the Salt northward, unto extremity the Jordan southward. This – border south.” The meaning is that this southern border goes to the spot where the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea. From there...

20 The Jordan was its border on the east side.

The word border is a verb: *v'ha'yarden yigbol oto liphat qedemah* – “And the Jordan bordering him to side eastward.” The Descender is that which borders Benjamin on the east. The word east is *qedem*, also meaning aforeside. It speaks of that which comes before, earlier, or into the past, even as far as everlasting.

20 (con't) This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, according to its boundaries all around, according to their families.

Literally: “This inheritance sons Benjamin to her borders around, to their families.” The inheritance is set within these borders, and the names have a story to tell.

*These are the borders of the Son of My Right Hand
And together they have a story to tell us
It is a story that is glorious, beautiful and grand
It is the story of our Lord Jesus*

*Every detail gives us hints of what He has done
Or of how it is realized in each of us
The marvelous details concerning God's own Son
Glorious pictures of our Lord Jesus*

God has set forth these things, allowing us to see

*The beautiful things that Christ has done for us
The truths are found in the gospel that He offers for free
It is the precious gift of God, the gospel of our Lord Jesus*

II. The Cities of Benjamin (verses 21-28)

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were

“And were the cities to tribe sons Benjamin to their families.”

21 (con’t) Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz,

y’rikho u-beith khaglah w’emeq qetsits – “Jericho, and Beth Hoglah, and Emek Keziz.”

Y’rikho – Place of Fragrance. *Beith Khaglah* – House of the Partridge or House of Turning in Joy. *Emek Qetsits* – Severed Depth, Cut off Valley.

22 Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel,

u-beith ha’aravah u-ts’marayim u-beith el – “And Beth Arabah, and Zemaraim, and Bethel.” *Beith ha’Aravah* – House of the Pledge. *Ts’marayim* – Two Woolen Things. *Beith El* – House of God.

23 Avim, Parah, Ophrah,

v’ha’avim v’ha’parah, v’apherah – “And the Avim, and the Parah, and Ophrah.”

Ha’Avim – The Ruiners, The Ruin Dwellers, or The Mischief Makers. *Ha’Parah* – The Heifer. But that comes from the verb *parar*, to break or frustrate. So it could mean The Breaker. *Apherah* – Female Fawn, but that comes from *aphar*, dust. And so, maybe Of the Dust.

24 Chephar Haammoni, Ophni, and Gaba: twelve cities with their villages;

v’kh’phar ha’amoni v’ha’aph’ni va’gaba shetem esreh v’khatsrehen – “And Chephar the Ammoni, and the Ophni and Gaba. Ten two and their villages.”

Kh'phar ha'amoni – Village of the People or Village of the Ammonites. *Aphni* comes from an unused root and its meaning is unknown. *Gaba* is probably the same as Gibeah or Hill.

²⁵ Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth,

Giv'on v'ha'ramah u-b'eroth – “Gibeon, and the Ramah, and Beeroth.

Giv'on – Hill Town or Hilly. *Ha'Ramah* – The Height; The Lofty Place. *B'eroth* – Wells.

²⁶ Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah,

v'ha'mitspah v'ha'kh'phirah v'ha'motsah – “And the Mizpah, and the Chephirah, and the Mozah.”

Ha'Mitspah – The Watchtower. *Ha'Kh'phirah* – The Village. *Ha'Motsah* – Depending on the root: The Drained, The Unleavened Bread, The Law, The Place of Going Forth.

²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah,

v'reqem v'yirp'el v'tar'alah – “And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah.

Reqem – Embroider. *Yirp'el* – God Will Heal. *Tar'alah* – Dove of God or Reeling.

²⁸ Zelah, Eleph, Jebus (which is Jerusalem), Gibeath, and Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages.

Tsela ha'eleph v'hay'busi, hi y'rushalim giv'ath qir'yath arim arba esreh v'khatsrehen – “Zelah, the Eleph, and the Jebusi (it Jerusalem), Gibeath, Kirjath. Cities four ten and their villages.”

Tsela – Rib or Side. *Ha'Eleph* – The Cattle or The Multitude. *Hay'busi* – The Treading Down or The Trodden Underfoot. *Y'rushalim* – Foundation of Peace. *Giv'ath* – Hill. *Qir'yath* – City.

^{28 (fin)} This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

Benjamin's borders have been defined and their cities have been named. They will be rather prominently mentioned in the coming pages of Scripture. The first king of Israel,

Saul, will be from this tribe. The great apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, will come from Benjamin as well.

There will be other heroes mentioned from this tribe, and a great self-inflicted calamity will come upon them in the book of Kings. The history of Benjamin will be rich and filled with hints of the workings of God in Christ.

*Hints of the majesty of God in Christ
Are hidden in the names and places for us to see
Riches beyond measure that cannot be priced
And yet they must be earned by searching the word diligently*

*How wonderful it is to search out this word
Looking for hints of what God has done for us
Think on the names of places that you have heard
In them are hints of the coming Christ, our Lord Jesus*

*Thank You, O God, for the treasures we can see
When searching out this precious word
Wonderful riches and treasure there will be
When we consider each verse we have heard*

III. Pictures of Christ

The borders of Benjamin, even if some are unstated at this point in the narrative, are the Jordan on the east, Dan on the west, Judah to the south, and Joseph, meaning Ephraim, is on the north.

Benjamin, or Son of *the* Right Hand, anticipates Christ as the Resurrected and Ascended Son of God. The Jordan, the Descender, to the east (signifying before in time) looks to Christ having first Descended in order to accomplish His work. Judah to the south, or right hand, signifies Jesus is the Praise of God. Joseph/Ephraim to the left indicates the work accomplished by Christ –

Joseph – He Shall Add/Take Away: He is the One to add people to God’s flock, having taken away their reproach.

Ephraim – Twice Fruitful/Ashes: He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of Jew and Gentile. But His work also means that sin was judged in Him, thus the ashes, signifying His afflictions.

Dan (Judge) to the west signifies Christ's role after His ascension. He is the Judge of mankind.

The descriptions provided here in Chapter 18 follow closely after some of the descriptions seen earlier in the borders of Judah and Joseph (Ephraim). Thus, there is some fun repetition from those chapters.

Verse 11 began the description of the northern border. It speaks of the work of Christ in His incarnation. First, it used the unusual word *va'yaal* or "and ascended" concerning the lot. That anticipates the resurrection of Christ leading to His ascension. Jesus is the Son of the Right Hand of God after His Ascension –

“But he [Stephen], being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, ⁵⁶ and said, ‘Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’”
-Acts 7:55, 56

Verse 11 continued with the lot having come out between Judah and Joseph. That was just explained in detail. Christ is the Praise of God who accomplished the work of God.

Verse 12 showed that the border of Benjamin began on the north from the Jordan River and on the shoulder of Jericho. Christ's work began at His incarnation (His descent) from Heaven.

Verse 12 continued with the border ascending in the mountain, westward. The mountain signifies a large but centralized group of people. Jesus was raised in and among Israel and He never failed to continue on His trek toward the Lord.

In verse 13, He went through Israel via Beth Aven or House of Wickedness, and Luz, turning aside from the Lord, even though they were considered the House of God (Bethel), the land and people among whom the Lord resided.

The trek descended to Ataroth Addar, (Majestic Crowns), near the hill on the south side of Lower Beth Horon (Lower House of Freedom). It speaks of the work of Christ, His

death, from which His many crowns are derived, and the effect of His work, bringing freedom from death.

Verse 14 began the west side. It speaks of the effects of the work of Christ. First, it mentioned the movement of the border to the hill that lies before Beth Horon (House of Freedom) and ending at Kirjath Baal (City of the Lord) also known as Kirjath Jearim.

From the House of Freedom, victory over death, it speaks of those who are a part of the City of the Lord, which is the City of Forests. In Joshua 15, that was seen to represent the gathering of the church.

Next, verse 15 began the details of the southern border, the state of those redeemed by Christ. It goes from Kirjath Jearim (the gathering of the church) to the waters of Nephtoah. As in Chapter 15, the fountain of Nephtoah anticipates eternal access into glory, symbolized by the gates that are never shut in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:25).

Verse 16 refers to the mountain that lies before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom (the exaltation of the Son of Groaning). It speaks of the centralized gathering of people who stand before the Lord Jesus and who are exalted from this fallen life because of the affect of His work. They are brought from a state of groaning –

“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:22, 23

But more, that was said to be in *emeq Rephaim*, or in the Depth of the Healed Ones, an obvious reference to the state of believers in Christ.

Verse 16 next referred to the Jebusite (Treading Down) and the descent to En Rogel (Fountain of the Fuller). Jebus is derived from *bus*, to tread down, or trample. This is expressed in Psalm 60 –

“Give us help from trouble,
For the help of man *is* useless.
¹² Through God we will do valiantly,
For *it is* He *who* shall **tread down** [*bus*] our enemies.” Psalm 60:11, 12

It speaks of the completed work of Christ on behalf of His people, defeating their enemies which leads to the Fountain of the Fuller, a reference to the eternally purified garments such as those mentioned in Revelation 3:5.

After that, verse 17 next mentioned En Shemesh, Fountain of the Sun. That speaks of the eternal light of Christ (Malachi 4:2) upon His people, and thus the eternal flowing of light where there will be no night (Revelation 22:5).

From there, the border extends toward Geliloth. It is a plural word signifying Rollings. It refers to the state of Liberty of Christ's redeemed. They have the yoke of sin and law rolled off of them forever.

Verse 17 continues by noting the Ascent of Adummim, or Ascent of the Red Ones (men). It is the heavenly promise noted many times in Scripture, such as Ephesians 2:6 where believers are said to be raised up and seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

This was followed by the descent to the stone of Bohan (Thumb), son of Reuben (See, a Son). Stone signifies establishment, as in setting up a pillar. It signifies permanence; that which is established is set to stand firm. It signifies resiliency and strength, as in that which is fixed and unyielding.

The thumb represents the hand and thus action. It is that which has the ability to grasp firmly. The whole thought anticipates the eternal security of the believer. Adding in the name Reuben would anticipate the sonship of those who are in Christ. As Paul says, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).

Verse 18 notes passing toward the shoulder against the Arabah northward and the descending to the Arabah. The Arabah refers to the pledge of the Holy Spirit and the final granting of what the pledge signifies, meaning eternal life in the presence of God –

"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, ²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a **guarantee** [Greek: *arrabón*/pledge]." 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22 (see also 2 Corinthians 5:5 and Ephesians 1:13, 14)

That leads to the next point where the border passed to the north side of Beth Hoglah or House of Turning in Joy. That is an obvious and beautiful description of the eternal state of those redeemed by Christ.

The southern border is said in verse 19 to end at the tongue of the Salt Sea, northward. It is a reminder of what brought about this marvelous state for the believers. The Salt Sea speaks of the incorruptible death of Christ, the incorruptible nature of the New Covenant in Christ, and the resurrection of Christ.

With that, verse 20 states that the Jordan was Benjamin's border on the east side. It takes the reader full circle back to where it started, with the incarnation of Christ, His descent. Being east, *qedem*/before, it is both a note of the eternity of Christ as well as the beginning of His earthly to accomplish His work.

With that, the final words are, "This inheritance sons Benjamin (Son of the Right Hand) to her borders around, to their families." It speaks of the sonship of the Son –

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:26-28

After that, the second section of the passage detailed the listing of the cities of Benjamin. It is certain, and as can almost be deduced by a short glance through them, that each city name attests to something concerning the work of Christ.

As for the inheritance itself, the wisdom of God is attested to, both in the fulfillment of prophecy already stated, and in the historical record that will arise from the placement of Benjamin here.

Benjamin will play an important role in Israel's future. Some of it will be a bit sordid, some of it will be exalting of them. But the story of Benjamin is ultimately and most prominently that of typological anticipations of the coming Redeemer, Jesus.

After His coming, He will again use Benjamin in a magnificent way when He selects the apostle Paul to pen much of the New Testament. And yet, despite the high and noble position, it will be one that is derived solely from the grace and mercy of God.

Paul was an enemy of Jesus Christ, fighting Him with all of his ability. But in the midst of his breathing out threats and murder against the Lord's people, the Lord personally intervened in his life. Because this is so, Paul had no standing in and of himself to boast.

And this is true with each one of us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. There is no merit in any of us concerning salvation. Rather, we were on the path to destruction and Christ stepped in. This is the story of the inheritance of Benjamin.

God has done the work and we are the benefactors of the life, cross, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord. What can we add to that? The answer is nothing. We come to God through Jesus as poor, condemned prisoners and accept the pardon that Jesus bought for us with His own precious blood.

Let us remember this as we head out today. The same type of people that we once were are on the streets we will walk. They are in the same sad state we were in. Have pity mixed with compassion on them. Open your mouth and speak, pull out the tracts you carry and leave them with those you encounter. Tell about the goodness of God in Christ.

The Son of the Right Hand is the Son who first came to bring us back to Himself so that we too could become sons of God. All hail the name of Jesus. He is our Lord. He is our God. He is the exalted One who now sits with all authority and power. All hail the glorious name of Jesus. Amen.

Closing Verse: *"We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness,
In the midst of Your temple.*

*¹⁰ According to Your name, O God,
So is Your praise to the ends of the earth;
Your right hand is full of righteousness." Psalm 48:9, 10*

Next Week: Joshua 19:1-9 *We know you will just love this sermeon...* (The Inheritance of Simeon) (38th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Benjamin

Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin
Came up according to their families, sho'nuff
And the territory of their lot came out
Between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph

Their border on the north side began at the Jordan
And the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north
-----as intended
And went up through the mountains westward
At the Wilderness of Beth Aven it ended

The border went over from there toward Luz
To the side of Luz (which is Bethel) southward
-----as is now known
And the border descended to Ataroth Addar
Near the hill that lies on the south side of Lower Beth Horon

Then the border extended around the west side to the south
From the hill that lies before Beth Horon southward
-----so the border was applied
And it ended at Kirjath Baal (which is Kirjath Jearim)
A city of the children of Judah; this was the west side

The south side began at the end of Kirjath Jearim
And the border extended on the west
And went out to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah
Where swimming is the best

Then the border came down to the end of the mountain
That before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom lies
Which is in the Valley of the Rephaim on the north
Descended to the Valley of Hinnom as the map did apprise

To the side of the Jebusite city on the south
-----at the record does tell
And descended to En Rogel

And it went around from the north
Went out to En Shemesh, and extended toward Geliloth
-----as intended
Which is before the Ascent of Adummim
And to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben it descended

Then along toward the north side of Arabah it passed

And went down to Arabah at last

And the border passed along to the north side of Beth Hoglah
Then the border ended at the north bay at the Salt Sea
At the south end of the Jordan
This was the southern boundary

The Jordan was its border on the east side
This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin
-----as the records show
According to its boundaries all around
According to their families, as we now know

Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin
According to their families, were as the records tell
Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz
Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, and Bethel

Avim, Parah, Ophrah
Chephar Haammoni, Ophni, and Gaba also
Twelve cities with their villages
As the records show

Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah
Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, Zelah, and Eleph as well
Jebus (which is Jerusalem), Gibeath, and Kirjath
Fourteen cities with their villages as the records tell

This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin
As listed and for us to know
According to their families
So the records show

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone

We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:1-9 (THE INHERITANCE OF SIMEON)

It's kind of hard to imagine an inheritance within an inheritance. I tried to think of something comparable to what is presented in these verses and couldn't come up with anything. An inheritance, by default, seems to imply something that belongs to one exclusively.

A person can share his inheritance, but to have a permanent stake set aside within another's inheritance while it still belongs to the first isn't something that you would normally expect to see. On a spiritual level, this is possible though.

Jesus is said to have inherited a more excellent name than the angels. In coming to Jesus, we implicitly share in His name, and we are granted a part in the heavenly inheritance that He has earned.

But that is not what we are seeing in Joshua 19. Judah had an inheritance, that was too much for them, so Simeon is being given an inheritance within the inheritance of Judah. Henceforth, all of this land is going to be known as the land of Judah, even while Simeon is in the cities and villages granted to them.

What do you imagine is going on here? Why did God set an inheritance inside an inheritance, and what prompted it to occur? God already knows the end from the beginning, and so there had to be a purpose.

Text Verse: *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

-Revelation 2:7

It's fascinating to sit down on Monday morning, having no idea what the passage is conveying, and then trying to figure it out. I got started around 3:30am. The first verse went quickly. I couldn't believe how fast! Well, until I looked at the clock and saw it was 4:45am and I still had more verses to go.

The same thing happened with verse 2. Hideko was walking out the door at 6:30am and I was still typing that verse. Later verses went more quickly so that I was done with them by about 11:30am. And then I sat. Thinking. And sat. Thinking.

The analysis of these verses didn't come easily, but it is such a treasure because it explains things that are right in front of our noses concerning inheritances: what God has done in Christ, how it affects Israel, how it affects the church, etc.

It never gets old. The word just keeps giving us new and exciting details. Yes! Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Too Much for Them (verses 1-9)

¹ The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

Simeon was the second son of Jacob as well as the second son of his wife Leah. His name comes from *shama*, to hear. Thus, it means Hearing or He Who Hears.

Surprisingly, this is the first time that Simeon is seen in the book of Joshua. He will only be seen in this chapter for his land grant and in Chapter 21 when Levitical cities are included in his land grant. He will be mentioned very sparsely in the rest of the Old Testament.

In Chapter 18, the remaining land was to be surveyed and divided into seven parts and yet, without any explanation as to why, a portion was drawn out of Judah. Thus, it seems likely that it was decided before the surveyors went out that a portion would be taken out of Judah's inheritance. Now, the lots are being cast...

^{1 (con't)} And their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

vayhi nakhalatham b'tok nakhalath bene Yehuda – “And was their inheritance in midst inheritance sons Judah.” The lot that was cast, and the resulting land allotment fulfills the prophecy of Jacob from Genesis 49 –

“Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of cruelty *are in* their dwelling place.
⁶Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united to their assembly;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.

⁷ Cursed *be* their anger, for *it is* fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.” Genesis 49:5-7

Simeon had marched with Reuben and Gad after leaving Sinai. They had encamped together on the south side of the tabernacle when it rested (Numbers 2). These two had separated from Simeon, taking their inheritance east of the Jordan.

A question arises here as to whether the lot itself designated the land for Simeon or if it simply designated Simeon to be the first to choose which lot they would choose. The text does not say. Either way, the result is that other than from Judah, Simeon will be separated from his brothers.

At the census in Numbers 26, after the wilderness wanderings, Simeon was found to be the smallest tribe of all. Their total number in Numbers 1 was 59,300. In Numbers 26, it was 22,200. Thus, his numbers dropped by 37,100.

That was the largest decrease of any tribe. This was probably because many of the tribe were killed in the matter of Peor in Numbers 25. It seems that Simeon was most associated with that. Thus, they were destroyed by sword and plague because of it, reducing their numbers greatly.

It would be a good reason for their assignment within Judah, the tribe with the greatest numbers. Judah could act as a defense and as a help for this smaller tribe, something that will be seen in Judges –

“Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, ‘Who shall be first to go up for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?’ ² And the LORD said, ‘Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand.’ ³ So Judah said to Simeon his brother, ‘Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I will likewise go with you to your allotted territory.’ And Simeon went with him.” Judges 1:1-3

As this allotment fulfills Jacob’s prophecy, we could speculate that the lot was designated by the Lord to ensure that would happen. But it could be that because of their separation from Reuben who had chosen land east of the Jordan, and because Judah and Simeon were both sons of Leah, they simply chose to dwell together.

Adding in Levitical cities that will be designated in this area, there will be three of these sons of Leah dwelling together, Simeon, a portion of Levi, and Judah.

As for the cities to be designated, the first thirteen will be in the Negev, the south country. The second four will have two in the Negev and two in the Shephelah, or lowland. In the allotments recorded in Joshua 15, of which Simeon will now receive their portion, it is apparent that these cities are a far distance one from another –

In the Negev:

Lebaoth, Shilhim, **Ain**, and **Rimmon** (Joshua 15:32)

In the Shephelah:

Libnah, **Ether**, **Ashan** (Joshua 15:42)

Thus, even in the allotment within Judah, Simeon is further divided among Israel, more perfectly fulfilling the prophecy of Jacob. As for the cities Simeon is granted, they are next enumerated...

²They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah,

The Hebrew here would at first seem to suggest three cities, but the total listing in verse 6 is thirteen, not fourteen cities: *vayhi lahem b'nakhalatham b'ersheva v'sheva u-moladah* – “And was to them, in their inheritance, Beersheba and Sheba, and Moladah.”

In Joshua 15:26, it lists Shema instead of Sheba before Moladah. Thus, it could be referring to that same location. But this would make fourteen cities, not thirteen. Also, neither Shema nor Sheba is mentioned in the listing of Simeon's cities in 1 Chronicles 4.

For this reason, the word “and” before Sheba seems to indicate that Beersheba and Sheba are being identified as one city, not two – “Beersheba and Sheba.” As the listing specifically will read thirteen cities, this seems the most likely explanation.

Beersheba means Well of the Oath or Well of the Seven. The word *beer* signifies a well or a pit. A well is something dug out, not natural. The word *sheva* means seven. However, that comes from *shava*, to swear as in an oath. The dual name is derived from the account found in Genesis 21 –

“Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had seized. ²⁶ And Abimelech said, ‘I do not know who has done this

thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard *of it* until today.’²⁷ So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant.²⁸ And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.²⁹ Then Abimelech asked Abraham, ‘What *is the meaning of* these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?’³⁰ And he said, ‘You will take *these* seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness that I have dug this well.’³¹ Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.” Genesis 21:25-31

This designation was repeated in Genesis 26 at the time of Isaac. There it gives a reasonable explanation for the name Sheba being affixed to Beersheba in this verse of Joshua –

“So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.³¹ Then they arose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

³² It came to pass the same day that Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, ‘We have found water.’³³ So he called it Shebah. Therefore the name of the city *is* Beersheba to this day.”

Genesis 26:30-33

Therefore, the well named Shebah (Sheba) is included with the city, Beersheba. Again, Sheba simply means Seven, but it is also derived from *shava* and alternatively means Oath. The “h” added at the end of the name signifies a feminine form of the word.

Moladah comes from *yalad*, to bear, bring forth, or beget. The *m* prefix may indicate “from.” Thus, it means Place of Bringing Forth, or more simply Birthplace, or even Origin.

³ Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem,

Khatsar shual means Village of the Fox. But this needs further explanation. The *shual* (fox) comes from *shoal*, the hollow of the hand, because these are burrowing animals, making their own hollow. The word is found in Isaiah 40:12, where it asks, “Who has measured the waters in the hollow [*shoal*] of His hand.” Hence, the meaning extends to Village of the Hollow of the Hand.

Balah probably comes from *baleh*, meaning worn out. Thus, it probably means Wearing Out, Worn Out, or Old.

Atsem comes from *etsem* or bone. Thus, it means Bone, Supporting, or Strength.

⁴ **Etolad, Bethul, Hormah,**

Etolad comes from *el*, God, and *yalad*, to bring forth or bear. Thus, it could mean Brought Forth of God, Born of God, Generated of God, Generation of God, etc.

Bethul is possibly derived from *bethula*, virgin, and *el*, god. Or it may be derived from *beith*, house, and *el*, god. Thus, it probably means Virgin of God or Abode of God.

Khar'mah means Anathema. James Strong defines it as Asylum.

⁵ **Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah,**

The name *Tsiq'lag* is a bit of a brain teaser. It appears to be derived first from *tsuq*. It means to pour out or melt, or to oppress or distress, such as to put pressure on someone to give up information or to lay siege to a city. It is used in Job 29 –

“When my steps were bathed with cream,
And the rock poured [*tsuq*] out rivers of oil for me!” Job 29:6

The second part is from *log*, a small amount poured into a hollow, like the hand. Thus, it could signify Measure of Pressure or Measure of Pouring.

Beith ha'markavoth means House of the Chariots.

Khatsar susah means Village of the Horse or Village of the Mare.

⁶ **Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhen:**

Beith Levaoth means House of Lionesses.

Depending on the root, *Sharukhen* comes from two words. The first is *sharah*, to loosen, and thus figuratively, to dwell or abide. The second is *khen*, or grace. It signifies Abode of Grace.

^{6 (con't)} **thirteen cities and their villages;**

Depending on the scholar, this may be seen as a scribal error that should read fourteen. As noted earlier, some say that Sheba should either be Shema or that it is the same place as Beersheba, and so on.

But the record of Genesis 26, that everybody oddly ignores, seems to indicate that Sheba (Shebah) is merely the well that belongs to Beersheba. Hence, thirteen cities being designated appears to be correct. Along with those, the others are...

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

Ayin means Fountain, Spring, or Eye.

Rimmon means Pomegranate. But the pomegranate symbolizes harvest ready fruit and so it can further mean Mature Mind or Harvest Ready.

Ether comes from *athom*, to multiply. And so it signifies Abundance. However, that can figuratively mean something like Deceitful as in the proverb where the word is used this way –

“Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend,
But the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful [lit. many].” Proverbs 27:6

Ashan means Smoke.

⁸ and all the villages that *were* all around these cities

There are the main cities with their villages, and then there are lesser villages that extended beyond them, scattered through the countryside. These would all be accounted to Simeon. This grant with the villages extended...

^{8 (con't)} as far as Baalath Beer, Ramah of the South.

Baalath Beer means Lady of a Well or Well of a Lady. *Ramath Negev* means Height of the South. It is supposed to be another name for Baalath Beer.

^{8 (con't)} This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families.

This sums up the listing from verses 1 through 8. It is the second allotment of the final seven, coming after Benjamin and before Zebulun. With that, the next words provide an explanation of why they are located in this area. But as was stated in the previous chapter, the account never fully explains how the lots were divided out in the seven final distributions...

⁹The inheritance of the children of Simeon *was included* in the share of the children of Judah,

me'khevel bene Yehuda nakhalath bene Shim'on – “From cord sons Judah inheritance sons Simeon.” The *khevel* is a rope used as a measuring line. Hence, it speaks of the territory, share, or allotment that has been measured out. With that, the explanation of “why” without the “how it was determined” is next stated...

^{9 (con't)} for the share of the children of Judah was too much for them.

The area granted to Judah had a large number of cities, and cities are what the land grants are centered on, even if other factors were considered. Cities are connected to roads that are connected to highways. As such the amount of productivity and trade of the land is often directly connected to the cities.

In the case of Judah, they would not be harmed at all by having these cities go to Simeon. In fact, it would be a benefit to them for the cities to be filled...

^{9 (con't)} Therefore the children of Simeon had *their* inheritance within the inheritance of that people.

The text reads much more simply: “And inherited sons Simeon in midst their inheritance.” Simeon, He Who Hears, receives his inheritance within the borders of Judah, Praise. Without really telling us the “how was this decision made,” we are simply told that it occurred. The reason was Judah’s share was too much. What a thing! “Too much room. Ok, let’s invite He Who Hears.”

*He who has an ear to hear
Let him hear what the Spirit says today
The words I speak will be perfectly clear
When he pays heed to what I say*

There is the unfolding of a wonderful story

*It is one that will include any who will hear
In heeding My word, there will be wonder and glory
This extends to anyone whether far off or near*

*The Spirit speaks in and through My word
And so the Spirit is still speaking today
Pay careful heed to all you have heard
Yes, be sure to listen to all that My word does say*

II. This Is the Church

The boundaries of the various allotments have reflected the work of Christ and its effects on those who are saved. The cities within Simeon now reflect the status of the church that Christ came to establish.

Simeon means He Who Hears. To hear in Scripture means not only to hear audibly, but also to attend to, such as –

“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. ¹⁹ And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him.” Deuteronomy 18:18, 19

In this case, Simeon is He Who Hears (attends to) the word. He has responded to the word of Christ. Simeon receives his inheritance within the inheritance of Judah. The boundaries were defined, and the pictures of Christ were laid out in Joshua 15:1-12.

It is within those typological anticipations of Christ that Simeon, He Who Hears, receives his allotment. Judah means Praise. Jesus is the Praise of God. The inheritance is then defined, beginning with Beersheba, Well of the Oath/Well of the Seven.

A well is something dug out. It reflects the profession of faith that a believer brings out. The water is there, but it must be released and obtained. That is the point of digging for the water. The words “and Sheba” or “and seven,” were affixed to that.

It isn't just that the location is given, but the well itself is obtained. The Lord speaks forth the word of salvation. His word is its own oath, and it establishes what it speaks. In this case, it is Seven. That will be explained in a moment.

The next location is Moladah or Bringing Forth. From the profession of faith, the church is established in those who make that profession. That leads to Hazar Shual, Village of the Fox. Recall that *shual*, or fox, is derived from *shoal*, or hollow. The verse quoted from Isaiah 40:12 about the “hollow of His hand” explained the meaning.

This then takes us to the church as described in Revelation. In Revelation 1:16, it says that “He had in His right hand seven stars.” This is explained in Revelation 1:20 –

“The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.”

The Greek literally reads, “which you saw upon [Greek: *epi*] my right hand.” It is as if the churches are in the hollow of His hand. The seven stars are emblematic of the seven leaders of the seven churches. They are the messengers of the Lord and anticipate the “Well of the Seven.”

Next is Balah, Wearing Out. It is the state of those in the church –

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.” 2 Corinthians 4:16

Despite this state, those in the church remain in a state of strength, reflected by Ezem (*Atsem*), Strength –

“...that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.”

-Colossians 1:10, 11

Next is mentioned Eltolad, coming from *yalad*, to bring forth or bear. Thus, it means Brought Forth of God, Born of God, Generated of God, Generation of God, etc. It is reflective of numerous verses in the New Testament. One from Galatians says –

“And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Galatians 4:6

That leads directly into the state of the church, reflected in the name Bethul or Virgin of God –

“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin [Bethul] to Christ.”

-2 Corinthians 11:2

This Virgin of God, despite being in the world and affected by it, is also secure in Christ. He is our Sanctuary and Refuge. He is our place of Asylum, reflected by *Khar'mah* –

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.” Hebrews 6:17, 18

Next came Ziklag, or Measure of Pouring. The measure, however, it not defined. It is simply a pouring out according to whatever measure. That is described by Paul in Titus 3:4-7 –

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured [Ziklag] out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

The next two cities came in the same verse as Ziklag and reflect essentially the same thought, Beth Marcaboth (House of the Chariots) and Hazar Susah (Village of the Horse). Both of these are used in Scripture to define warlike operations. They reflect power to wage battle and, at times, pride. These two together are well described by Paul –

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

After that came Beth Lebaoth, House of Lionesses. The lion is a symbol of courage and strength. Again, Paul provides a suitable explanation for that –

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened [Beth Lebaoth] with might through His Spirit in the inner man.” Ephesians 3:14-16

So far, each city has described the state of the believer or how that has come about. The next city Sharuhen, or *Sharukhen*, does as well. As noted, it comes from two words signifying to dwell and grace. Hence, Abode of Grace. There is an abundance of verses to explain this, but Romans 6:14 will do –

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace [Sharuhen].” Romans 6:14

And that state of grace is explained by how it is obtained. Unlike a well which is dug, a spring or fountain is that which comes up naturally. The Spirit comes through a profession, but once He comes, He does so ceaselessly, represented by Ain, or Fountain–

“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain [Ain] of water springing up into everlasting life.’” John 4:13, 14

Once a person in the church is so prepared, he can (if he is willing) move ahead to maturity. That is the point of the filling of the Spirit, represented by the next city, Rimmon. It means Pomegranate, but the Pomegranate is defined by those at Abarim as Mature Mind or Harvest Ready. Paul then explains that in several ways, but simply stated from 1 Corinthians –

“Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature [Rimmon].” 1 Corinthians 14:20

The next city is Ether. It signifies Abundance. There is a lot concerning this word in the New Testament and none of it is what the Prosperity Gospel proclaims. Rather, the abundance God provides to those who are mature minded is available to the poorest beggar in Christ, such as –

“For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance [Ether] of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)” Romans 5:17

With that, the next city, Ashan, or Smoke, was named. Smoke reflects a presence, be it of God, or a burning city, something irritating in the eyes, and so on. But it is a fleeting presence. God makes Himself manifest in temporary ways (Isaiah 6:4). Cities that are burning are manifest until they are gone (Joshua 8:21). The irritation of the wicked is a temporary manifestation in the nostrils of the Lord (Isaiah 65:5).

“Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

The life before knowing Christ was smoke. That which is found in Christ is eternal. John explains this precisely, saying –

“For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

-1 John 2:16,17

With that, the naming of the cities was complete, and yet more locations are implied with the words of verse 8. There it said, “as far as Baalath Beer, Ramah of the South.” This brings the narrative back to the thought of a well. It opened with Beersheba, and it is closing with Baalath Beer or Lady of a Well.

The lady that John writes to in his two shorter epistles is debated, but the context reveals that it is speaking of a body of believers –

“The Elder,

To the elect lady [Baalath Beer] and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, ² because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:

³ Grace, mercy, *and* peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.” 1 John 2:1-3

The Well of the Lady consists of those who have professed Christ and become a part of the church of believers. This location, Baalath Beer, is then defined as Ramath Negev, Height of the South. But Negev is from a root signifying parched.

This then would reflect a nearness to God, symbolized by the Height in the parched world. The water of life provided by Christ is what brings them this nearness and it came by professing Him as the Lord (Yehovah) in the flesh.

The verses then close out by reiterating that this is the inheritance of He Who Hears in the inheritance of Praise. The New Covenant was established with the House of Israel and the House of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31), but it extends to any and all who hear the word and accept it by faith.

These cities tell the story: “This is the church.” It is the body of believers for whom Christ died. It is hidden away in a few otherwise obscure verses about a land allotment within another land allotment, but Scripture never really explains how it came about. If it had, it would not have been quite the mystery that would later be revealed.

In this passage, we can see that not only does God have every aspect of what He is doing meticulously and minutely detailed, such as the earlier Joshua sermons, and the manner in which Christ would accomplish those things, such as in the more recent sermons, but He is also giving us details of what those things mean for us as well when we are included in His body of believers.

What a treasure! Take care when you read the word. Think on what you are reading and read it repeatedly so that you will remember what you have read. Keep cataloging things, making mental notes of key words and phrases, and considering how things fit into the greater panorama of the word.

Everything fits, and everything has a purpose. Trust that. When you read passages like these in Joshua, don't look at them as a laborious section to just get through, but enjoy the words, the names, the places, and so on. A story is being told!

And above all, keep remembering that every word in this precious and sacred word comes from the mind of God and for the benefit of those who will pay heed. Let us remember that it all anticipates the coming of Jesus and what has occurred since then.

And if Jesus has come, which indeed He has, then He is coming again. Let us be of mature minds growing in the knowledge of Him and His word from day to day. May it be so with each who loves His appearing.

Closing Verse: *“...when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now*

been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.” Ephesians 3:4-6

Next Week: Joshua 19.10-16 (The Inheritance of Zebulun) (39th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Simeon

The second lot came out for Simeon
For the tribe of the children of Simeon, by lot and not by chance
According to their families
And their inheritance was within the children of Judah’s
-----inheritance

They had in their inheritance Beersheba (Sheba), Moladah
Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem
Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah
Ziklag, Beth Marcaboth, Hazar Susah, each of them

Beth Lebaath, and Sharuhem: thirteen cities and their villages
Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four cities and their villages too
And all the villages that were all around these cities
As far as Baalath Beer, Ramah of the South, these they did accrue

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children
Of Simeon according to their families, according to their men

The inheritance of the children of Simeon
Was included in the share of the children of Judah, not by chance
For the share of the children of Judah was too much for them
Therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within
that people’s inheritance

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:10-16 (THE INHERITANCE OF ZEBULUN)

Abarim defines Zebulun as Glorious Dwelling Place. That is what I have consistently used in any sermon where Zebulun is mentioned. However, they also define it as Instance of Exaltation. I actually didn't know this until after I typed the sermon since the introductions are always the last thing I type.

In fact, I didn't know any of what I will tell you in these intro comments until the sermon was done. This is kind of sweet because, as you will see in the second section of the sermon, I struggled with what the verses were saying, trying my best to come to some other conclusion than the one that almost immediately caught my attention. I kept saying, "Well, it won't be that."

Abarim provides these words in their evaluation: "The verb זבל (zabal), means to exalt or honor and occurs only once in the Bible. Noun זבל (zebul) occurs five times and refers to some lofty abode which is designed to honor the occupant."

They also say, "The name Zebulun was probably around long before the Hebrew verb 'to dwell gloriously' was invented. HAW Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament makes mention of Speiser's link to the Akkadian *zubullu*, which denotes a bridegroom's gift. Curiously enough, in Hebrew the word for gift of endowment is זבד (*zebed*), from the similar verb זבד (*zabad*), meaning to endow with or bestow upon."

I had no idea about these things. Remember this or come back after the sermon and remind yourself of it. I think you will be surprised...

Text Verse: *"And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." Daniel 5:16*

Abarim will be quoted again later referring to an enigma that they could not solve concerning these sermon verses today. The enigma will be explained today. Whether you feel the explanation is satisfactory is up to you. If it is actually correct or not is known to the Lord. I can only go where I believe the word is taking us.

The explanation, to me, seems perfectly evident and beautifully relevant to the rest of what we teach in this church concerning a particular doctrine. This was not isogesis,

where one inserts presupposed meaning into the text. Rather, the meaning was drawn out of the context of the text, exegesis.

Are you ready? Great things such as the (hopefully!) solving of an enigma are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. As Far as Sarid (verses 10-16)

The final seven tribal land inheritances are being assigned according to the lot. The first was to Benjamin. The second was to Simeon. The third is now to go to Zebulun.

Zebulun was Jacob's tenth son, the sixth and last son of his first wife, Leah. Though he is younger than Issachar, the lot drawn for him comes before Issachar which agrees with the order of blessing by Jacob in Genesis 49 –

“Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea;
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
And his border shall adjoin Sidon.
¹⁴ Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two burdens;
¹⁵ He saw that rest *was* good,
And that the land *was* pleasant;
He bowed his shoulder to bear *a burden*,
And became a band of slaves.” Genesis 49:13-15

The record of his birth is found in Genesis 30 –

“Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰ And Leah said, ‘God has endowed me *with* a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons.’” So she called his name Zebulun.”

-Genesis 30:19, 20

On the march from Egypt to Canaan, Zebulun formed together with Judah and Issachar, also born to Leah, under the standard of Judah. Of their inheritance now to be detailed, Charles Ellicott gives an interesting commentary to consider –

“With regard to Judah and Zebulun, it is noticeable that we find their union reproduced in the earthly history of our Lord. Mary, who was of the house of David, and Joseph of the same lineage, are found dwelling in Nazareth, in the tribe of Zebulun. Thus the north and the south alike had “part in David,” and inheritance in David’s Son. There is a Bethlehem (Joshua 19:15) in Zebulun as well as in Judah. The name is not found in any other tribe.”

¹⁰ The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to their families,

va’yaal ha’goral ha’sh’lishi livne zevulun l’mishp’hotam – “And ascended the lot, the third, sons Zebulun to their families.” This is the *second* and last time that the word *alah*, “ascended” or “arose,” is used in relation to the lot. The first was with Benjamin.

Elsewhere, it either says the lot “was,” or it said to go or come forth, using the word *yatsa*. What seems certain is that both of the names are typologically anticipating Christ. Benjamin means “Son of *the* Right Hand,” and according to Abarim Publications, as we saw a moment ago, Zebulun means “Glorious Dwelling Place.”

As Jesus is the Son who ascended (Mark 16:19) to the right hand of God (seen in the name Benjamin), which is in His Glorious Dwelling Place (Revelation 21:3), the use of *alah* anticipates the ascension of Jesus. As for the ascending of Zebulun’s lot, it is according to the son’s families...

¹⁰ (con’t) and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid.

v’hi g’vul nakhalatam ad sarid – “and was border there inheritance unto Sarid.” It is a way of presenting a border on the south from some point within the inheritance. Thus, a person standing within the inheritance might say, “The southern border of this inheritance lies all the way to Sarid.

From there, Sarid is somewhat of a middle point used to trace the borders to the west (19:11) and to the east (19:12). Of the land to be described, Keil says –

“The Inheritance of Zebulun fell above the plain of Jezreel, between this plain and the mountains of Naphtali, so that it was bounded by Asher on the west and north-west (Joshua 19:27), by Naphtali on the north and north-east (Joshua 19:34), and by Issachar on the south-east and south, and touched neither the Mediterranean Sea nor the Jordan. It embraced a very fertile country.” Keil

The name Sarid is found only here and in verse 12. It is identical to the word *sarid*, a word signifying a survivor or one who is left remaining. That comes from the verb *sarad*, to escape. Hence, it signifies Escapee or Survivor. With that understood, the borders of Zebulun are next defined...

¹¹ Their border went toward the west and to Maralah,

v'alah g'vulam la'yamah u-maralah – “And ascended their border to westward, and Maralah.” The word *yam* signifies both “sea” and “west.” So it could read either “seaward” or “westward.” However, the border does not reach to the sea and so “westward” is preferred.

Maralah is seen only here. It comes from the word *raal*, to quiver or shake. That is only found in Nahum 2 –

“The shields of his mighty men *are* made red,
The valiant men *are* in scarlet.
The chariots *come* with flaming torches
In the day of his preparation,
And the spears are brandished [*raal*].” Nahum 2:3

Abarim defines the name as Place of the Flag. They then note that this simply conveys the idea of a border marker made out of a flag.

¹¹ (con't) went to Dabbasheth,

u-phagal b'dabasheth – “and impinged in Dabbasheth.” The name is found only here. It is the same as *dabbesheth*, a hump, like the hump of a camel in Isaiah 30:6.

“The burden of the beasts of the south. Into a land of adversity and distress, Of young lion and of old lion, Whence are viper and flying saraph, They carry on the shoulder of asses their wealth, And on the hump [*dabesheth*] of camels their treasures, Unto a people not profitable.” Isaiah 30:6 (YLT)

That, however, is an intensive of *d'vash*, honey. In other words the meaning of honey is being equated to the hump of a camel. It is the place of the camel's prosperity and abundance. Thus, Dabbesheth means Honey, but it is intensified. Therefore, I would translate it as Place of Prosperity and Abundance.

11 (con't) and extended along the brook that is east of Jokneam.

u-phaga el ha'nakhal asher al pene yaq'neam – “and impinged unto the brook which upon face Jokneam.” The type of brook, *nakhal*, comes from *nakhal*, to take possession and thus, an inheritance. This brook is believed to be the river Kishon mentioned in Judges 4.

Jokneam means either People Will Be Lamented or Let the People Acquire. This was the westward extension. Next...

12 Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise

v'shav mi'sarid qed'mah mizrakh ha'shemesh – “And returned from Sarid eastward, ascent the sun.” This begins the eastward extension of the southern border. It heads in the direction of the ascent of the sun...

12 (con't) along the border of Chisloth Tabor,

al g'vul kisloth tavor – “Upon border Chisloth Tabor.” The meaning of the name is rather complicated. Chisloth comes from *kesel*, which means loins or flanks, stupidity, or (misplaced) confidence. Tabor may come from *tbar*, to break, or from *barar*, to clean or purify. Hence, it may mean Purifying Stupidity, Purifying Misplaced Confidence, Breaking Stupidity, or something similar.

12 (con't) and went out toward Daberath, bypassing Japhia.

The NKJV saying “bypassing” is inexplicable: *v'yatsa el ha'daverath v'alah yaphia* – “And went out unto the Daberath and ascended Japhia.”

The name Daberath is from *davar*, word, or to speak. The “t” at the end may indicate a simple perfect, second person singular – You Spoke or You Have Spoken. But the name is prefixed by an article. Thus, it would have to mean The Word from You, or something like that. From there the ascent goes up to Japhia, or Illuminous.

13 And from there it passed along on the east of Gath Hepher,

The translation skips a word, thus missing the full sense: *u-mi'sham avar qed'mah mizrakhah gitah khepher* – “And from there passed over eastward, to the east, Gath Hepher.”

Gath Hopher means Winepress of the Pit or Winepress of Shame. Both meanings meet in intent. A pit is that which is dug out, and shame is something which, when it is uncovered, exposes that which is shameful. This is the birthplace of the prophet Jonah as noted in 2 Kings 14:25. Next, the border goes...

¹³ (con't) **toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on Neah.**

These are very complicated words. It is quite uncertain how to actually translate them. Most older translations will give full names. New translations use part of them as a description: *itah qatsin v'yatsa rimon ham'thoar ha'neah* – "Ittah Kazin and went out Rimmon the Methoar (the outlining) the Neah."

Eth (lit: *Itah*) Kazin comes from two words. The first means either Now or Time. Qatsin means Chief or Ruler. Thus, it means something like Judge Now or Time for a Ruling.

Rimmon means Pomegranate. But the pomegranate symbolizes harvest-ready fruit and so it can further mean Mature Mind or Harvest Ready.

The words "the Methoar" may be a separate name or a description of Rimmon. If an independent name, it would be The Outlining. If tied to Rimmon, it would mean Outlining of a Pomegranate or Outlining of a Mature Mind, etc. Of this, Abarim says –

"...most modern commentators and translators see the methoar-part as part of the narrative, but that's actually hard to defend. This participle occurs only in Joshua 19:13, while the descriptions of the tribal territories go on for chapters, which seems to suggest that the author is saying something that doesn't get said anywhere else. It's a mystery that perhaps in the future might be solved with greater authority than anybody's guesses." Abarim

Neah comes from *nua* – to wander or waver. With the article, it would be The Wandering or The Staggering.

¹⁴ **Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon,**

Rather: *v'nasav oto ha'g'vul mi'tsaphon khanathon* – "and went around it the border from north Hanathon." The word "it" is referring to Neah. Hannathon comes from *khanan*, grace or favor. The "t" in the middle probably indicates an intensive form and the "n" at the end may signify "place of." Thus, it would mean Regarded with Favor, Place of Much Favor (Grace), or Extraordinary Free Gift.

¹⁴ (con't) **and it ended in the Valley of Jiphthah El.**

v'hayu tots'otav ge yiphtakh el – “And his outgoings valley Jiphthah El.” The valley here, *ge*, comes from *gevah*, pride, which in turn comes from *gaah*, rise up, high, etc. This means the sides of the valley rise up, forming the valley.

The name *Yiphtakh* is also the name of the man who would later Judge Israel, Jephthah (He Will Open). Taken together with El, or God, the name means God Will Open or God Opens. Ellicott defines it as God's Opening. They all carry the same general meaning.

¹⁵ **Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem:**

The verse begins with “And” instead of “Included were.” Kattath comes from *qatan*, small. Thus, it means Little or even Very Small.

Nahallal is identical to *nahalol*, found only in Isaiah 7:19. There, it is translated as pastures or watering holes. Young's says, “commendable things.” That then comes from *nahal* to lead or guide to a watering place or a place of rest. The most known use of that is found in the 23rd Psalm –

“He leads [*nahal*] me beside the still waters.” Psalm 23:2

Strong's defines it as Pasture. I would say Led to Rest.

Shimron comes from *shamar*, to watch or guard. Hence, it is Watching or Vigilant Guardian. Strong's defines it as Guardianship.

Idalah is not translated by most and there are several guesses as to its meaning. Smith's Bible Dictionary says Memorial of God.

Bethlehem means House of Bread, but it can equally mean House of War. It is a different Bethlehem from where Christ was born.

¹⁵ (con't) **twelve cities with their villages.**

Obviously, the five villages listed in this verse are not twelve cities. Thus, the word “and” at the beginning is saying that some of the cities previously mentioned laying along the borders belong to Zebulun. Others are border cities belonging to the adjoining tribe.

The total number of existing cities with their villages belonging to Zebulun is twelve. With all of these identified, the listing of Zebulun's borders and cities ends with...

^{16 (fin)} **This was the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.**

This sums up the listing from verses 10 through 15. It is the third allotment of the final seven, coming after Simeon and before Issachar.

*Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God
Nor can corruption inherit that which is incorrupt
Be we shall all be changed, and so, heavenly streets we'll trod
In the twinkling of an eye; the change will be abrupt*

*When the last trumpet sounds, we will be taken to glory
We shall all be changed, completion of the gospel story*

*Where O Death, O where is your sting?
Where O Hades, O where is your victory?
When Christ our Savior, us to Himself does He bring
When Christ translates His children to eternal glory*

II. Stupendous Symbolism; Terrific Typology Up, Up and Away

The various locations, and the descriptions of them, made zero sense at first because I am so dismissive of the sensational. For example, I do not believe God speaks to people today except through His word.

I do not believe that Jesus comes to us either while we are awake or while we are asleep. That would be illogical based on what is said in the New Testament writings. With the word complete, we are asked to trust in the word by faith, not expect or rely on sight.

All sensation does is distract and lead us away from what is sound. People want to speak in tongues, but this is not unique to Christianity. Several religions claim they speak in tongues. Cults, pagans, shamans, Japan's God Light Association, and others all claim to speak in tongues.

I had a neighbor in Japan, a Shokugokai Buddhist, that chanted out tongues every day. We could hear her as we passed her house.

People in pretty much every religion on the planet claim to have divine visions, visitations, projections to the heavenly realm, and so forth. None of these things actually edify at all, even if they actually do occur in Christianity, which they don't.

Colossians 3:4 presupposes that there is one specific time that Jesus will come and manifest Himself to His people. Therefore, it is not only unwise, but it is against Scripture, to accept any supposed vision of Christ before that day.

This understanding kept me from initially making the conclusions that I finally made on these verses. I am not a date setter, and you won't find me either predicting the rapture or bothering with anyone who does. If someone thinks he has the timing of that figured out, he is wrong.

Despite this, there are several sets of verses in the Old Testament that point to the rapture. I did a sermon on them in the past and I still agree with the conclusions made there. The typology is rather evident once you see it.

After a bit of review where the same thought kept creeping into my mind, meaning that these verses seem to be pointing to the rapture, I had to finally say to myself, "Well, let's see if it fits." Listen and let your own mind decide.

I shall present my conclusions and leave them as they are for others to accept or dismiss and for the Lord to eventually nod that they were correct or to take away rewards at the Bema seat because they were not.

Beginning in verse 10 was the note concerning the ascending of the lot, using the word *alah* (to ascend), something unique to Benjamin and Zebulun. Both speak of the finished work of Christ. Benjamin, Son of the Right Hand, signifies Jesus' ascension to heaven where He sits at God's right hand (Mark 16:19). Zebulun marks the location as God's Glorious Dwelling Place (Revelation 21:3).

Verse 10 then continued with the thought that Sarid was somewhat of a middle point used to trace the borders to the west and to the east from there. There it said, *v'hi g'vul nakhalatam ad sarid* – "and was border there inheritance unto Sarid."

Sarid, Escapee, defines those within the border. This follows with 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5–

“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ²For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.”

From there, this border will start by going west and then east. Westward movement signifies the anticipation of meeting God. This has been explained many times, but allow me to refresh your overloaded mind.

One comes from the east, enters the outer gates of the tabernacle, continues into the courts, past the altar of sacrifice, past the laver, through the outer door of the tabernacle and into the holy place, forward to the veil, through that, and into the Holy of Holies where God resides. God is west and man will forever look west to search Him out.

This westward line begins with an ascension to Maralah. As shown, Abarim defined the name as Place of the Flag, noting that this simply conveys the idea of a border marker made out of a flag. A marker is something that is only useful in the light. Hence, one must be a son of the light, a son of the day, to see it.

From there, the border proceeded to Dabbasheth. It is a difficult word that most translate as Hump, simply because that is how it is translated in Isaiah 30:6. But as I explained, it is an intensive of *d'vash*, honey.

Honey is being equated to the hump of a camel. It is the place of the camel's prosperity and abundance. Thus it means Place of Prosperity and Abundance, an obvious reference to our inheritance.

Verse 11 continued describing the border as impinging unto the brook, the *nakhal*, which is upon face Jokneam. The *nakhal* comes from the verb *nakhal*, meaning to take as a possession or an inheritance. This, in turn, comes from *nakhalah*, an inheritance. That faces, or is before, Jokneam, Let the People Acquire.

The whole thought indicates that the border identifies the claiming of the inheritance of prosperity and abundance.

From there, verse 12 went back in the opposite direction, eastward. As it said, “And returned from Sarid (Escapee) eastward, ascent the sun.” This would be before the time of the escapee. The word *qedem* signifies east, but it also means before in time. And so, this is defining how the escapee became an escapee. As the border travels east, we are moving back in time in relation to the state of being an escapee.

The words “ascent the sun” actually begin that process. The *shemesh*, or sun, is used to describe the coming of Messiah in Malachi 4, its last use in the Old Testament, anticipating His arrival. There it says –

“But to you who fear My name
The Sun [*shemesh*] of Righteousness shall arise
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.” Malachi 4:2

With this understood, the border is said to have gone “upon border Chisloth Tabor.” The name gives a good sense of those who have come to Christ, Choose your favorite as they each convey who we once were –

Purifying Stupidity
Purifying Misplaced Confidence
Breaking Stupidity

Prior to that (east) the border “went out unto the Daberath and ascended Japhia.” As explained, Daberath means The Word from You, or something close to that. It is a reference to how one becomes an escapee –

“In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13

That of course, is based on the source of the word, which is God –

“So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

From there the border went on the ascent up to Japhia, Illuminous. It refers to that source of the word, speaking of God in His nature. It next said in verse 13, “And from

there passed over eastward, to the east, Gath Hopher.” Gath Hopher means Winepress of the Pit or Winepress of Shame.

The meaning was explained saying that a pit is that which is dug out, and shame is something which when it is uncovered exposes that which is shameful. This forms a picture. The people who are escapees were in the current state of the people of the world.

In this context, a winepress symbolizes the place where judgment is poured out –

“And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.’¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.”

-Revelation 14:18, 19

Verse 13 continued with the super complicated words that Abarim noted were “a mystery that perhaps in the future might be solved with greater authority than anybody’s guesses.” I can only go by typology here. If it is correct, it would explain the mystery of the words.

They said, “Ittah Kazin and went out Rimmon the Methoar (the outlining) the Neah.”

Eth Kazin is defined as Judge Now or Time for a Ruling. That is what those who are currently in the winepress must do.

As was noted, Rimmon means Pomegranate. But the pomegranate symbolized harvest-ready fruit and so it can further mean Mature Mind or Harvest Ready.

Connected to “the Methoar” it would be The Outlining. If tied to Rimmon, it would mean Outlining of a Pomegranate and thus, Outlining of a Mature Mind. It is the answer to the proposition set forth in the gospel and which responds to the words of Paul in Philippians 2:5 –

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

That was precisely defined by Paul in 2 Corinthians 2 –

“However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.”

-2 Corinthians 2:6

Those who are mature, meaning coming to the knowledge of God in Christ, are outlined (distinguished) from those in the winepress of wrath.

Next mentioned was *ha'neah*, The Neah. That came from *nua*, to wander. Thus, The Wandering. That word was first used when referring to Cain, the fallen line of Adam who is not redeemed –

“when thou tillest the ground, it doth not add to give its strength to thee -- a wanderer [*nua*], even a trembling one, thou art in the earth.” Genesis 4:12 (YLT).

From that (verse 14) the border goes *tsaphon*, or north. The word signifies that which is hidden or treasured away because the north receives less light in the northern hemisphere. It thus speaks of those who are “hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3).

This northward movement is around Hanathon. Any of the three names gives the sense of the event –

Regarded with Favor
Place of Much Favor (Grace)
Extraordinary Free Gift

The border goes around the Wandering, those lost in the world. It is those who have received Christ’s extraordinary favor and the gift spoken of by Paul –

“But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. ¹⁶ And the gift *is* not like *that which* came through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which* came from one *offense* resulted in condemnation, but the free gift *which* came from many offenses resulted in justification.” Romans 5:15, 16

Verse 14 continued with the border ending at the Valley (*ge*) of Jiphthah El or God Will Open (God Opens, God’s Opening). That is a clear reference to the gospel of Jesus

Christ. He did the work, He is the Door, we respond to the gospel and the door is opened –

“He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: ⁸“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.” Revelation 3:7, 8

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:20

Verse 15 noted the names of five cities within the inheritance of Zebulun. These would reflect the state of those included, not the process of how they were included. They are Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem.

Kattath comes from *qatan*, small. Thus, it means Little or even Very Small. This would not reflect the number, but the character. The word *qatan* is used both literally and figuratively. In a figurative sense, it is the least in importance, the smallest of note, etc. It is reflective of the words of Jesus and the thought repeated in the epistles –

“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, ³ and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.’” Mathew 18:2, 3

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’” Matthew 19:14

Jesus was not saying that little children, because of their nature as little children, will inherit the kingdom of heaven. He is saying that people will not inherit the kingdom of heaven unless they are, by nature, like little children. It is the state of total trust, by faith alone, in the work of Jesus Christ.

This “little child” terminology is used by both Paul and John in their writings, such as Galatians 4:19, 1 John 2:1, etc.

The next city is Nahallal which I translate as Led to Rest. It is a logical translation based on the evaluation given earlier. That perfectly reflects the state of those in Christ, even as David described it in the 23rd Psalm.

Shimron was next. It is Watching or Vigilant Guardian. It is no doubt the state of those who are anticipating their glorification.

Idalah was defined by Smith's as Memorial of God. A memorial in the New Testament is defined by Thayer's Greek Lexicon as "that by which the memory of any person or thing is preserved."

That fits perfectly with those awaiting the call, even those who have died –

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words."

-1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Finally, the last city, Bethlehem, was named. It means House of Bread. Christ is the Bread of Life. It signifies those who are in Christ being sustained by Him until that wonderful day that Scripture promises to those who are His.

The final note of verse 15 was that there were twelve villages. Twelve is the number of perfection of government or governmental perfection (Bullinger). This then symbolizes the entire body of those of the church, represented by the twelve apostles.

We ended with verse 16, "This *was* the inheritance of the children of Zebulun [Glorious Dwelling Place]." Such is the inheritance that has been secured for God's people since the coming of Christ. Those who have called on Him have this promise which is a guarantee from God, who cannot lie.

It is a glorious set of verses that speak of the redemption of Christ, a marvelous state in Christ, and an anticipation of the glory of the coming of Christ for His people.

Obviously, this could simply be a general statement of all who are saved by Christ at any time, but because this is tied to those who escape and those who do not escape, it must

certainly anticipate the rapture. There are those who will not escape the end times and yet they will be saved during the tribulation.

But that is not the focus of what is revealed here. Rather, the words are tightly connected to the events leading up to, but not during, the end times the world will face. As such, I conclude that this is another clear and reliable anticipation of a pretribulation rapture.

If that is incorrect, nothing is lost. We would still be going through the end times to some extent anyway, wouldn't we? But if it is correct, it gives us a definite connection to the already clear timeline provided by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2.

We are not of the night, but of the light and of the day. This is the reward and the honor of being in Christ. Those who are saved and yet believe in a mid or post-trib rapture will still be taken out, they will just be a bit more surprised than those of us who understand what God has done and will do in Christ.

The typology here gives us a marvelous reassurance of the pre-tribulation. Be settled in your doctrine, have faith in the word, and in God's promises, and keep your seatbelts fastened – Jesus is coming for His people. And may that day be soon.

Closing Verse: *“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:9, 10*

Next Week: Joshua 19:17-23 *It's a great inheritance, above and beyond, by far...* (The Inheritance of Issachar) (40th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Zebulun

The third lot came out for the children of Zebulun according to
-----their families, so was their deed
And the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid

Their border went toward the west and to Maralah
Went to Dabbasheth, and extended along the brook that is east of Jokneam, oohrah!
Then from Sarid it went eastward toward the sunrise along the
-----border of Chisloth Tabor
And went out toward Daberath, bypassing Japhia

And from there it passed along on the east of Gath Hopher
Toward Eth Kazin, and extended to Rimmon, which borders on
-----Neah as well
Then the border went around it on the north side of Hannathon
And it ended in the Valley of Jiphthah El

Included were Kattath, Nahallal, Shimron
Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages too
This was the inheritance of the children of Zebulun
According to their families, these cities with their villages
-----they did accrue

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:17-23 (THE INHERITANCE OF ISSACHAR)

Without giving away all the details of the sermon, I will note that the typology of this short passage follows logically after that of the previous one, Zebulun. That makes sense when considering that Zebulun and Issachar are brothers and sons of the same mother, and yet Jacob blessed them in reverse order and their inheritances are in reverse order as well.

Why would Jacob do that? Why would that reversal be repeated now? There is nothing in Scripture to indicate that either son did anything right or wrong as is the case with other sons of Israel. It seems arbitrary. But it isn't.

When we get to the end of today's verses, we will at least have seen the typological reason for why. Keep in mind that Israel, the nation, is going through the tribulation period. Why is that?

Obviously, it is because they rejected Jesus as their Messiah for the past two thousand years. They had the opportunity to acknowledge Him right up until AD70. They didn't, and off they went into a time of the curses of the law, which led to their exile.

They have had the opportunity, as a nation, to call out to Him since 1948 when they were reestablished. They still have not done so. However, Daniel 9 reveals to us that they will enter into a future time of law observance with the signing of a peace deal which includes the sacrificial worship of the law.

So what is the common denominator in their dispersion and punishment along with their entering into the tribulation period? The law. They will enter into the tribulation because they chose, and will continue to choose, the law over the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Text Verse: *"In that He says, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away." Hebrews 8:13*

I can't figure out how many people in the church cannot understand that Israel has been under the punishment of the law for rejecting Jesus. Israel will enter into the tribulation period because of rejecting Jesus.

That means their default position at this time is life under the law. They agreed to it at Mount Sinai, and it has been a weight on them ever since. And yet, people in the church keep reintroducing the law into their theology which is supposed to be grace alone through faith alone. It is maddening to see and baffling to the brain.

All they need to do is pick up the Bible and read it in context. With Adam and then Israel as the example of living under the law, they just need to think it through. We don't need more law. We need grace.

One can choose the law or he can choose grace. The law came first in order for there to be the opportunity for grace. Grace cannot reign in one's life while law exists in his life. Israel chose the law, and until they accept Christ's fulfillment of it, they cannot receive the grace. The result of this choice is death because the wages of sin is death (Romans 3:23), and it is by law that we have the knowledge of sin.

This theme runs so deeply through Scripture that it is a primary doctrine. It became evident in the second chapter of Genesis. It was the main focus of everything in Scripture from Exodus 20 until Jesus cried out His dying words and gave up His spirit as is recorded in the Gospels.

Grace over law continues to be the focal point of Scripture until the last verse of the Bible where John bestows a final blessing upon those who hear the words, saying, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen." (Revelation 22:21).

Again, why is Israel going through the tribulation? It is because God has chosen to use a tribulation period to judge the world for its unrighteousness, and yet to also give all who failed to come to Him through the grace of Jesus Christ one last opportunity to do so. Jesus is what the name Issachar points to: He is Wages. Let's see how that is revealed in today's passage.

It's all to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Fourth Lot (verses 17-23)

The narrative continues to detail the final seven tribal land inheritances which are being assigned according to the lot. The first was to Benjamin. The second was to Simeon. The third went to Zebulun. Now, the fourth is designated and detailed...

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

Zebulun's lot was said to have "ascended." Now, the wording returns to the more familiar term, *yatsa*, to come out. But what is unusual is that the name Issachar is repeated twice: *l'yissakhar yatsa ha'goral ha'revii livne yissakhar l'mishp'hotam* – "To Issachar went out the lot, the fourth, to sons Issachar to their families."

Issachar was Jacob's ninth son and the fifth son of his first wife, Leah. Though he is older than Zebulun, the lot drawn for him comes after Zebulun which agrees with the order of blessing by Jacob in Genesis 49 –

"Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea;
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
And his border shall adjoin Sidon.

¹⁴ Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two burdens;

¹⁵ He saw that rest *was* good,
And that the land *was* pleasant;
He bowed his shoulder to bear *a burden*,
And became a band of slaves." Genesis 49:13-15

The record of his birth is quite detailed. It is found in Genesis 30 –

"Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, 'Please give me *some* of your son's mandrakes.'

¹⁵ But she said to her, '*Is it* a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?'

And Rachel said, 'Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes.'

¹⁶ When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, 'You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes.' And he lay with her that night.

¹⁷ And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸ Leah said, 'God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband.' So she called his name Issachar." Genesis 30:14-18

From the context of the passage, you can probably figure out the meaning of the name. Issachar means He is Wages. As Leah said, “God has given me my wages.” The name comes from *nasa*, to lift up, and *sakar*, wages.

On the march from Egypt to Canaan, Issachar was stationed to the east of the tabernacle together with Judah and Zebulun, also born to Leah, under the standard of Judah.

With the casting of the lot, the territory will next be detailed. For the most part, only the names of the cities will be provided. The borders are not stated except for the portion which is at the eastern side of the northern border. The other borders are not necessary because they can be determined by reviewing the borders of the tribes surrounding Issachar. Now, the verses begin with...

18 And their territory went to Jezreel,

vayhi gevulam yizrelah – “And was their border Jezreel-ward.” Jezreel means God Sows. Jones’ Dictionary of Old Testament Proper Names proposes the meaning of He Will Be Sown of God, adding that it means he will have numerous progeny. But that is not necessarily the intent.

In the book of Hosea, the name will be used to signify God sowing judgment among Israel, making a pun upon the two names –

“So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴Then the LORD said to him:

‘Call his name Jezreel,

For in a little *while*

I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu,

And bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

⁵It shall come to pass in that day

That I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.” Hosea 1:4, 5

The name Yisrael, or He Strives with God, is set in contrast to Yizreel, or God Sows. Israel strived with (meaning against) God, and God would sow judgment, signified by Jezreel, among Israel. Thus, the name simply signifies God Sows. He sows whatever He determines to sow, be it progeny, judgment, blessing, etc.

18 (con’t) and included Chesulloth, Shunem,

v'ha'k'suloth v'shunem – “and the Chesulloth and Shunem.” As with several other locations to be named, this is the only mention of the Chesulloth in Scripture. It is similar to the first part of the name Chisloth Tabor seen in verse 19:12. The name comes from *kesel*, meaning loins or flanks, stupidity, or (misplaced) confidence.

As such, it means something like The (misplaced) Confidences or Stupidities. Abarim notes, “This is also the word for stellar constellations in general, and more specific the constellation Orion.” Hence, they give a secondary meaning of “Constellations.” Another option is that it could mean Loins or Slopes because it was believed to be on the slopes of a small mountain.

The root of Shunem is debated. It could come from a word meaning to be quiet, or from one meaning jag, crag, or tooth. Thus, it is translated as Two Resting Places or Uneven. Abarim proposes Silences or Teeth.

¹⁹ Haphraim, Shion, Anaharath,

Khaphraim comes from *khaphar*, to dig. Abarim notes this would be “both in order to unearth something and to bury something. Hence this verb may be used to describe (1) a quest for something wanted, or (2) a quest to obscure something unwanted.”

It also may come from *kepher*, to be ashamed, because when something wicked is exposed it becomes evident, thus bringing shame. Therefore, it means Two Digs, Two Shames, Double Pits or Double Shame.

Shion comes from the same root as *sho*, a destruction or desolation. That word is used by Zephaniah concerning the Day of the Lord –

“The great day of the LORD *is* near;

It is near and hastens quickly.

The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter;

There the mighty men shall cry out.

¹⁵ That day *is* a day of wrath,

A day of trouble and distress,

A day of devastation [*sho*] and desolation [*meshoah*: from *sho*],

A day of darkness and gloominess,

A day of clouds and thick darkness,

¹⁶ A day of trumpet and alarm

Against the fortified cities
And against the high towers.” Zephaniah 1:14-16

Thus, Shion means something like Empty or Ruin.

Anakharath comes from *nakhar*, meaning nostrils or snorting. That is found only twice in the Old Testament, once in Job and once in Jeremiah. In both, it is referring to the snorting of a horse. The majestic description of the horse in Job, which goes on for seven full verses, begins with these words –

“Have you given the horse strength?
Have you clothed his neck with thunder?
²⁰ Can you frighten him like a locust?
His majestic snorting [*nakhar*] strikes terror.” Job 39:19, 20

The name Anakharath means Snorting, but Strong’s understands this to then mean a narrow pass or gorge, like a nostril.

²⁰ **Rabbith, Kishion, Abez,**

v’ha’rabith, v’qish’yon, v’avets – “And the Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez.” Rabbith comes from *ravav*, to become much or many. Hence, it is The Multitude or The Great.

Qish’yon comes from a primitive root signifying to be dense. It can be rendered both literally and figuratively. Thus it means hard, tough, stubborn, severe, etc. Therefore, it signifies Hardness, Hard Place, or Very Hard.

Avetz comes from an unused root meaning to gleam. Strong’s translates it as Conspicuous.

²¹ **Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pазzez.**

Remeth means Heights, High Places, or Lofty Place.

En Gannim comes from *ayin* – either a fountain or an eye, and the plural of garden. Hence, it means Fountain of Gardens. The *gan*, or garden, comes from a root signifying being covered, surrounded, and defended.

En Gannim is the location of modern Jenin, a spot often in the news because it is plagued with violence from the Muslims residing there.

En Khadah comes from *ayin* (fountain or eye) also, along with the second part that is derived from *khadad*, to be fierce or to sharpen. It is translated as Fountain of Joy by Abarim. Others say Swift Fountain, Fountain of Sharpness, or Sharp Eye.

Beith Patsets means House of Dispersion, coming from *puts*, to scatter.

²² And the border reached to Tabor,

u-phaga ha'gevul b'tavor – “and impinged the border in Tabor.” Tabor may come from *barar*, to purify or clarify and would mean Purified, Purifying, or Clarifying. However, Strong's connects it to *tvar*, to break, and calls it Broken Region.

²² (con't) Shahazimah, and Beth Shemesh;

Shakhatsimah (or Shakhatsumah) comes from *shakhats*, dignity or pride. Thus, it is something like Proudly. Lange, however, defines it as Heights. The word *shakhats* is found only twice in the Bible, both in Job and both referring to the dignity or confidence of proud animals –

“Nor have the sons of pride [*shakhats*] trodden it, | The fierce lion has not passed over it.” Job 28:8 (YLT)

“He sees every high thing, | He [is] king over all sons of pride [*shakhats*].”
-Job 41:34

Beth Shemesh means House of *the* Sun. This is obviously a different Beth Shemesh than that granted to Judah in Joshua 15:10.

²² (con't) their border ended at the Jordan:

v'hayu tos'oth gevulam ha'yarden – “And are outgoings their border the Jordan.” Though not stated explicitly, this means that the border goes to the Jordan and then south. As such, it defines Issachar's eastern border as the Jordan, the Descender.

²² (con't) sixteen cities with their villages.

arim shes esreh v'khatsrehen – “Cities six ten and their villages.” One of the cities, Tabor, is named as belonging to Zebulun in 1 Chronicles 6:77, but it is not uncommon to have a border town assigned to more than one tribe.

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

zoth nakhalath mateh bene yisakhar l'misp'hotam he'arim v'khatsrehen – “This inheritance tribe Issachar to their families, their cities and their villages.” With this, the cities of Issachar, along with a couple of its borders, have been defined. As said earlier, the other borders can be determined from the borders of the tribes neighboring them.

*Wages are owed and they will be paid
This is absolutely certain in the case of sin
What is due has been measured and weighed
And that means we are all done in*

*That is, unless someone else will pay what is due
And if He is able and willing to pay the high cost
But what are the chances anyone will come through?
Alas, there is no hope. Humanity is lost*

*But God has done it! There is hope renewed
He has sent Jesus to take away our sin
In His death, wages are paid for what we accrued
Because of His work, a new life will begin*

II. Explaining the Typology

As we saw, the name Issachar means He is Wages. He is named after his younger brother, Zebulun, or Glorious Dwelling Place. The territory of Issachar began with a note concerning it was toward Jezreel. Jezreel means God Sows.

I propose that Issachar, the older brother, being identified after Zebulun is tied to events in the biblical narrative that also occur in a set order. Last week, Zebulun made a remarkable picture of the rapture. God’s people, the church comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, was taken out. What follows that event?

The sequence of events is laid out by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2. The next events are the revealing of the antichrist and the tribulation period. That leads to the restoration of Israel. Issachar, or He is Wages, reveals this in typology.

As noted, Issachar comes from *nasa*, to lift up, and *sakar*, wages. Wages are what is earned. Death, for example, is the wages of sin. For those who trust in the Lord, death – meaning spiritual death and separation from God – is no longer a concern. This means that Christ is the wages paid for man’s sin. He was lifted up and became the payment.

In the restoration of Israel, this will finally be true for them, just as it is for the church now. This is reflected, for example, in Isaiah –

“Indeed the LORD has proclaimed
To the end of the world:
“Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Surely your salvation is coming;
Behold, His reward [*sakar*] is with Him,
And His work before Him.’”
¹² And they shall call them The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
And you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.” Isaiah 62:11, 12

Noting Jezreel first with the border going Jezreel-ward would signify that God Sows in the direction one pursues. In forsaking Christ, God sows judgment and condemnation. In coming to Christ, God sows restoration and blessing.

After Jezreel, Chesulloth, or Stupidities (Misplaced Confidences) was mentioned. Israel and most of the world will be found stupid or with misplaced confidence when the antichrist is revealed. Jesus spoke of this in John 5 –

“But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.” John 5:42, 43

Paul gives greater detail concerning him –

“Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?
⁶ And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own

time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12

After Chesulloth, Shunem is named. It is a condensed plural word probably best defined as Two Resting Places, although that could be debated. If that is correct, it could be considered the two paths that Israel will take in the tribulation period. The majority will seek rest in the antichrist while the others will seek rest in Christ.

That is followed by Haphraim, Two Digs. As noted, the root means to dig "both in order to unearth something and to bury something" (Abarim). This would logically follow Shunem. Part of the people are digging to bury their shame; the other part is digging to expose it. Christ is the difference between the two.

The next city is Shion, Empty or Ruin. As noted, the word's root was referred to in Zephaniah 1 when anticipating the Day of the Lord. It is the state of how things will be at that time.

Shion was followed by Anakharath, coming from *nakhar*, meaning nostrils or snorting. The snorting, however, can be taken in a hyperbolic sense to speak of coming destruction such as in Jeremiah 8 –

"We looked for peace, but no good *came*;
And for a time of health, and there was trouble!
¹⁶ The snorting of His horses was heard from Dan.
The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of His strong ones;
For they have come and devoured the land and all that is in it,
The city and those who dwell in it." Jeremiah 8:15, 16

These verses of Jeremiah were actually believed by some of the church fathers to be referring to the coming of the antichrist. Whether that is the case, the parallel of the Babylonian destruction to that of the end times is a valid one.

The Rabbith is named next. It means The Multitude. That would fit perfectly with the prophecy of Joel 3 –

“Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For the day of the LORD *is* near in the valley of decision.” Joel 3:14

This is the same as the Valley of Jehoshaphat mentioned in Joel 3. That is generally accepted as the area separating Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. But the battle itself is describing events in Jezreel (Megiddo) Valley –

“Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat;
For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.
¹³ Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.
Come, go down;
For the winepress is full,
The vats overflow—
For their wickedness *is* great.” Joel 3:12, 13

That this is Jezreel (Megiddo) can be deduced from the comparable passage in Revelation –

“And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.’ ¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.”
-Revelation 14:18-20

That is later defined in Revelation 16 as Armageddon, meaning the Valley of Megiddo where Mount Megiddo is.

The next location is Qish’yon signifying Hardness, Hard Place, or Very Hard, coming from *qashah*, hard in both a literal and figurative sense. For example, it is used when referring to hardened hearts and stiffened necks.

This could then be referring to either the state of the people in rebellion against the Lord or the dire straits in which the people find themselves. Both hold true concerning the tribulation period.

The next location, Avetz, comes from an unused root meaning to gleam. Strong's is the only one I could find who even translates it. He says Conspicuous. Based on the coming names I would say this signifies the revelation of Christ to the people, though this is speculation because of the rarity of the name. See Revelation 19 –

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.”

-Revelation 19:11-13

With this advent, Jesus is seen to be the incarnate Lord Yehovah of the Old Testament, symbolized by Remeth, or High Places, coming from *rum*, to be high or exalted. That is seen, for example, in Isaiah 57 –

“For thus says the High [*rum*] and Lofty One
Who inhabits eternity, whose name *is* Holy:
‘I dwell in the high [*marrom*: from *rum*] and holy *place*,
With him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’” Isaiah 57:15

The way in which the contrite ones are revived is defined in the coming names. First En Gannim, Fountain of Gardens, is named. This speaks of the source of the water for gardens, be it Eden, Gethsemane, or heaven. A garden is a place of innocence, security, conscience, happiness, salvation, and purity.

The ending of the tribulation period and Israel's restoration is seen in En Khadah. That is translated by Abarim as Fountain of Joy. The significance of that is seen in Zechariah 12 and 13 at the time of Judah's restoration –

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced.

Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” Zechariah 12:10

That pouring out is then explained as Zechariah 13 opens –

“In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.” Zechariah 13:1

This pouring out and fountain are to be on this particular group of people who are then explained by the name Beth Pazzez, or House of Dispersion. As seen earlier, the word *patsets* is derived from *puts*, a scattering. Zechariah 13 continues with words that explain the meaning –

“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
Against the Man who is My Companion,
Says the LORD of hosts.
'Strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep will be scattered [*puts*];
Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.
⁸And it shall come to pass in all the land,
Says the LORD,
'That two-thirds in it shall be cut off *and* die,
But *one*-third shall be left in it:
⁹I will bring the *one*-third through the fire,
Will refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them.
I will say, “This *is* My people”;
And each one will say, ‘The LORD *is* my God.’” Zechariah 13:7-9

The House of the Dispersion becomes the house where the dispersed are brought back, far fewer in number. Their state is then explained by the next location, Tabor, or Purified. It is a name coming from *barar*, to purify.

It is the state of the people who have gone through the refiner’s fire and been purified. Daniel refers to this process using the word *barar*, or purified –

“Many shall be purified [*barar*], made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.” Daniel 12:10

With that seen, the next location Shahazimah, meaning Proudly, was named. This was explained as the dignity or confidence of a proud animal in Job. That can easily be a metaphor for those who are saved by the Lord. As Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, there is no reason to not equate those in Him to sons of such confidence, dignity, and pride.

The next location is Beth Shemesh or House of *the* Sun. As noted in Joshua 15, it provides an obvious picture of the eternal nature of the light of Christ, who is called the Sun of Righteousness in Malachi 4. Thus, House of *the* Sun speaks of Christ dwelling among His people.

With that, the last location noted said, *v'hayu tos'oth gevulam ha'yarden* – “And are outgoings their border the Jordan.” Christ is the Descender. Those who are in Christ are set in their inheritance based upon His descent during His first advent to accomplish the work set before Him.

Thus, to say the outgoings of their border is the Jordan, it means that this is how the border of their inheritance is set, meaning through the finished work of Christ.

With the naming of the locations complete, the final note concerning the grant was that it was comprised of sixteen cities with their villages. Bullinger does not define the number, but it is the product of two and eight.

Two is the number of division or difference. Eight is the number of superabundance and the beginning of a new series. This could then be explained by the difference of those who enter the tribulation (2) – those who are separated to the antichrist and those who are separated to Christ. This is followed by a new beginning (8). For the latter, an existence of superabundance as they enter the millennium. For the former, superabundant condemnation.

The verses today ended with the note that this is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar. The children of He is Wages have received their inheritance, and it is not because of anything they had done to merit it.

Likewise, for those in Christ, or for those who come to Him during the tribulation, their state is granted based on unmerited favor. All people have a choice to make. God does not force it on us, and He does not select some for salvation and some to be condemned apart from their free will.

The offer is made in the promise of Messiah, whether looking forward to His coming in times past, or looking back on His coming in the world today. God has done all that is necessary for man to be reconciled to Him, but we must accept the offer.

To turn down God's offer is to remain in one's sin and to receive just condemnation. To accept it is to find peace, restoration, and eternal life.

I would hope you will choose wisely. Accept what God has done, believe in your heart, and call out to God, professing that Jesus Christ is Lord! He has made access into heaven possible. Thank God!

Closing Verse: *"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:*

*'The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷ For this is My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.'" Romans 11:25-27*

Next Week: Joshua 19:24-31 *More exciting than a 100-yard Olympic dasher...* (The Inheritance of Asher) (41st Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Issachar

The fourth lot came out to Issachar
For the children of Issachar according to their families it did go
And their territory went to Jezreel
And included Chesulloth, Shunem, Haphraim, Shion
-----and Anaharath also

Rabbith, Kishion, Abez
Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pазzez

And the border reached to Tabor, Shahazimah, and Beth Shemesh
Their border ended at the Jordan: sixteen cities

-----with their villages too

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar
According to their families, the cities and their villages
-----they did accrue

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:24-31 (THE INHERITANCE OF ASHER)

It's always exciting for me to have those little events in life crop up that seem coincidental, but which never are. Quite often Jim will open the church and he'll talk about something that will, without advanced planning, be exactly what is referred to in the sermon.

At times, one of the psalms that is read in church will be referred to in the sermon. That is never planned because the sermons are typed well in advance and I never really know what psalm will be read on Sunday morning, simply because we skip one once in a while, or we forget to read one, or whatever.

And yet, the exact psalm that is there to open the service will read right into the content of the sermon. Similarly, there are many times when I will be doing my morning Bible reading, and I find myself reading exactly what I need for sermon typing that Monday.

That happened on the day I typed this sermon. I read the first few chapters of Micah that morning and then got started. About six hours into sermon typing, I realized that both passages use the name Achzib.

The name is found in Joshua 19:29 and in Micah 1:14. Considering that name is only found four times in the Bible, that was a fun surprise for me. Little God winks like that always make me glad I read the Bible every day. So, how many chapters did you read this morning?

Text Verse: *"Kiss the Chosen One, lest He be angry, And ye lose the way, When His anger burneth but a little, O the happiness of all trusting in Him!" Psalm 2:12 (YLT)*

The word *esher*, or happiness comes from *ashar*, blessed or happy. This is the word used by Leah when Asher was born. What is it that brings happiness? What is it that will bring eternal happiness? Unfortunately, too many in the church wrongly equate the two kinds of happiness. "This makes me happy and so this will be what God will provide for eternal happiness."

With this kind of thinking, every possible perversion one can name has crept into the church. We take our corrupt view on happiness, such as sexual sin, decide that God accepts this, and then anticipate that for all of eternity we will be able to indulge in sexual sin.

If you think this is crazy, just look at what is taught in almost every mainstream church on the planet. This isn't happiness. It is moral corruption and wickedness. It will not lead to eternal bliss. For those poor, deluded fools, it will bring eternal condemnation as God's wrath is poured out on them.

What makes me happy? One thing is driving to church for Bible study or Sunday gathering and the very passage that is playing on the audio Bible as I drive is a part of what is in the material to be presented in the next couple of hours. Man, I get the biggest kick out of that.

Puppies make me happy too.

There are some contrasts set forth for us in today's passage. First, we will evaluate the content for what it all means, and then we will see how it all fits in typologically with something we all experience in our lives in Christ.

Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Fifth Lot (verses 24-31)

The narrative continues as it details the final seven tribal land inheritances that are being assigned according to the lot. The first was to Benjamin. The second was to Simeon. The third went to Zebulun. The fourth went to Issachar. The fifth is now designated and detailed for the tribe of Asher...

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

Asher was Jacob's eighth son and the second son of Leah's maidservant Zilpah. The lot drawn for him comes after Zebulun and Issachar, despite them being born later. This is because the sons of the maidservants are detailed after those of Jacob's wives, Leah and Rachel. The record of his birth is found in Genesis 30 –

“When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. ¹⁰ And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. ¹¹ Then Leah said, ‘A troop comes!’ So she called his name Gad. ¹² And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob

a second son. ¹³Then Leah said, 'I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed.' So she called his name Asher." Genesis 30:9-13

In her exclamation, Leah makes a pun on the noun *osher* (happiness) and the verb *ashar* (blessed), saying, *b'asheri ki ish'runi banoth* – "I am in happiness for will call me blessed, daughters." As such the name means Happy but it also means Blessed.

On the march from Sinai to Canaan, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were stationed north of the tabernacle under the standard of Dan. In the order of marching, this was the final standard to break camp and move.

It is interesting that the youngest son of each handmaid, Asher and Naphtali, are paired next to each other in the most northern area of Canaan in the tribal land grants. Asher will be in the most northwestern area of the land, along the Mediterranean Sea. Cambridge describes it, saying –

"The general position of the tribe was on the slope of the Galilean mountains from Carmel northwards, with Manasseh on the south, Zebulun and Issachar on the south-east, and Naphtali on the north-east, a narrow, but beautiful and fertile region."
Cambridge

With that, the description begins by stating...

²⁵ **And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph,**

As is usual, the NKJV destroys the earlier correct translation of the KJV when such lists are made, leaving out the conjunctions between each name: *v'hi gevulam khelqath va'khali, va'veten, v'akhshaph* – "And was their border Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph.

What is described begins with the central part of the territory. It goes to the south in verses 26 and 27 and then to the north in verses 28 and 30.

Khelqath comes from the verb *khalaq*, to divide or share, or from the noun *khelqah*, a parcel or portion. Hence, it is variously translated as Division, Portion, Field, or Possession. Strong's, however, takes a figurative meaning of the word *khelqah* and calls it Smoothness. This is derived from the description of Jacob's skin in Genesis 27 –

“Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶ And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part [*khelaqh*] of his neck. ¹⁷ Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.” Genesis 27:15-17

Using this figurative sense, the word is also used to describe the smooth tongue. Thus, a figurative meaning could be Flattery.

Khali comes from the noun *khali*, an ornament or jewel. That, however, comes from *khalah*, which signifies to be rubbed or worn (as when a jewel is polished). Figuratively, that word means weak or sick as well as to stroke, as in flattery. A second root is *khalal*, to pierce. Thus, it is translated as Jewel, Ornament, Polished, Pierced Thing, Pierced, etc.

Beten comes from *beten*, the belly or womb. Thus it means Belly or Womb. However, the NAS Concordance looks at it as Depression, taking it as a depression in the terrain that looks like a belly.

Achshaph was seen in Chapter 11. It is possibly from *kashaph*, meaning to practice sorcery. Hence, it signifies Fascination or Bewitched. Next...

²⁶ **Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal;**

Alammelech comes from *alah*, an oak, or from *alah*, an oath. The second half is from *melekh*, king. Thus, it is Oak of *the/a* King or Oath of *the/a* King.

Amad is said by Strong's to come from *am*, people, and *ad*, time (meaning perpetuity/eternal). Thus it is People of Time.

Mishal is from *shaal*, to ask or inquire. Strong's defines it as Request.

²⁶ (con't) **it reached to Mount Carmel westward, along *the Brook Shihor Libnath*.**

u-phaga b'karmel ha'yamah u-b'shikhor livnath – “And impinged in Carmel, the westward (or seaward as in Jeremiah 46:18), and in Shihor Libnath.”

Carmel means Plantation, Orchard, or Fruitful Field (Plentiful Place). Clarke calls it Vineyard of God.

Shikhor Livnath comes from two words obviously intended to avoid any hint of racism (or not) *shakhar*, to be black, and *laven*, to be white. Having said that, the noun *shakhar* means dawn and the verb *shakhar* means to seek early or diligently.

Thus, the meaning of the city's name could have an amazing number of possibilities including Black-White, Dark Side of the Moon, or Lunar Eclipse. To throw in another monkey wrench, the thought of *laven*, or white, has consistently referred to works since early Genesis.

This is because *laven* also means brick because bricks whiten when they are fired. Bricks imply human labor and thus works. Therefore, for typology, the city could be translated as Blackened Works, Early Works, or Diligently Seeking Works, etc.

²⁷ It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon;

v'shav mizrakh ha'shemesh beith dagon – “And turned rising the sun, Beth Dagon.”
Beith means House. Dagon comes from *dag*, fish, but as much as anything, fish signify abundance.

Hence the word *daga* means to multiply or increase and *dagan* refers to cereal crops in general, thus natural abundance. Therefore, Beth Dagon can mean House of Dagon (the god), House of Fish, House of Increase, or House of Cultivation of Natural Abundance.

²⁷ (con't) and it reached to Zebulun and to the Valley of Jiphthah El,

Zebulun means Glorious Dwelling Place.

The valley, *ge*, comes from *gevah*, pride, which in turn comes from *gaah*, rise up, high, etc. This means the sides of the valley rise up, forming the valley.

Yiphtakh means He Will Open. Taken together with El, or God, the name means God Will Open or God Opens. Ellicott defines it as God's Opening. They all carry the same general meaning.

²⁷ (con't) then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel, bypassing Cabul which was on the left,

The word “bypassing” is entirely incorrect: *tsaphonah beith ha’emeq un’iel v’yatsa el kavul mis’mol* – “northward Beth the Emek and Neiel and went out unto Cabul from left.”

As for Beth Emek, *beith* means House and *emeq* means Valley, but that comes from *amoq*, to be deep. Thus, it is House *of* the Valley or House *of* the Depth.

Neiel means something like Moved of God or Scattered of God, although some say it is Dwelling Place of God.

Cabul comes from *kevel*, a fetter. Thus it signifies a limitation. Therefore, Strong’s defines it as Sterile. Others define it as Good for Nothing. The same name, but regarding a different area, is seen again in 1 Kings 9 –

“Then Hiram went from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. ¹³So he said, ‘What *kind of* cities *are* these which you have given me, my brother?’ And he called them the land of Cabul, as they are to this day. ¹⁴Then Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold.”

-1 Kings 9:12-14

In this passage from 1 Kings, Keil ties it to the root חבל (*khevel*), which would give the meaning Pawned or Pledged. Hence he concludes that this strip of territory was merely given to Hiram as a security for the repayment of a loan. That would make sense based on the note about the gold. However, this thought would take us back to the original word, fetter. Hiram may have felt chained to the land based upon the money sent. Thus, it may simply mean Fettered.

²⁸ **including Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon.**

Ebron is from the verb *avar*, to pass over, or the noun *ever*, the region beyond. Thus it is Beyond, Passing, or Passage. Strong’s defines it as Transitional.

Rekhov means Wide Space or Open Place.

Khamon comes from *khamam*, to be or become warm. Thus, it is Warmed, Hot, Glowing, or maybe Hot Spring.

Qanah comes from *qanah*, to get, or acquire. That is the root of *qaneh*, a reed because a reed is used as a measuring device. Thus, it can mean Reed, Possessed, or Possessor.

Church historian Jerome says that this is identified as Cana where Jesus performed his first miracle because this Cana, rather than another one, was in Asher. It is in the upper Galilee rather than the lower Galilee.

Tsidon Rabah (Greater Sidon) means Great Hunting Place or Great Fishery.

²⁹ And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre;

v'shav ha'gevu' ha'ramah v'ad ir mivtsar tsor – “And turned the border the Ramah and until city fortified, Tsor.” This is probably not speaking of Tyre at all. It is generally agreed that it wasn't until later that Tyre became a noted location. Rather, this could be a fortified city known as Tsor, the same name later given to what we today translate as Tyre.

The Ramah means The Height or The Lofty Place.

Tsor (Tyre) comes from *tsor*, flint, or *tsur*, rock. Thus, it is the fortified city, Rock.

²⁹ (con't) then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the region of Achzib.

v'shav ha'gevu' khosah v'yihyu tots'otav ha'yamah me'khevel akhzivah – “And turned the border Hosah and were outgoing the sea from cord Achzib.” The meaning of “cord” is that which is marked off, and thus an area or region.

Khosah comes from *khasah*, to seek refuge. Thus, it means Seeking Refuge or simply Refuge. Strong's goes with the intent of what the act of seeking refuge is and translates it as Hopeful.

Akhziv comes from *akhzav*, deceptive or disappointing. That comes from *kazav*, to be a liar. Thus, it literally means Lying or Liar, but the intent is probably Deceptive or Disappointing.

Micah will use the name in a word play he makes on the names of cities in Israel. There he says, “*The houses of Achzib [akhziv] to lie [l'akhsav] to the kings of Israel*” (Micah 1:14). The idea is that what appears useful turns out to be completely disappointing.

³⁰ Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob were included:

It would be nice if they just translated as it is given: *v'umah va'apheq, u-rekhov* – “And Ummah, and Aphek, and Rehob.”

Ummah comes from *ummah*, a word signifying close against, beside, next to, corresponding to, and so on. That comes from *im*, with. Thus it means Association or Union.

Apheq comes from *aphaq*, meaning to contain, refrain, or be strong. Hence, it is Fortress.

As before, Rekhov means Wide Space or Open Place.

³⁰ (con't) **twenty-two cities with their villages.**

The number obviously doesn't match the named cities, but there are, as always, various explanations for this. There may be joint border cities, names used as references of where the border goes to, some cities may be collocated and thus be one city with a joint name, and so forth.

What is of note isn't that, but the meaning of the number itself –

“Twenty-two, being the double of eleven, has the significance of that number in an intensified form,—disorganization and disintegration, especially in connection with the Word of God. For the number two is associated with the second person of the Godhead, the living Word. It is associated with the worst of Israel's kings,—Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:20), and Ahab (1 Kings 16:29), each reigning 22 years. Eleven, we have seen, derives its significance by being an addition to Divine order (10), and a subtraction from Divine rule (12). These are two of the three ways in which the written Word of God can be corrupted—the third being alteration. ‘The words of the LORD are pure words’—words pertaining to this world and therefore requiring to be purified (see p. 169). But these words have been altered, taken from, and added to by man. Is there anything in this which connects it with the fact that the letters of the alphabet (Hebrew) are twenty-two in number? Does it point to the fact that the revelation of God in being committed to human language and to man's keeping would thereby be subject to disintegration and corruption?” Bullinger

³¹ (fin) **This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.**

zoth nakhalath mateh bene asher l'misp'hotam he'arim v'khatsrehen – “This inheritance tribe Asher to their families, their cities and their villages.” With this, the cities of Asher, along with some of its borders, have been defined. What is the Lord telling us with all these names?

*Happy are those who walk in the light of the Lord
Who are content to follow Him all their days
Happy are those who cherish His word
Learning it and applying it to all of their ways*

*Happy are those who do not stand in the path of sinners
Nor those who sit in the seat of the scornful
Such as these are life's true winners
Such as are not will be eternally mournful*

*Follow the Lord and delight in His law always
Meditate on His word with all of your mind
You will stand in His presence for eternal days
This temporary, fallen world will forever be left behind*

II. The Typology Explained

As was seen, there are said to be twenty-two cities within Asher. Even though that comes at the end of the verses, it provides the tone for the seemingly confused state of names contained within them.

Bullinger noted that “twenty-two, being the double of eleven, has the significance of that number in an intensified form,—disorganization and disintegration, especially in connection with the Word of God.” It is also “associated with the second person of the Godhead, the living Word.”

Concerning the word, through our actions and conduct, including teaching and instruction, we can add to the word, (legalism), or we can detract from the word (license). We can also alter the word (corruption). Each of these cause disorganization and disintegration of the word.

This is immediately seen in verse 25 with the naming of the cities. Helkath comes from a root meaning to divide or share, or one signifying a parcel or portion. They both give the sense of division.

Hali ultimately comes from a root signifying rubbed or worn. Strong's notes that it includes the thought of stroking, as in flattery. Beten was then defined as Belly or Womb, and Achshaph as Fascination or Bewitched.

Each of these is a part of how Paul describes what is going on in the church, such as –

“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. ¹⁸ For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.” Romans 16:17, 18

“For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹ whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame— who set their mind on earthly things.” Philippians 3:18, 19

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain?” Galatians 3:1-4

The next names, in verse 26, provide a contrast to those things. Alammelech, Oath of the King, are those who trust the word of God, accepting His word as an unbreakable oath.

Amad, People of Time (meaning eternity) is an obvious explanation of their eternal state in Christ. Mishal, or Request, is the manner in which they live, letting their “requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6) instead of fretting away their lives in anxiety.

Carmel, Fruitful Field, (Vineyard of God according to Clarke) is explained by Paul, saying, “you are God’s field” (1 Corinthians 3:9). Shihor Libnath, as I typologically translated it as Diligently Seeking Works, is exactly explained by Paul –

“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing

to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” 1 Timothy 6:17-19

In these names of verses 25 & 26, there is seen this contrast: Two opposing sides within the church, warring against one another. As such, we should take the next locations in verse 27 as describing not one hope but one of two hopes.

The turn is “toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon.” Toward the sunrise would indicate toward the rising light of Christ. Beth Dagon is the House of Increase. One hope is increase in this life, the other is hope in the next. Each is a hope based on what one expects God to provide and how He will provide it.

That takes us back to Paul’s words about those who set their minds on earthly things as opposed to spiritual things. He says –

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

-Romans 8:5-8

The border reaches to Zebulun, Glorious Dwelling Place. Though the heavenly anticipation is the hope of release from the cares of this world, the spiritually minded want release from the perversion of it, whereas the carnally minded want it to be their eternal state, doing the things they do now without ever facing death.

The next named location is *ge yiptakh el*, the Valley of God Opens. The word *ge* come from *gevah*, pride or exaltation. There are those who are proud that God will open heaven for them, and there are those who exalt God for opening heaven for them. The perspectives result in either self-pride or humility.

It is Jesus through whom God opens heaven for Man. He is the dividing marker and how we perceive ourselves in relation to Him is the key difference between salvation and condemnation. Is it by faith in His works, or do we exalt ourselves in who we are and what we have done?

From there, the border turned northward, the hidden or darkened direction in Scripture. It went beyond Beth Emek, the House of the Depth. Using the word *amoq*, the root of *emeq*, there is a contrast in the two following thoughts –

“O LORD, how great are Your works!
Your thoughts are very deep [*amoq*].
⁶A senseless man does not know,
Nor does a fool understand this.” Psalm 92:5

“They are deeply [*amoq*] corrupted,
As in the days of Gibeah.
He will remember their iniquity;
He will punish their sins.” Hosea 9:9

The contrast fits those who are in the church. Some are hidden in Christ, and some only claim to be so. There are those who are in the House of the Depth considering the things of God, and there are those who are in the House of the Deep living in corruption, iniquity, and sin. The church is comprised of both. Woe to the latter.

Neiel, Moved of God, is next named. One will either be moved of God in the things of God, or he will be moved away from God as Cain was.

After that came Cabul. The meaning of the name is debated but, based on what was presented from 1 Kings 9 in the interaction between Solomon and Hiram, it does appear to be some sort of binding that occurred between the two of them, be it a pledge or a fetter. With that in mind, one is either bound to the Lord through Christ in salvation, or he is so in condemnation.

Verse 28 began with Ebron which Strong’s translated as Transitional. That is the state of all mankind in relation to Christ while in this body. We are either awaiting heaven or hell. What we have here is not what will be.

Rehob is the Wide Space. There is either a narrow path to the Wide Spaces of heaven, or there is a wide path to the narrow confines of hell. One, the latter, speaks of the earthly minded, the other, the former, of the heavenly minded in this life.

Hammon comes from *khamam*, to become warm. That is used in Isaiah 57 when referring to allegiances –

“Inflaming [*khamam*] yourselves with gods under every green tree,
Slaying the children in the valleys,
Under the clefts of the rocks?
⁶Among the smooth *stones* of the stream
Is your portion;
They, they, *are* your lot!” Isaiah 57:5, 6

There are those who are inflamed with the passions of this world, and there are those who are impassioned by the warmth of God towards them in Christ. The names provide contrast. That continues with Kanah.

Though it comes from the word signifying a reed, the reed is used to indicate obtaining or acquiring and thus Possessed. Those in the visible church are either possessed by Christ, or they are not. If not, they remain possessed by the devil. The Bible gives no other options. Some are so deluded, though, that they think they are the Lord’s when they are not. We all must evaluate what we truly believe.

The next location is Greater Tsidon, the Great Fishery. Everyone is as a fish. When Jesus said to Simon and Andrew that they would be fishers of men, he meant that men are like fish to be caught. That, by necessity, means that some are caught, and some are not. Even within the visible church, there are caught fish, and there are those who are not. Don’t be a not, but rather a caught.

Next is *ha’Ramah*, or The Lofty Place. It may be stretching this too much, but it is hard to not at least attempt the connection. This is still the northern border, heading west. A passage in the Psalms and one in Isaiah contrast concerning what seems to be speaking of the Lofty Place –

“Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised
In the city of our God,
In His holy mountain.
²Beautiful in elevation,
The joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north,
The city of the great King.
³God *is* in her palaces;
He is known as her refuge.” Psalm 48:1-3

“How you are fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground,
You who weakened the nations!
¹³ For you have said in your heart:
‘I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation
On the farthest sides of the north;
¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High.’
¹⁵ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,
To the lowest depths of the Pit.” Isaiah 14:12-15

Though the passage in Isaiah is widely thought to be referring to Satan, this is not the case. The word translated as “Lucifer” is *helel* meaning “shining one.” By using a Latin word and then incorrectly turning it into a pronoun, all kinds of confusion has arisen over this.

The passage is speaking of the King of Babylon. He was an unregenerate man who thought too highly of himself. This is the state of those who place themselves in the Lofty Place instead of placing the Lord there.

The next location named was *ir mivtsar tsor* – “city fortified, Rock.” The contrast and explanation is found in the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:32 where it says, “For their rock is not like our Rock.” There are those who are confident in their rock (*tsur*), and yet their rock is not the Lord who is the Rock (*tsur*).

From Tsor, the next location is Hosah, translated by Strong’s as Hopeful, but the idea is Refuge. When we seek refuge, that is our hope. The contrast is between who one is seeking. For the true believer, it is explained in Hebrews 6 –

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.” Hebrews 6:17, 18

For those who are in Christ, there is no need for fear. Their refuge in Christ is set. On the other hand, for those who are not, there is Achzib, Deceptive or Disappointing. This

cannot apply to those who are believers because they have already obtained refuge. On the other hand, the final three names are given to contrast that.

Ummah or Union speaks of the state of believers in Christ, being united to God through Him. Aphek, or Fortress, is also their state, secured in their salvation because of Him. And Rehob, Wide Space speaks not of the path they are on, but where their narrow path leads.

This is the explanation of what is going on in the church. The warnings and blessings are laid out in the gospels and epistles, but the typology was given in Joshua. Hence, there are twenty-two cities that contrast, forming a scene of disorganization and disintegration that exists until it is finally and forever corrected by the coming of Christ for His true church.

And, unfortunately, that state of corruption exists within His word as well when man adds to it or subtracts from it, or even – as happens more and more in the world today – alters it. By this time in history, we should have a word that is so grasped by faithful believers that we could have no doubt about its contents.

And yet, because of purposeful manipulation of this word, it is becoming more and more splintered, not more cohesive. We must carefully and faithfully hold to its sacred contents, we must warn against faulty evaluations of it, and we must never consider adding to it through legalism or detracting from it through license.

Instead, let us hold fast to this cherished word, in context, and with a proper and right understanding of what it is telling us. And having said that, my evaluation of these many locations must certainly be lacking in some areas. I have done my best to present to you what I believe we are being told, but that doesn't mean I have gotten all the details correct.

And so, please be certain to study the word yourself, consider what you have heard, and hold on to what is good while letting go of what is in error. The word of God is too precious to not do this. Handle this treasure carefully and meditate on it always.

This is your guide to right living and proper glorification of the Lord who created you, sent His Son to redeem you, and then gave you His word to instruct you. Please hold fast to this word. In doing this, your life and your eternal destiny will certainly be Happy and Blessed.

Closing Verse: *“O the happiness of that one, who Hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked. And in the way of sinners hath not stood, And in the seat of scorers hath not sat.” Psalm 1:1 (YLT)*

Next Week: Joshua 19:32-39 *Great things for us to see...* (The Inheritance of Naphtali)
(42nd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Asher

The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher
According to their families, one and all
And their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten
Achshaph, Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal

It reached to Mount Carmel westward, along the
-----Brook Shihor Libnath
It turned toward the sunrise to Beth Dagon as well
And it reached to Zebulun and to the Valley of Jiphthah El
Then northward beyond Beth Emek and Neiel

Bypassing Cabul which was on the left
Including Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as
-----Greater Sidon
And the border turned to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre
Then the border turned to Hosah, and ended at the sea by the
-----region of Achzib, which was well known

Also Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob were included:
Twenty-two cities with their villages too
This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher
According to their families, these cities with their villages
-----these they did accrue

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:32-39 (THE INHERITANCE OF NAPHTALI)

Each week studying these tribal land grants in Joshua has been a new adventure for me. I wake up Monday morning, usually still wiped out from Sunday, and get into the sermon wondering, “Will this week fit the pattern already seen concerning a typological picture of things to come?”

It concerns me because the passage would otherwise be a lot of names and directions that have no real bearing on our lives. How do you write a sermon on something that is, frankly, otherwise tedious?

The answer is to make up a life application or a word of motivational encouragement which really has nothing to do with the text itself.

That is easy enough to do, but personally, I would find it even more tedious than just reading and evaluating the verses from a grammatical and historical context. I would feel dirty that I had not provided you with something truly edifying and that has a real and substantial connection to Christ.

As with the previous land grants, this grant to Naphtali takes little things that are seemingly irrelevant, and they jump out of the text and say, “Hey look here! There is a mystery waiting to be uncovered!” It is the most exciting thing! There is Jesus again. God is telling us a story about Jesus.

Text Verse: *“But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. ¹⁶And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.” Romans 5:15, 16*

The words of Paul reveal a contrast. There is the offense, and there is grace. There is the man, Adam, and there is the Man, Jesus Christ. There are wages, and there is the gift (note to translators: free gift is a redundancy). There is sin in Adam, and there is sinless perfection in Christ. There is judgment in Adam leading to condemnation, and there is judgment upon Christ leading to justification.

Such things are set forth for us to consider and act upon if we are wise. But these things weren't just seen in Christ and then written down by Paul and the other apostles. They were also anticipated in Christ as written down by the authors of the Old Testament.

We will see such contrasts today in an otherwise obscure passage about the borders of the land grant to the tribe of the sixth son born to Jacob. As always, I started the sermon having no idea how things would turn out. And as has been the case with the previous five land grants, there is an underlying story to tell. Let's get to it.

Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Sixth Lot (verses 32-39)

The narrative continues the details of the final seven tribal land inheritances which are being assigned according to the lot. The first was to Benjamin. The second was to Simeon. The third went to Zebulun. The fourth went to Issachar. The fifth went to Asher. The sixth is now designated and detailed for the tribe of Naphtali...

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

Like with the tribe of Issachar, the wording is curiously different than most other such statements concerning the lot for a tribe. It repeats the name Naphtali: *livne Naphtali yatsa ha'goral ha'shishiy livne Naphtali l'mishp'hotam* – "To sons Naphtali went out the lot, the sixth, to sons Naphtali to their families."

For example, last week, it said – "The fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families."

As for Naphtali, he was Jacob's sixth son and the second son of Rachel's maidservant Bilhah. The lot drawn for him comes before Dan despite Dan being born earlier to Bilhah. The sons of the maidservants are detailed after those of Jacob's wives, Leah and Rachel. Why these two are out of birth order is not stated.

The reason for the odd mentioning of Naphtali twice in the opening statement, and this is total speculation, may be because he is the sixth son born to Jacob and the sixth lot to

be parceled out. In order to avoid any confusion that a mistake was made, the name is repeated.

Bullinger defines the number six, saying, "Six is either 4 plus 2, i.e., man's world (4) with man's enmity to God (2) brought in: or it is 5 plus 1, the grace of God made of none effect by man's addition to it, or perversion, or corruption of it: or it is 7 minus 1, i.e., man's coming short of spiritual perfection. In any case, therefore, it has to do with man; it is the number of imperfection; the human number; the number of MAN as destitute of God, without God, without Christ." Simply said, it speaks of fallen man.

The record of Naphtali's birth is found in Genesis 30 –

"And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ Then Rachel said, 'With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, *and* indeed I have prevailed.' So she called his name Naphtali." Genesis 30:7, 8

In her exclamation, Rachel makes a word game on the verb *pathal*, to twist or wrestle. For example, the noun *pathil* signifies a cord or thread because of its twisting threads. The verb then also means to be crafty or cunning because such thinking is twisted.

The name then means My Twistings or My Wrestlings, but it has a secondary meaning of Crafty.

On the march from Sinai to Canaan, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were stationed north of the tabernacle under the standard of Dan. In the order of marching, this was the final standard to break camp and move.

It is interesting that the youngest son of each handmaid, Asher and Naphtali, are also paired next to each other in the most northern area of Canaan in the tribal land grants. Asher is in the most northwestern area of the land, along the Mediterranean, and Naphtali is next to him with the Jordan as his eastern border.

As no commentator I read gave a decent description of this land, I asked Sergio to give a brief description of it. He said, "It is one of the beautiful ones. It's like a miniature version of Colorado. Forests everywhere. Rivers.

There's one road; I'd say [it is] one of the most scenic ones in Israel. [It] goes in a canyon between two mountains. It's windy and narrow and it follows a beautiful river and there are trees on both sides. In the spring, it doesn't look like Israel. It looks like Switzerland!"

With that, the description of the borders begins, saying...

³³ And their border began at Heleph, enclosing the territory from the terebinth tree in Zaananim,

The meaning could be either a tree or the name of a place. The NKJV says “the terebinth” but it might be a city name: *v’hi gevulam m’kheleph m’elon b’tsaananim* – “And was their border from Heleph, from Allon in Zaananim.”

Kheleph comes from the noun *kheleph*, an exchange. In other words, “Your compensation for this will be this.” That comes from *khalaph*, a verb signifying to pass on or pass through. The sense is still of a change though. To get that, we can literally translate the words of Psalm 102:25, 26 –

“Of old You laid the foundation of the earth,
And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands.
²⁶ They will perish, but You will endure;
Yes, they will all grow old like a garment;
Like a cloak You will pass through them [*khalaph*],
And they will be passed through [*khalaph*].” Psalm 102:25, 26 (modified)

The idea would be the Lord puts on a garment, passes through that phase of garment-wearing, and then takes it off. The garment has now been passed through. Thus, Kheleph means Change or Exchange.

Allon means Oak (Terebinth) coming from *allah*, an oak. As just noted, it is either referring to a particular oak that is a landmark or a place called Oak. There is no article before the word, but it does say “in Zaananim.” It is hard to be dogmatic. Despite this, the oak comes from a root signifying mighty or strong. When thinking of an oak, one cannot escape that idea because they are mighty and strong trees.

Tsaananim comes from the verb *tsaan*, a word found only in Isaiah 33:20 –

“Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts;
Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home,
A tabernacle *that* will not be taken down [*tsaan*];
Not one of its stakes will ever be removed,
Nor will any of its cords be broken.” Isaiah 33:20

The word means to be taken down, but that is for the purpose of migrating. As the word is plural, it would mean Removals or Migrations. The name itself is unusually spelled with a double *nun* (our letter n) – Tsaananim, which Abarim calls “a mystery” because that is not how one would normally spell such a word.

³³ (con’t) **Adami Nekeb,**

What is the meaning? *va’adami ha’neqev* – “and Adami the Neqev.” Some translations make it two locations, “and Adami, Neqeb...” But the article seems to rightly place it as one, “and Adami the Neqev.”

Adami comes from *adamah*, ground or land. That is from the same as *adam*, man or mankind, which is also the name of Adam. As such, Adami can mean Earthy or Human, but it can also be My Adam because the *yud* (our letter i) is used as a possessive.

Nekev comes from *naqav*, to pierce. That figuratively can mean a variety of things as the context demands, such as appoint, designate, blaspheme, and so on. Abarim gives possible meanings such as Ruddy Hollow or Corrugated Soil. Taking it simply and without any manipulation at all, it would be translated as My Adam, the Pierced. When we get to the typology, we’ll see if it fits.

³³ (con’t) **and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum;**

v’yavnel ad laqum – “and Jabneel unto Lakkum.” Yavnel comes from *banah*, to build, and *el*, God.” Thus, it means Built of God or God Causes to Build.

According to Strong’s, Laqum comes from an unused root thought to mean “to stop up by a barricade.” He then says, “perhaps Fortification.” From there...

³³ (con’t) **it ended at the Jordan.**

v’hi tots’otav ha’yarden – “and was its outgoings the Jordan.” The Jordan is The Descender. With the ending of this at the Jordan, the eastern border is easily defined as the Jordan including the waters of Merom (Joshua 11:5) and also the Sea of Galilee.

This would place Issachar and Zebulun on the south and Asher on the West. This continues to be described as...

³⁴ **From Heleph the border extended westward to Aznoth Tabor,**

Annoyingly, the NKJV inserted the name Heleph, causing me probably 30 minutes of wasted effort before I actually got to evaluating this verse in Hebrew and found out the word Heleph isn't even there: *v'shav ha'gevu'lam yamah aznoth tavor* – “and turned the border westward, Aznoth Tavor.”

Their translation supposes that Heleph was a central point on the northern border, first described as going from Heleph to the Jordan and now going from Heleph to the west. Something that happened in describing the borders of Zebulun.

However, that is only a supposition. What may actually be the case is that verse 33 describes the west border by Asher along with the north and east border. After that, the southern border is being described.

Aznoth Tavor comes first from *azan*, to give ear or listen. The first part, Aznoth, is derived from *ozen*, ear. The ear is often used to speak of an audience or a hearing. The second half, Tavor, according to Strong's comes from *tvar*, to break. However, Abarim defines the root as *barar*, to purify. As such, they say –

“Perhaps the name Tavor sounded like Purifying to a Hebrew audience, and the whole name Aznoth-tavor may have sounded like The Balance Of Purification, or ears that hear the word of the Lord and are instrumental in the purification of the person whose head they are attached to.” Abarim

Thus, depending on the root, it is Ears (Balance) of Purification, or Ears of Breaking.

³⁴ (con't) **and went out from there toward Hukkok;**

mi'sham khuqoqah – “from there Hukkok-ward.” Khuqoq comes from *khaqaq*, to cut, inscribe, or decree. By implication, then, to enact laws. Abarim defines it as Decree, Science, or Loving Embrace. The third meaning is because “the noun *heq* describes a hollow container in which one's conscious intent, one's reason and concerns are stored. Hence the idiom of bringing someone or something into one's bosom” (Abarim). Next...

³⁴ (con't) **it adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side,**

u-phaga bizbulun mi'negev u-b'asher paga mi'yam – “and impinged in Zebulun from south and in Asher impinged from west.” Zebulun means Glorious Dwelling Place. The

south, or *negev*, defines being parched. Asher means Happy. The word *yam* means both west and sea.

³⁴ (con't) **and ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise.**

u-bihudah ha'yarden mizrakh ha'shamesh – “and in Judah, the Jordan, rising the sun.” Judah means Praise. The Jordan is The Descender. The word *mizrakh*, place of the sunrise, comes from the verb *zarakh*, to rise. The reason for that will be seen when the passage typology is explained.

Either Judah is a city not mentioned elsewhere or known, or it could be that “the sixty cities, *Havoth-jair* (Numbers 32:41), which were on the eastern side of Jordan opposite to Naphtali, were reckoned as belonging to Judah because Jair their founder was descended on the father’s side from Judah through Hezron” (Cambridge). If correct, it is a brilliant explanation.

Another strong possibility is that it is actually referring to Judah because the Jordan descends to Judah, thus tying this northern tribe to the southern tribe by this watery lifeline of Israel. Judah, being the recipient of the Jordan could say to possess it in its ultimate sense, just as Judah possesses Jesus because He descended to there.

³⁵ **And the fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth,**

Note: the Hebrew says *ha'tsidim*, the Ziddim. These fortified cities are in the northern area and form a belt of protection from the land to the north just as Judah was protected from incursion from the south. The names mean:

ha'Tsidim comes from *tsad*, side. Being plural, it is The Sides.

Tser comes from the root *tsur*. That has multiple meanings: to lean or incline; to confine, secure or besiege; to be an adversary; to form or fashion; and flint or rock. It is not known which root it came from so it could have one or many meanings. Most simply translate it as Rock.

Khamath is from *khamah*, heat or the sun. Some translate it as Hot Springs, but it may mean Hotness. That would not merely mean in a temperature sense, but in being angry, agitated, or mentally distressed.

Raqath comes from the verb *raqaq*, to spit, or the adjective *raqaq*, thin, weak, or maybe *yaraq*, green. Thus, it is most likely translated as Spit or Weak. But many agree that the word means Bank or Shore because of a logical connection to the thinness of a shore.

Kinereth comes from *kinor*, meaning a type of harp. The reason for the name is the shape of the sea, which looks like a harp when viewed from above. The city is named because of the sea, being close by it. The harp is an instrument used for praising, prophesying, and making a joyful noise.

³⁶ **Adamah, Ramah, Hazor,**

Adamah is the same as *adamah*, a feminine noun meaning ground or land. It means Red Ground or Earth.

ha’Ramah or the Ramah means The Height or The Lofty Place.

Khatsor has various meanings based on a root signifying to begin to cluster or gather. It may mean Village, Trumpet, Leek, Enclosure, etc.

³⁷ **Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor,**

Kedesh means Holy, Sacred Place, or Sanctuary.

Edrei means something like Mighty.

Ein Khatsor means something like Spring of the Village.

³⁸ **Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh:**

Yiron comes from *yare*, to fear. But that indicates anything from fear to awe-inspiring or even revering. Thus it may mean Place of Fear, Place of Reverence, etc.

Migdal El means Tower of God.

Khorem comes from *kharam*, to anathematize. Thus, it means Designated or Devoted.

Beith Anath comes from *beith*, house, and *anah*, a word having four distinct meanings: to answer or respond; be occupied with; to afflict, oppress, or humble; or to sing. Thus it can mean House of Answer, House of Business, House of Affliction, or House of Singing.

Beith Shamash means House *of the* Sun.

³⁸ (con't) **nineteen cities with their villages.**

The number doesn't match the named cities, but there are, as always, various explanations for this. There may be joint border cities, names used as references of where the border goes to, some cities may be collocated and thus be one city with a joint name, and so forth.

The meaning of the number is more noteworthy than the explanations for the number of cities. Bullinger defines the number nineteen, saying, "It is a combination of 10 and 9, and would denote the perfection of Divine order connected with judgment. It is the gematria of Eve and of Job." With that, the verses end with...

³⁹ (fin) **This *was* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.**

zoth nakhalath mateh bene naphtali l'misp'hotam he'arim v'khatsrehen – "This inheritance tribe Naphtali to their families, their cities and their villages." With this, the cities of Naphtali, along with some of its borders, have been defined. What is the Lord telling us with all these names?

*The borders tell a story of wonder ahead
Giving us hints of the coming Christ
They also speak of those for whom His blood was shed
Precious souls for whom His life was priced*

*The naming of the cities gives a contrast for us to see
There is life in Adam or there is life in Christ
The division is marked out for us precisely
That is seen in our response to His sacrifice*

*Let us pay heed to the borders of Naphtali
And to the naming of its fortified cities as well
In them, there are marvelous things to see
Yes, they have a stupendous story to tell*

II. Pictures of Christ

As noted in the first verse of the passage, the wording is curiously different than we have seen – “To sons Naphtali went out the lot, the sixth, to sons Naphtali to their families.”

My speculation was that this may be because he is the sixth son born to Jacob and the sixth lot to be parceled out. Thus, there is a double six implied in the inheritance. As was explained, six simply speaks of fallen man.

I propose, and I think you will agree, this first border description speaks of the work of Christ. The first location was Heleph, Change or Exchange. It speaks of the second Man replacing the first as stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians –

“And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.” 1 Corinthians 15:45

One might say that isn’t correct because Christ was not fallen, but Philippians 3:8 tells us that Christ was found in appearance as a man. Though not fallen, that doesn’t negate His ministry in such an appearance. This would explain the name Heleph even more fully.

As seen, it comes from *khalaph*, to pass through in the sense of an exchange. This is exactly what Christ did in exchanging His heavenly aspect for a human aspect.

That is then explained by the next two locations Allon and Zaananim. Allon, though meaning Oak, carries with it the idea of being mighty, and thus signifies Christ’s state which was then removed (Zaananim / Removals or Migrations) in His migration to Earth.

As noted, the name Zaananim is unusually spelled with a double *nun* (our letter n) which Abarim calls “a mystery.” Considering Christ, however, it seems to resolve the mystery. *Nun* is the fourteenth letter in the Hebrew Aleph-Beth.

Of the number, Bullinger says –

It “...being a multiple of seven, partakes of its significance; and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being the number associated with incarnation.”

The meaning of the letter is continue, offspring (heir), and son. That seems obvious. Though being in the appearance of man, meaning fallen, He is not. Rather, there is an emphasis (two nuns) on the incarnation. He is the Son of God and also the Heir of all things –

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”

-Hebrews 1:1, 2

As noted, the next location is Adami Nekeb which I translated in the most simple form as My Adam (My Man), the Pierced. No explanation is needed when taken in light of the surrounding text. It is the most marvelous description of the Lord Jesus one can imagine.

The border then continued to Jabneel or Built of God. That is an exacting description of Christ’s human form –

“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:
‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,
But a body You have prepared for Me.’” Hebrews 10:5

The building blocks of Christ’s humanity are carefully recorded throughout Scripture in the people who were interwoven into his genealogy as God directed the redemptive narrative.

After that, the border went unto Lakkum a word that Strong’s guessed that its root means Fortification.

However, and this may be complete manipulation on my part, the word *qum* means arise. When prefixed by the letter *lamed*, it says, *la’qum*, to arise. Both spellings are identical without the manufactured vowel points - לקום. As such, this signifies the resurrection after the crucifixion.

It next said that the border then had its outgoings at The Descender (Christ in His coming to Earth, descending from heaven). Christ came and died, but He also resurrected in His time of descent. The picture really is quite marvelous.

I now propose, and I think you will again agree, this next border description speaks of the effects of the work of Christ for His people. This then is the opposite of the land of

Judah where Christ's work was seen in the southern border and the effects of His work were seen in the northern border.

This makes complete sense when considering that Jerusalem is the focal point of the work of God in Christ. Hence, His work encompasses the borders of the land and the effects are contained within. Rather marvelous.

Thus, verse 34 began with the border having turned westward toward Aznoth Tabor, or Ears of Purification. Westward is the direction as one heads toward God. It speaks of ears that hear the purifying word as one accepts the gospel, such as in Romans 10:17 –

“So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

That then went toward Hukkok which Abarim translated as Loving Embrace. It is the metaphorical picture of being accepted by God because of acceptance of the Gospel.

The border then was said to impinge on Zebulun and Asher. It speaks of both the heavenly promise and the state of the promise, the Glorious Dwelling Place in a state which is Happy and Blessed – the name means both.

With that, it says the border went “in Judah, the Jordan, rising the sun.” A direct translation would be “In Praise, the Descender, rising the sun.” It is an exacting description of what believers do and will do forever. The “rising of the sun” again, like in other verses in Joshua, anticipates Christ as described in Malachi 4 –

“But to you who fear My name
The Sun of Righteousness shall arise [*zarakh*]
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.” Malachi 4:2

Verses 35-38 named the fortified cities within these borders. Like with Asher of the previous passage, these look less to the work of Christ or the effects of His work than to the state of things based on the work of Christ.

ha'Tsidim, the Ziddim, means the sides. There are one of two sides in which one can be, in Christ or not.

Zer, Rock, signifies where one places his trust –

“For their rock [*tsur*] is not like our Rock [*tsur*].” Deuteronomy 32:31

Hammath, Hotness, reflects the attitude of the people, being in a passion toward God or toward the things of the world.

Rakkath or shore gives a clear connection to whether one is in Christ or not. On which shore of the Descender (the Jordan) does one stand?

Chinnereth, Harp, deals with praising, prophesying, and making a joyful noise. Again, we do this in relation to God in Christ, either for Him or for the world without Him.

Adamah, Earth, gives us another contrast. Remembering that the passage is based on sets of sixes – Adam or – as Paul calls Him – the second Man (the last Adam). One either has his foot on the ground in Adam, remaining of the earth, or in Christ who will redeem us from the earth.

ha’Ramah or the Ramah bears the same connotation as in previous sermons. One can either mistakenly place himself in the Lofty Place through self-exaltation, or the Lord will place him in the Lofty Place because he chose to exalt the Lord.

Khatsor, Village (from a root signifying clustering), gives another exacting contrast. How will a person incline himself? It is either towards Christ or towards the world.

Kedesh, Holy or Sanctuary, indicates one is either found in Christ or in Adam. Only one will please God.

Edrei, Mighty, again speaks of placing one’s confidence. Christ is mighty to save, Adam, not so much.

En Hazor, the Spring (Fountain) of a Village carries the same contrasting connotation. Where one has clustered is where one’s fountain, and thus his source of life, is found.

The last verse of names carries the same contrasting thoughts. Iron, Place of Reverence, points out how one reveres the world of man or the world of Christ. Migdal El, Tower of God, is contrasted to the tower of man, meaning Babel and all that accompanies her.

Horem, coming from *kharam*, or anathematize and meaning Designated or Devoted, is clear. One is devoted to God in Christ or he is anathema and to be destroyed. Just two options are available to man.

Beth Anath comes from a word having several distinct meanings. We cannot know which meaning was on God's mind when these were laid out, but each of them gives us a sound contrast between Adam and Christ: House of Answer, House of Business, House of Affliction, or House of Singing. Please consider each and its contrast.

Finally, Beth Shemesh or House of *the* Sun. As noted in Joshua 15, this provides a picture of the eternal nature of the light of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, of Malachi 4. Thus, House of *the* Sun speaks of Christ dwelling among His people. The contrast is to be separated from God forever –

“And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 8:11, 12

There is the world of fallen Adam under the rule of Satan and there is the redeemed world of Christ. The contrast is clear. With that, the note of there being nineteen cities was provided. As Bullinger defines it, “It is a combination of 10 and 9, and would denote the perfection of Divine order connected with judgment.”

There is judgment upon sin in Christ or there will be judgment of sin apart from Christ. This is the perfection of divine order seen in the borders and fortified cities of Naphtali.

There is fallen Adam, represented by the number six, and there is the replacement of him by Christ represented in the second six, where God “made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

To think about what God did for us in the giving of Christ never gets old. Here we are, walking on life's path and heaping up our debt before God, but Christ steps in and offers us a new and better hope.

That truly is grace, God's unmerited favor. He was under no obligation to do a thing, and yet He determined that it was worth the cost of living His life among us, entering into the stream of our existence (our miserable existence!), and bringing us back to Himself.

From Christ's first moment of human existence, He placed Himself under the authority of fallen humanity. When He was born, He was wholly dependent on the provision of Joseph and Mary. As He lived, He placed Himself under the care of women for His

support. He also entrusted Himself to the authority of both Israel and Rome without complaint or retort.

The Jews rejected him, the Romans crucified Him, and since then, most of the world either ignores Him or bizarrely hates Him, preferring to stay in Adam and apart from His goodness. It's hard to figure, but this is Jesus. And this is the love of God in Him that offers those who come to Him something new.

For those who are in Christ, let us act like it is so, committing ourselves to the Lord anew each day. Let the old things continue to pass away. Let Adam be set aside constantly as you pursue Christ the Lord in all you do. May it be so for each of us until that great day when we arise to be in His image forever and ever. Amen.

Closing Verse: *“Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.” Colossians 3:9, 10*

Next Week: Joshua 19:40-51 *It's all about Jesus! He is the Man, Yes and Oohrah!...* (The Inheritance of Dan and That of Joshua) (43rd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Naphtali

The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali
For the children of Naphtali according to their families, we see
And their border began at Heleph
Enclosing the territory from Zaanannim's terebinth tree

Adami Nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum
It ended at the Jordan. Really, no joke!
From Heleph the border extended westward
To Aznoth Tabor, and went out from there toward Hukkok

It adjoined Zebulun on the south side and Asher on the west side
And ended at Judah by the Jordan toward the sunrise
And the fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath

Chinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, but that's not all the prize

Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath
And Beth Shemesh: nineteen cities with their villages too
This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali
According to their families, the cities and their villages
-----these they did accrue

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 19:40-51

(THE INHERITANCE OF DAN AND THAT OF JOSHUA)

Today's passage details the final land allotment granted to the tribes of Israel. Along with this grant is a final note about a land grant given to Joshua. As you will see, this is not unlike what is occurring with the inheritance of Jesus.

The inheritances of those east of the Jordan signify those Jews who believed in the coming Messiah before Jesus came while the law was still in effect. We have seen tribal allotments that have detailed the life and work of Christ and its effects as realized in those He has saved.

We have seen how the Gentiles are included in this as detailed in the giving of Caleb's inheritance. Those who are west of the Jordan reflect the salvation of national Israel at some future point, including Jesus' rightful inheritance of that fact, represented in the passage from Joshua 17:14-18.

Through each step, the borders, the cities, and the other details have been presented have shown us typological representations of what Christ did, how He did it, and what it means for us. Our faith should be strengthened as we consider it all.

What He has done for us in the securing of our inheritance will be realized someday. We can have confidence in this. But if you think about it, because it is future, even though it is accomplished in God's eyes, Jesus really hasn't yet received His inheritance. That won't happen until the plan of redemption is finished.

Text Verse: *"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Hebrews 1:1-4*

The author of Hebrews goes on to say what that more excellent name is, the Son of God. His inheritance is an acknowledgment of that. But unless all people know that it is God in Christ who has obtained this name, the inheritance is not really fully realized.

He has earned the right to eternal life through His sinless perfection. He has earned the right to the throne of David through His victory. He has secured a people for Himself from both Jews and Gentiles. And someday, that will be realized when we stand before Him.

But there are those in the world who deny Him or who never knew Him. For God to receive the full measure of glory through the bestowal of the inheritance, it necessarily means that all humanity must know what God in Christ has done.

This is the purpose of the final judgment at the Great White Throne noted in Revelation 20:11. This is also hinted at in Isaiah 45:23, in Romans 14:11, and in Philippians 2:10. Every knee shall bow before the Lord (Yehovah) by bowing before the Lord (Jesus).

This will be the moment when the inheritance is finally and fully realized. We Christians will already be living in our final state, enjoying the inheritance God has prepared for us. And Jesus will be partaking of that as well.

However, someday the fullness of what He has inherited will be realized. After the Great White Throne will come the new heaven and the new earth. Everything that Jesus is due to inherit will be realized because He is the Son of God.

How wonderful it is that believers will share in this inheritance. God in Christ has perfected all things and poured out His grace upon those who will simply come to Him by faith. What a marvelous story of love and redemption.

It's all to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Seventh Lot (verses 40-48)

The narrative will now complete the record of the seven tribal land inheritances which are being assigned according to the lot. The first was to Benjamin. After him was Simeon, then Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali. The seventh and final lot is now designated and detailed for the tribe of Dan...

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

Unlike the other tribes, the wording is reversed from the usual manner in which the lots are presented. Unfortunately, almost every translation ignores this when it should be highlighted: *l'mateh bene dan l'misp'hotam yatsa ha'goral ha'sh'vii* – “To tribe sons Dan to their families went out the lot, the seventh.”

The reason may be as simple as it being the last lot to be cast. Hence, instead of saying, “The seventh lot came out ... according to their families,” it says, “To... their families the seventh lot went out.” Therefore, it is a way of closing out the lots by stating the number last.

Being the seventh lot, it is the number of spiritual perfection. Without this final lot, there would be only imperfection. But with the inclusion of Dan, it brings the matter of inheritances to their rightful state before the Lord.

As for Dan, he was Jacob's fifth son and the first son of Rachel's maidservant Bilhah. The lot drawn for him comes after Naphtali despite him being born earlier to Bilhah. As has already been seen, the sons of the maidservants are detailed after those of Jacob's wives, Leah and Rachel. But why these two are out of birth order is not stated. Bullinger defines the number five, saying –

“Five is four plus one (4+1). We have had hitherto the three persons of the Godhead, and their manifestation in creation. Now we have a further revelation of a People called out from mankind, redeemed and saved, to walk with God from earth to heaven. Hence, Redemption follows creation. Inasmuch as in consequence of the fall of man creation came under the curse and was ‘made subject to vanity,’ therefore man and creation must be redeemed. Thus we have:

1. Father
2. Son
3. Spirit
4. Creation
5. Redemption

These are the five great mysteries, and five is therefore the number of GRACE.”

The record of Dan's birth is found in Genesis 30 –

“Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, ‘Give me children, or else I die!’

² And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, 'Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?'

³ So she said, 'Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear *a child* on my knees, that I also may have children by her.' ⁴ Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. ⁵ And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ Then Rachel said, 'God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son.' Therefore she called his name Dan." Genesis 30:1-6

In her exclamation, Rachel makes a wordplay on the verb *din*, to judge. Therefore, the name Dan means Judge or Judging.

On the march from Sinai to Canaan, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali were stationed north of the tabernacle under the standard of Dan. In the order of marching, this was the final standard to break camp and move. As the leader of this group, they had the honor of taking up the rear guard. Dan was also the second most numerous tribe behind Judah in both of the censuses.

As for the parcel allotted to Dan, Keil gives a description for us –

"This fell to the west of Benjamin, between Judah and Ephraim, and was formed by Judah giving up some of its northern towns, and Ephraim some of its southern towns, to the Danites, so as to furnish them with a territory proportionate to their number. It was situated for the most part in the lowland (shephelah), including, however, the hill country between the Mediterranean and the mountains, and extended over a portion of the plain of Sharon, so that it belonged to one of the most fruitful portions of Palestine."
Keil

With this general description understood, the verses continue...

⁴¹ And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh,

Literally: *tsar'ah v'eshtaol v'ir shemesh* – "Zorah and Eshtaol and Ir Shemesh." The boundaries of the parcel are not given because they were easily identified from the positioning of Dan in relation to the three adjoining tribes. Thus, only the cities are named.

The borders adjoin the three most powerful tribes, Judah on the south and Ephraim and Benjamin together covering the north and east. The Mediterranean Sea was to be the

western border. They also were bordered by the location where the unconquered Philistines remained throughout Israel's history.

Zorah comes from either *tsirah*, a collective word meaning hornets, or *tsaraath*, leprosy. Thus, it literally means either Hornet(s) or Leprosy. However, both are a type of affliction because the hornet is metaphorically used as an instrument of war, driving out the enemies. For example, this is seen in Exodus 23 –

“I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn *their* backs to you. ²⁸ And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you.” Exodus 23:27, 28

Therefore, this location may be metaphorically named Afflictions or Afflictors. Zorah was found to be within Judah's inheritance in Joshua 15:33. The same is true with the next city, Eshtaol, which is listed along with Zorah in the same verse.

Eshtaol is listed by Strong's under the root *shaal*, to ask for or inquire. Thus, he defines it as Entreaty. However, without explanation, he also defines it as “to found” and thus, Establish.

Zorah and Eshtaol will become famous as the general location from which Samson will come –

“So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.” Judges 13:24, 25

Ir Shemesh comes from *ir*, a city, and *shemesh*, the sun. Thus, it is City of the Sun.

⁴² **Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah,**

Each name is prefixed by “and” in the Hebrew. Aijalon is noted as a Levitical city in Joshua 21.

The roots of Shaalabbin are *shual*, a fox, and *bin* (to discern). *Shual* comes from *shoal*, hollow of the hand or a handful because the fox is a burrowing animal. Abarim defines it as Sly Fox or Understanding by Ferreting.

However, it is certainly the same location known in Judges 1 and 1 Kings 4 as Shaalbim. Thus, most commentators call it Foxes or Place of Foxes. Despite that, the spelling is purposeful here and seems to indicate more than just a plural form of Fox.

Aijalon comes from *ayyal* or deer. It means Place of the Deer. However, that comes from the same as *ayil*, or ram, which is derived from a word indicating strength. Thus, as seen in Joshua 10, Place of Strength is not out of line.

Jethlah is found only here. It comes from *talah*, to hang as on a gibbet rather than a gallows. Strong's defines it as It Will Hang.

⁴³ **Elon, Timnah, Ekron,**

Each name is prefixed by the word "and" in the text. Elon means Oak. But that is also derived from *ayil*, a ram. That is then derived from *ul*, a word that gives the sense of strength. As such, the idea of an oak, like a ram, is that of strength.

Timnah (Heb: Thimnathah) means Allotted Portion.

Ekron comes from *aqar*, to pluck up or uproot. But that is from the same as *equer*, an offshoot or descendant. Hence, the name could mean either Offshoot or Uprooted. These are followed by...

⁴⁴ **Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath,**

Again, each is prefixed by the word "and" in the original. Both Eltekeh and Gibbethon are listed as Levitical cities in Joshua 21.

Eltekeh is an interesting name. The first portion is from *el*, God (god). The second half may be from a root, *tq'*, not used in the Bible, but which is found in Arabic. It means fear or take heed. Thus, it would mean God is Dread or God-fearing.

However, it also may come from *qo*, a feminine word meaning to vomit. As such, it may mean God Vomits, God Vomits Her, etc.

Gibbethon is an intensive form of *givah*, a hill. Thus it means Mound, Height, or Lofty Place. But, as has been seen before, *givah* is connected in the New Testament to Gabbatha, the elevated knoll where Christ was judged before His crucifixion.

Baalath is derived from *baal*, lord or master. Being feminine, it would signify a lady of the house. For example, the word *baalath* is found in 1 Kings 17 –

“And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress [*baalath*] of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.” 1 Kings 17:17 (KJV)

Thus, it signifies Lady or Mistress. Next...

⁴⁵ **Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon,**

Each name is prefixed by “and” in the Hebrew.

Jehud, or Yehud, is found only here. The Hebrew spelling is a shortened form of Yehuda, Judah. Thus, it means Praise, Praised, or Let Him (God) Be Praised.

Bene Berak comes from *ben*, son, and *baraq*, lightning. As bene is plural, it literally means Sons of Lightning. But lightning is used to describe the state of something as well, such as a gleaming or glittering sword. Thus, it can also mean Sons of Brightness.

Gath Rimmon comes from *gath*, winepress, and *rimmon*, pomegranate. But as has been previously seen, the pomegranate symbolizes harvest-ready fruit and so it can further mean Mature Mind or Harvest Ready. Thus, it can also be interpreted as Winepress of the Mature Mind or Winepress of the Harvest Ready. Gath Rimmon is noted as a Levitical city in Joshua 21.

⁴⁶ **Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa.**

u-me ha'yarqon v'ha'raqon im ha'gevu' mul yapho – “And Me the Jarkon, and the Rakkon, with the border against Joppa.”

Me-ha'Yarqon is found only here. It comes from *mayim*, waters, and *yeraqon*, mildew, paleness, lividness. That, in turn, comes from *yereq*, green. Thus, it is literally The Green Waters. But the idea extends to sickness, such as in Jeremiah 30 –

“For thus says the LORD:
'We have heard a voice of trembling,
Of fear, and not of peace.
⁶Ask now, and see,

Whether a man is ever in labor with child?
So why do I see every man *with* his hands on his loins
Like a woman in labor,
And all faces turned pale [*yeraqon*]?
7 Alas! For that day *is* great,
So that none *is* like it;
And it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble,
But he shall be saved out of it." Jeremiah 30:5-7

Thus, it is no stretch to say this could mean Waters of the Sickness.

Ha'Rakkon is also only seen here. It comes from *raqaq*, to spit, or *raq*, thin. Translators define it as Thin Place, Green Place, or Place at the Shore. But it could also be The Spitting Place.

This area is said to be against (meaning in front of) Joppa or Yapho. That comes from *yaphah*, to be fair or beautiful. Hence, it means Beauty or Beautiful. With that, the words continue with...

47 And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these,

v'yetse gevul bene dan mehem – "And went out border sons Dan from them." This could mean one of several things. One would be that there is a limitation based on the named cities, being not enough from them to support the tribe. One can think of a bunch of people within the borders of an area, so many are they that they overflow the borders.

Or it may mean that Dan was given the land, but it returned to the previous inhabitants, having gone out from the possession of Dan. Or it could mean that because of what is said in the next clause, the borders expanded because of the migration of Dan out of their allotted borders. No matter what, because of this, there was an insufficient amount of land for them...

47 (con't) because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it;

The word "because" would only make sense with the third option given in the previous clause. The Hebrew reads: *va'yaalu bene dan va'yilakhmu im leshem va'yilk'du otah* – "And went up sons Dan and warred with Leshem and struck her." This is something that doesn't occur until Judges 18 where the Danites from Zorah and Eshtaol went to the very north of the land, to Laish, and struck it.

This is near the area where the Jordan originates. Because it is so far north, the familiar phrase “from Dan to Beersheba” is seen in Scripture, signifying from the most northern city to the most southern, and thus it represents the entire land.

The name Leshem comes from *leshem*, a particular gemstone, possibly the jacinth or amber. It is one of the twelve stones noted in the breastplate of the high priest. Thus, it is Precious Stone. Next, it says...

47 (con't) and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it.

va'yaku otah l'pi kherev va'yirshu otah va'yesh'vu bah – “And struck her to mouth sword and dispossessed her and dwelt in her.” Rather than remaining in their allotted possession and subduing it, the men from Zorah and Eshtaol passed through much of the land of Israel to get to Leshem, at which time they took the area and it became their possession, and...

47 (con't) They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

va'yiqreu l'leshem dan k'shem dan avihem – “And called to Leshem, Dan, according to name Dan their father.” Henceforth, this area retained this name. Even to this day, it is known as the area of Dan where the famous Tel Dan Nature Reserve is a popular spot for visitors.

The substance of the account is found in these verses –

“So the five men departed and went to Laish. They saw the people who *were* there, how they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. *There were* no rulers in the land who might put *them* to shame for anything. They *were* far from the Sidonians, and they had no ties with anyone. ... So they took *the things* Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him, and went to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire. ²⁸ *There was* no deliverer, because it *was* far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. ²⁹ And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly *was* Laish.” Judges 18:7 & 27-29

And so, what we see here is a group of people who were unwilling to subdue the land they were granted and instead moved an extended distance from their tribal inheritance so that they could take an area where there were peaceful inhabitants that would be easy to destroy.

Reading the entire chapter where this account is recorded one sees several noticeable character flaws in this group of people. With that, the final verse of the inheritance is provided...

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

zoth nakhalath mateh bene dan l'misp'hotam he'arim ha'eleh v'khatsrehen – “This inheritance tribe Dan to their families, their cities, the these, and their villages.” With this, the cities of Dan, along with some of its borders, have been defined. What is the Lord telling us with all these names?

*I will declare the decree
Because the battle is won
The Lord has said to Me
You are My Son*

*Today I have begotten You
Let heaven and earth rejoice and dance
For You are Faithful and True
Ask, and I will give the nations as Your inheritance*

*Great is the victory of the Lord Jesus
Great are the mighty things He has done
God in Christ had redeemed us
An inheritance through the giving of the Son*

II. Joshua's Inheritance (verses 49-51)

⁴⁹ When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders,

vay'kalu linkhol eth ha'arets ligvulotekha – “And ended to inheriting the land to her borders.” The meaning is that the entire land was divided and each tribe had received

its allotted portion. Nothing was left unallocated, even if many areas were not yet subdued. It is only at this time that...

⁴⁹ (con't) **the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun.**

va'yit'nu bene Yisrael nakhalah lihoshua bin nun b'tokam – “and gave, sons Israel, inheritance to Joshua son Nun in their midst.” The words convey the character of the man. He didn't seek out his own interest, but rather ensured every tribe had received its land.

And more, his portion was neither taken by him nor demanded. Rather, he asked for it and it was given to him by the sons of Israel. That is seen in the next verse. Despite being a fearless leader in battle, he was modest and caring towards his people placing them ahead of himself.

⁵⁰ **According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for,**

al pi Yehovah nathenu lo eth ha'ir asher shaal – “Upon mouth Yehovah they gave to him the city which he asked.” Nothing is recorded of this in the books of Moses, but to say that the Lord didn't say it would be an argument from silence.

However, it could be that the judgment came through the mediation of Eleazer the priest. Either way, the record says that Joshua asked for this and it was then granted by Israel at the word of the Lord. The city he asked for is next named...

⁵⁰ (con't) **Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it.**

timnath serakh b'har Ephraim va'yivneh eth ha'ir va'yeshev bah – “Timnath Serah in Mount Ephraim and built the city and dwelt in her.” Of the name Timnath Serakh, Timnath is derived from Timnah, Allotted Portion, and Serakh comes from the verb *sarakh*, signifying to go free without bonds. Thus, the name is translated as Extra Portion, Abundant Portion, etc.

In Judges 2:9, the first and last letters are transposed, calling the place Timnath Kheres, or Portion of the Sun.

This location is said to be in Mount Ephraim. As has been seen in previous sermons, a mountain (*har*) is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people.

Ephraim means Twice Fruitful with a secondary meaning of Ashes.

As for the city, Timnah Serah, it is not uncommon for scholars to suggest that the city already existed and Joshua simply rebuilt it. But as it is first mentioned here, it is probable that Joshua both built the city and named it as well. With this noted, it next says...

⁵¹ These were the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance

More literally, the words read, “These the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers to the tribes of the sons of Israel, caused to inherit...” (SLT).

This statement is given to show obedience to the command given by the Lord in Numbers 34:16-29 where Eleazar (Whom God Helps) and Joshua (The Lord is Salvation) the son of Nun (Increase) were to divide the land along with the leaders of the tribes who were designated by name at that time.

Thus, there is noted in these words faithful obedience to the command. This parceling out the inheritance is next said to have been conducted...

^{51 (con’t)} by lot in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

b’goral b’shiloh liphne Yehovah petakh ohel moed – “in lot in Shiloh before Yehovah, door Tent Meeting.” Shiloh means Tranquility. This is where the Tent of Meeting was set up as recorded in Joshua 18:1.

This is now the ending of the thought that was stated by Joshua to those sent to survey the land in Joshua 18:8 –

“Then the men arose to go away; and Joshua charged those who went to survey the land, saying, ‘Go, walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.’”

With this noted the verse and the chapter end saying...

⁵¹ (fin) **So they made an end of dividing the country.**

vay'kalu m'khaleq eth ha'arets – “And ended from dividing the land.” The land is divided, even if not totally subdued. The inheritances are set and were to remain unaffected by the years, through wars, or through intermarriages.

Each contingency for keeping these lands set and unchanged has been addressed, and all of it has been under the careful eye of the Lord who determined that it should be this way, even before He had called Israel out of Egypt.

If the lands continued to have the previous occupants dwelling in them, that would be the fault of those inheriting them, not the fault of the Lord who promised He would be with them and see them through the entire process of wiping those inhabitants out.

Likewise, our inheritances are set in Christ, but if we continue on living with those things that should be eradicated by us once the inheritance is received, it is our fault, not the Lord's. And despite our failings, the surety of the inheritance remains.

*The inheritance awaits so do not lose heart
We are accepted because of Jesus
If we stumble, let us make a new start
Press on because God has forgiven us*

*Nothing can separate us from the love of God
Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord
Let us be filled with thanks each step that we tread
Until that day when comes our heavenly reward*

*The inheritance awaits; the work is done
Not by us, but by Jesus Christ our Lord
Let us worship God through His Son
Until the day we obtain the heavenly reward*

III. Pictures of Christ

As Dan's lot is the seventh for the land yet to be divided, it brings the inheritance to a state of spiritual perfection. But more, as this process ends with Dan (Judge), the fifth son of Jacob, it signifies that the inheritance is completed on a note of grace.

The names look to the state of those in Christ as they await their inheritance and the result of Christ's work for His people: spiritual perfection, expressed by the seventh lot. This comes as grace, expressed by Dan's position as the fifth son born to Jacob.

Zorah, Afflictions, reflects the state of believers waiting to be glorified. Several verses indicate this, such as –

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Eshtaol, Entreaty, looks to our life while afflicted in Christ. We entreat the Lord for relief from them such as what Paul did –

“Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Corinthians 12:8, 9

Despite our inheritance being deemed in a state of spiritual perfection, we will still face things that seem contrary to that. And yet, His grace is sufficient to endure through them.

Ir Shemesh, City of the Sun, acknowledges that we anticipate Christ – the Sun of Righteousness of Malachi 4 – and His city with foundations, noted in Hebrews 11:10, awaits us because of what Christ has done to perfect us.

Shaalabbin, Understanding by Ferreting, is the faithful believer's state as he searches out the wisdom of God from the word. It is how we grow in holiness as we await our final glorification and the Bema Seat judgment that lies ahead.

Aijalon, Place of Strength, is the place where the believer looks until that day, meaning to Christ Jesus. Jethlah, It Will Hang, speaks of where our sin hung, as Paul says –

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

That is the very act that made us spiritually perfect in God’s sight, and it is the place where God’s grace was communicated to His people.

Elon, Oak, indicating strength, reflects the act that brought us to our state of acceptance before God, meaning the work of Christ Jesus –

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Romans 5:6-9

Timnah, Allotted Portion, speaks of our grant because of the work of Christ.

Ekron, Offshoot, speaks of the state of believers in Christ. We reflect Him before God, being offshoots of what He has done to perfect us.

Eltekeh, God-fearing, speaks for itself. Having come to Christ, we have demonstrated that this is our position in Him. This is reflected in the next name, Gibbethon, or Mound. It looks to the spot where Christ was judged (Gabbatha), and in turn, the place where our sin was judged by God in Him.

Because of that, believers are brought into the church, an organic body of believers represented by Baalath, Lady, the church being a feminine noun in the Bible. This is seen, for example, in 2 John where John writes to the church –

“The Elder,
To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, ² because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.” 2 John 1:1, 2

Jehud, Praise, is an obvious connection to the expression of those in the church toward God because of Christ Jesus. Bene Berak, or Sons of Brightness, speaks of the radiance of those who are saved by God. Though we don't possess it now, except in God's eyes, it is what our future state will be when we are made like Him.

Gath Rimmon, Winepress of the Mature Mind, refers to the effects of Christ's work in us. Everything that is contrary to holiness and godliness will be pressed out of us. To God, those in Christ, are already positionally in this state, even if it has not yet been actualized. The great day ahead is the day when it will be actualized. Until then, we must press on as best we can –

“Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.” 1 Corinthians 14:20

As speculation, Me Jarkon, explained as Waters of the Sickness, look to what Christ did. By taking on human form, He drank such waters so that from Him we could receive the Water of Life. After that Rakkon, The Spitting Place, is where that was realized –

“Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses? ⁶⁴You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?’
And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.
⁶⁵Then some began to spit on Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him, and to say to Him, ‘Prophecy!’ And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.” Mark 14:63-65

In the trial where Christ was condemned leading to His crucifixion, we find life. That is, surprisingly, realized in the words “with the border against Joppa.” Joppa means Beauty or Beautiful. It is what Christ offers because of the horror He endured. It thus reflects the state of those redeemed by Him.

With that, verse 47 noted that the border of Dan (Judge) went beyond these original borders. This spoke of the expansion of the land of Dan when the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, Precious Stone. That speaks of the stone rejected by men but chosen by God and precious, which Peter equates to Christ Jesus in 1 Peter 2.

Leshem was said to be taken with the “mouth of the sword.” Remembering from early Joshua sermons that the word sword is identical to Horeb, the mount of the law, the meaning is clear. Christ's fulfillment of the law is what allows us to live in our current

state, meaning in Christ. It is He who has judged sin in us through His cross, fulfilling the law in His death.

That is the seventh and final inheritance. Thus, it speaks of God's spiritual perfection (7) residing in us through His grace (5) – reflected by Dan, the fifth son of Jacob.

With the inheritances secured and noted, the final verses relayed the inheritance of Joshua (The Lord is Salvation) the son of Nun (Increase). He had asked for Timnath Serah, Extra Portion. It speaks of the full scope of Christ's work –

“Indeed He says,
‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’” Isaiah 49:6

The work of Jesus is seen in Joshua, the Lord who is Salvation, the son of Nun, Increase. It resulted not only in the salvation of Israel, but of the Gentiles, making the effect of it the Extra Portion. Saying that it was in Mount Ephraim points to the effect of His work, the mountain being synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. It refers to the uniting of all believers, Jews and Gentiles, as one in Christ.

Ephraim (Twice Fruitful/Ashes) looks to Jesus. He is twice fruitful in the land of His affliction, prevailing over the law and thus becoming the Savior of Jew and Gentile as well as the church and national Israel. But His work also meant that sin was judged in Him, thus the ashes, signifying His afflictions.

With that, there was the note concerning the inheritances having been conducted by Eleazer (Whom God Helps) and Joshua the son of Nun, along with the fathers of the tribes being there to conduct the allotments before the Lord.

Everything is seen by these witnesses, testifying to the work of Christ on behalf of His people who have been granted their inheritances because of what Jesus has done. From there, the final words of the chapter noted that it was at Shiloh, Tranquility, before the Lord at the door of the tent of Meeting.

The whole thought looks to God in Christ and what He has done. He is the provider of God's peace. He is the Lord who sent Jesus and who approved of His work, raising Him

from the dead. He is the Door into the presence of God. And more, He is the Decider of the inheritance, reflected by the lot –

“The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision *is* from the LORD.” Proverbs 16:33

To sum up this section of Joshua, that of the inheritances including borders, cities, etc., it all anticipates the more perfect grant of God in our heavenly inheritance realized through the giving of His Son to bring us back to Himself.

Despite the need to speculate at times on the names of some of the people and places, the overall theme is perfectly clear and easily realized. Everything necessary to reconcile us to God and return us to His presence has been accomplished by Christ Jesus.

As our inheritance has been given to us, let us live as if we really believe it. Jesus has secured our inheritance! Let us not fret and fear that it may never come. It will.

Again, Jesus has secured our inheritance! Let us act out our belief by living holy lives now, awaiting that day when we will be brought before Him. God already sees us as perfected before Him, so let us live in this reality.

This is the beauty of what has been presented in this passage. God has accepted us. Thank God for Jesus Christ who has made that possible.

Closing Verse: *“...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:12-14*

Next Week: Joshua 20:1-9 *The implications of the contents of this sermon are huge...*
(Cities of Refuge) (44th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Inheritance of Dan and That of Joshua

The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan

According to their families, as it is known
And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol
-----Ir Shemesh
Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, Elon, Timnah, and Ekron

Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak
Gath Rimmon, Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region
-----near Joppa, quite a bit
And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these
Because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem
-----and took it

And they struck it with the edge of the sword
Took possession of it, and dwelt in it – it was their reward

They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father
This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan
According to their families, these cities with their villages
It became the land of that clan

When they had made an end of dividing the land
As an inheritance according to their borders, when that was done
The children of Israel gave an inheritance among them
To Joshua the son of Nun

According to the word of the LORD
They gave him the city for which he asked without a fit
Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim
And he built the city and dwelt in it

These were the inheritances which Eleazar the priest
Joshua the son of Nun also
And the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of
-----Israel divided
As an inheritance by lot before the LORD in Shiloh

At the door of the tabernacle of meeting is where
So they made an end of dividing the country then and there

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 20:1-9 (CITIES OF REFUGE)

Speaking personally, I love the word of God so deeply that I often have to stop and reflect on it. To love the Lord but not His word is illogical. "I love Jesus so much! I just don't really like the Bible." Such a thought cannot be.

Likewise, to say, "I love the Bible. It is so deep and its mysteries are so profound," may sound quite wonderful, but does a person who says that love the Giver of the word as much as he loves the word itself? Making the Bible into an idol is not difficult. It is actually as common as people in pews on Sunday morning in some churches.

Some people may idolize a particular version of the Bible. Others turn what the Bible may be conveying about the spirit world, specific patterns, numerical calculations, etc. into an idol. And yet, there is not a deep-seated love for, or honoring of, the Lord who spoke out the word. That, too, is illogical.

The two, the Lord and His word, are not to be separated. What the Lord speaks out is a reflection of who He is. We are to love the word because it is His word. We are to love the Lord who has revealed Himself through the word.

We are to seek out its mysteries because they reveal aspects of Him to us. In it, we find wisdom, love, truth, hope, anticipation of fellowship, and so much more. These are things that stem from Him, from His very being.

Text Verse: *"I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure." Psalm 119:162*

What got me thinking about these things is what it says in verse 2 of our passage today. We are reading the words of the Lord when we read the Bible. Therefore, we need to consider this as we read it. God is revealing Himself to us through the word.

In turn, the word is revealing God to us when we read it. If we really want to know who He is and what He is like, we can find out by reading the Bible.

If we read the Bible looking for mysteries that God has placed there, without considering God who put them there, we are wasting our time. People do that.

There are websites dedicated to Bible codes. They attempt to tell the future, explain why things have happened or will happen, and so on. And yet, those sites are often frequented by, or even owned by, unbelievers.

Today, we will look into the mysteries of the cities of refuge again as we did in Numbers 35. I admit, I plagiarized the details of that sermon for this one. But it is so filled with the marvel of what God has done through Jesus that it is as exciting to me today as when I weighed its meaning some years ago.

This is what the Bible is about: Exploring the word of God because it is God's word. The beauty of Jesus Christ is too precious to overlook when we are exploring the word. Let us have both a heart for God in Christ and a love for the word that tells us of Him. This is the sweet spot.

Such great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. He May Dwell Among Them (verses 1-6)

¹ The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying,

As so often was the case in the books of Moses, the word translated as "also" is "and" in the original. Though the words are recorded immediately after the final parceling of the land to the various tribes, the words here may have occurred at any point. What is stated is categorical, not necessarily chronological.

The reason this is categorical is because these cities are being appointed before the appointment of the Levitical cities, which starts in the next chapter. This is the opposite of Numbers 35 where the command was given to provide Levitical cities, out of which were to then be taken cities of refuge. That is recorded in Numbers 35:1-8.

What is to be conveyed in the coming verses is in fulfillment of the words of law found mostly in Numbers 35, but which is also mentioned in Exodus 21:13 and Deuteronomy 4 & 19. With that, the words of the Lord to Joshua begin with...

² "Speak to the children of Israel, saying:

This is a phrase commonly spoken by the Lord in Leviticus and Numbers when He spoke to Moses. This is the only time the exact phrase is used in Joshua, and it is based upon the words of Numbers 35:9-34 which are the same as here –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹ then you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there.’” Numbers 35:9-11

That appointment begins to be seen in the next words...

² (con't) **‘Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge,**

There is an article before “refuge” that should be included: *tenu lakhem eth are ha’miqlath*– “appoint to you cities the refuge.” The word translated as refuge is *miqlath*. It is seen twenty times, but only two of them are outside of Numbers 35 and Joshua 20 & 21. Those other two are in 1 Chronicles 6 which simply repeats the granting of the cities.

However, the article is combined with *miqlat* only four times: in Numbers 35:6, Joshua 20:2, and 1 Chronicles. For example, in Numbers 35, the word *miqlath* is used eleven times, but only the first time was the article included –

“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* six cities of [the] refuge, to which a manslayer may flee.” Numbers 35:6

In other words, there are cities of refuge which, when taken together, form “the Refuge.” That is what is again being addressed by the Lord to Joshua.

The word *miqlath* comes from the word *qalath*, which is found only in Leviticus 22:23 and which, surprisingly, means “stunted.” In Leviticus, it referred to not offering anything stunted to the Lord for fulfilling a vow.

The connection between the words is the idea that when one is in a place of refuge, or asylum, they are taken in. Their lives are thus stunted from going out. One might say they are cities of the stunted, but in the sense that they are cities of the protected. These cities are next said by the Lord to be...

² (con't) **of which I spoke to you through Moses,**

asher dibarti alekhem b'yad mosheh – “which I spoke to you in hand Moses.” Think of what is said! The Lord spoke “in the hand of Moses.” What Moses wrote is the word of the Lord. This means that what is compiled IS the word of God.

It is conveyed directly from His mouth to the paper and ink held by the hand of Moses. From there, it is read into the ear of the hearer or the mind of the reader. If people truly grasped the magnitude of these words, they would – wisely – treat the words of Scripture with care and humility.

Two significant points can be deduced from what has been said. The first is that because the Lord is referring to information coming from Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, He considered these books as a part of a whole.

The second is based on the fact that the same formula is used here in Joshua as was used in Numbers 35, “And the Lord spoke to Joshua saying.” However, new information is added to that which was given to Moses. And so, what Joshua is recording for the hearing of the people is also the direct spoken word of God and it bears the same weight and authority as the books of Moses because they are a continuation of what Moses had received. With that considered...

³that the slayer who kills a person accidentally or unintentionally may flee there;

The Hebrew is difficult but precise: *lanus shamah rotseakh makeh nephesh bishgagah bivli daath* – “to flee there slayer, striker soul in inadvertence, in lack of knowledge.” The repetition of the thought, being stated in two different ways, is to ensure that someone who purposefully killed another was not entitled to such an allowance.

However, a person who inadvertently struck another person, killing him without premeditation was to be given the opportunity to flee to such a city of refuge as a protection, as it next says...

^{3 (con't)} and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

The word translated as avenger is a verb, not a noun: *v'hayu lakhem l'miqlath mi'goel ha'dam* – “and shall be to you to refuge from avenging the blood.”

The word is *gaal*, to redeem or act as a kinsman. In this case, the word is translated as avenge, but it is the blood that is being redeemed through the act. Using avenge makes

it understandable to us. It is, however, as if the blood is being bought back through the act of avenging.

The cultural allowance and expectation were that when blood was shed, there was to be an avenging of it. This is a protection from that. The avenger is the one who would carry out the act, but it is safety from the act of vengeance itself that is being focused on.

The words of the next verse are not found in the books of Moses. They are a fuller explanation of what is to be done when a person accidentally slays another. As these words are new, and as they are words spoken by the Lord to Joshua, it confirms what was said in verse 2. They bear the same weight and authority as what was spoken to Moses because they continue what Moses received.

⁴ And when he flees to one of those cities,

The words are not speaking of a specific person. Rather, it is a general statement about anyone in this category: *v'nas el akhath me'he'arim ha'eleh* – “And flee unto one from the cities, the these.” It speaks of any such person who was described in the previous verse and who was to make a choice from the named cities of refuge to run there.

^{4 (con't)} and stands at the entrance of the gate of the city,

v'amad petakh shaar ha'ir – “And stands door gate the city.” The man comes to the gate of the city, specifically the entryway to it, and demonstrates his intention to enter the city. If the person is a manslayer, then he must first present his case...

^{4 (con't)} and declares his case in the hearing of the elders of that city,

The wording is very specific: *v'diber b'azene ha'ir ha'hi eth d'varav* – “and speaks in ears elders the city, the he, words his.” In other words, he is presenting his case in his own words directly to the elders of the city. Nobody is speaking for him. The matter is his and his alone: “I have slain a man inadvertently and without premeditation and I desire refuge in your city.” If so...

^{4 (con't)} they shall take him into the city as one of them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

The precision of wording continues: *v'as'phu oto ha'irah alehem v'nat'nu lo maqom v'yashav imam* – “And gathered him, the city-ward, into them and give to him place.

And dwelling with them.” Everything is stated carefully to ensure the matter is exactly understood and precisely carried out.

Obviously, if he is lying, that will be determined at a trial which is carefully specified in Numbers 35. However, for the record of Joshua, the assumption is that of a person who is innocent and is determined to be so at the required hearing.

There is no need to repeat those details. The focus here is solely on the designation of the city and what it means to the person who is accepted into it because of his innocence. If so...

⁵Then if the avenger of blood pursues him,

The words are verbs, making the clause one of action: *v'ki yirdoph goel ha'dam akharav* – “And according to pursuing avenging the blood after him.” The action of the avenger, not the avenger himself, is what is focused on. It is as if the process itself is alive. If the avenging comes following after...

^{5 (con't)} they shall not deliver the slayer into his hand,

v'lo yasgiru eth ha'rotseakh b'yado – “and no shut up the slayer in his hand.” The meaning is to deliver. But the only way to describe it properly is that it would be as if the avenging force held out his hand like the angel of death and the elders took the poor fellow and handed him over. The avenging force would shut him up in his hand, taking away the freedom from death that he deserved...

^{5 (con't)} because he struck his neighbor unintentionally, but did not hate him beforehand.

ki vivli daath hikah eth reehu v'lo sone hu lo mitmol shilshom – “because in lack of knowledge struck his neighbor and no hated he to him from yesterday, day before yesterday.” The words presuppose the innocence of anyone who is admitted into the city and is later found innocent. In other words, he is innocent until proven guilty, or he is just innocent altogether.

As long as the innocence was confirmed, at no time is he to be returned to the one avenging because the slaying was in innocence. Despite the guilt he bore as a manslayer, his life was to be spared while he remained within the sanctuary of refuge.

⁶And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment,

The translation is fine except it says, “for the judgment.” It is the specific judgment that is to be held by the congregation as indicated in Numbers –

“However, if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws anything at him without lying in wait, ²³ or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing *it* at him without seeing *him*, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm, ²⁴ then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these judgments. ²⁵ So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.” Numbers 35:22-25

The meaning is that the people of the city of refuge where the manslayer went sent him, probably under Levitical guard, back to the city where the killing had taken place. There would have been a preliminary trial at the Levitical city to see if he even qualified to be taken in.

Once summoned for a trial he would have been conducted to the city where the offense occurred for that trial. If guilty, he would be executed by the hand of the avenger. However, if found innocent, he would be returned to the Levitical city for refuge which would last for a set but indeterminate amount of time. This was, as just noted...

⁶ (con't) **and until the death of the one who is high priest in those days.**

ad moth ha'kohen ha'gadol asher yihyeh ba'yamim ha'hem – “until death the priest, the great, who is in the days, the those.” This makes the period of time he was to remain in the city of refuge completely unknowable.

One can see the providence of God in this. If what he did was the day when a new and young high priest was ordained, he may be there for the remainder of his life. If what he did was a week before the current high priest died, he would only have to be in refuge for that one week.

The reason for this mandate and this provision is two-fold. The first reason is that *ha'kohen ha'gadol*, or “the priest, the great,” represented the nation before God. He did

this with the holy offerings, and in his mediatorial role on the Day of Atonement. This is seen several times, but two pertinent examples are found in Exodus and Leviticus –

“So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy *place*, as a memorial before the Lord continually. ³⁰ And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron’s heart when he goes in before the Lord. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the Lord continually.” Exodus 28:29,30

“Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place, since it *is* most holy, and *God* has given it to you to bear the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord? ¹⁸ See! Its blood was not brought inside the holy *place*; indeed you should have eaten it in a holy *place*, as I commanded.”
-Leviticus 10:17, 18

The high priest bore the judgment of the children of Israel, and the priest bore the guilt of the congregation through the eating of the sin offering. As the high priest was ultimately responsible for all such judgment, and for the rites of atonement on the Day of Atonement, he bore the guilt of the people. In the case of the manslayer, another thought, however, comes into play. Two more verses are needed to see this –

“Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who *is* guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death.” Numbers 35:31

“So you shall not pollute the land where you *are*; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.” Numbers 35:33

The intentional manslayer must be put to death. Period. Nothing else was acceptable. But the one deemed innocent is also guilty of shedding blood, for which no atonement can be made, except by the blood of the one who shed it. Therefore, the Day of Atonement, where *all other sins* were atoned for, could not atone for his act.

However, because the high priest bore the judgment and the guilt of the manslayer, his death alone could expiate those sins. When he died, because he bore the guilt of the act, the act of the law – and thus the law of the act – died with him. The manslayer was now free from his guilt.

This is why the same word is used for both murderer and manslayer. The guilt of bloodshed is the same for both, regardless of it being intentional or unintentional. In Numbers 35, the word that defines the act, *ratsakh*, is first found as a precept of the law itself in the Sixth Commandment, “You shall not murder.”

People question if what Paul refers to in Colossians 2, and what the author of Hebrews says in Hebrews 7, 8, and 10 about the law being annulled in Christ, actually applies to the Ten Commandments. What is presented here answers that question. The Ten Commandments are the basis for the law, and they are – along with the entire law – annulled, obsolete, and set aside in Christ because Christ, the fulfillment of the law, was nailed to the cross.

The second reason is because in this there is a typological prefiguring of Christ. That will be explained later, but simply stated for now, the high priest was the mediator of the law. As this is so, the final judgment of the law, whether he officiated at the trial or not, was his.

As far as the person in the city of refuge, the time of his dwelling there would be solely up to that one determination – the death of the great priest – but it stood firm. At no time could he leave and be safe from the avenger of blood otherwise. This is seen next...

⁶ (con’t) **Then the slayer may return and come to his own city and his own house, to the city from which he fled.”**

az yashuv ha’rotseakh u-ba el iro v’el beto el ha’ir asher nas misham – “Then returning the slayer and come unto his city and unto his house, unto the city which fled from there.” The guilt of blood was atoned for by the death of the high priest. Because of this, the avenger of blood no longer had the right to take the life of the slayer. If he presumed to do so and carried through with his intent, he would then be tried as a murderer.

On the other hand, if the slayer left the city before the death of the high priest, and if he was caught and killed by the avenger of blood, no blood guilt could be imputed to the avenger –

“But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, ²⁷ and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood, ²⁸ because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of

the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession.” Numbers 35:26-28

*Do not defile the land in which you live
For in the midst of you, there I dwell
To you the blessings of heaven, I will give
Or from Me will come the tortures of eternal hell*

*For I dwell among you; even I, the Lord
Therefore, be holy as I am holy – this you must be
In this, you will receive my promised reward
And peace shall exist between you and Me*

*Do not profane the land, but keep it pure and undefiled
And between us there will be a state of harmony
In this, upon you I shall have smiled
And together we shall dwell for all eternity*

II. Consecrated Cities (verses 7-9)

⁷ So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kirjath Arba (which *is* Hebron) in the mountains of Judah.

Rather than “appoint,” it reads “consecrated,” or “sanctified” to express what occurred: *va’yaqdishu eth qedesh ba’galil b’har Naphtali v’eth shekhem b’har Ephraim v’eth qiryat arba hi khevron b’har Yehuda* – “And consecrated Qedesh in the Galilee in Mount Naphtali, and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kiryat Arba, it Hebron, in Mount Judah.”

The cities are listed from north to south and are strategically chosen to make fleeing to one of them as easy as possible from any point within the borders of Canaan.

Qedesh means Holy. Ha’Galil, or The Galilee, signifies a circular district, it is identical to *galil*, to pivot or turn. That, in turn, comes from *galal*, to roll away. Thus, like Gilgal it is The Liberty.

Naphtali means My Twistings or My Wrestlings, but it has a secondary meaning of Crafty. Shechem is identical to *shekem*, shoulder. Thus, it literally means Shoulder. However, that comes from *shakam* signifying to incline, as inclining the shoulder to a

burden. Hence, it is normally translated as to rise or start early. Abarim defines Shechem as “(Having a Sense of) Responsibility.”

Ephraim means both Twice Fruitful and Ashes. Qiryath Arba means City *of* Four; Khevron means Alliance. Judah means Praise. Along with these, three others were already set apart by Moses in Deuteronomy 4...

⁸ And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh.

In contrast to the cities west of the Jordan, these are named from south to north. They are said to be beyond Jordan Jericho (the Descender/ Place of Fragrance) eastward, a word meaning to arise or appear.

The first is Betser. The name comes from *batsar*, meaning to enclose or make inaccessible, and so it means Fortress or Defense. However, it is identical to the word *betser* which means “precious ore.” That is seen only in Job 22 –

“Then you will lay your **gold** in the dust,
And the *gold* of Ophir among the stones of the brooks.
²⁵ Yes, the Almighty will be your **gold**
And your precious silver.” Job 22:24, 25

The idea is that the ore is what people use as a defense or a protection, but the person would put away this protection and trust in the Lord as his gold – meaning his protection – instead.

Betser is said to be “in the wilderness, in the plain.” The *midbar*, or wilderness, is a place of God’s grace and of closeness to God, but it is also a place of testing. Next, *ha’mishor*, or “the plain,” is a word that signifies a level place. Thus, it figuratively speaks of uprightness. It is “the place of uprightness.” Reuben means See, a Son.

Ramoth comes from *rum*, meaning “high” or “exalted.” Thus, it signifies Heights, or Lofty Place. The Gilead means, The Perpetual Fountain. Gad means Troop or Fortune. It signifies “a fortune for which a troublesome, invasive effort is made” (Abarim).

Golan comes from *golah*, meaning Exile. The NET Bible also defines it as “Their Captivity: Their Rejoicing.” The Bashan means something like The Place of Fertile Soil. Manasseh means He Shall Forget/From a Debt. With this noted, it next says...

⁹These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwelt among them,

eleh hayu are ha’muadah l’kol bene Yisrael v’la’ger ha’gar b’tokam – “These were cities the Asylum to all sons Israel and to the stranger, the sojourning, in their midst.” Here is a word found only this once in the Bible, *muadah*. It is a noun meaning appointed, coming from *yaad*, to appoint. Being prefixed by an article, it signifies the Asylum.

Six cities have been designated. Six is the number of man, especially fallen man. It is five plus one, or grace plus man’s addition to it. It is seven minus one or coming short of spiritual perfection. These are given so...

^{9 (con’t)} that whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there,

la’nus shamah kal makeh nephesh bishgagah – “to flee there all striking a soul in inadvertence.” The repetition of this from verse 3 produces its own stress on the fact that this only applies to those who slayed another accidentally. If he was known to have killed a person willfully, he was not to be permanently admitted into the Asylum. But for the one who slayed by accident, he was brought in for safety...

^{9 (fin)} and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.

v’lo yamuth b’yad goel ha’dam ad am’do liphne ha’edah – “and no dying in hand avenging the blood until he stands before the congregation.” Obviously, until there was a trial, the receiving city of refuge would not know if he was guilty or not.

Until that was determined, there was provision for protection. If he was innocent of intentional murder, he would be admitted permanently until his death or the death of the high priest.

Where can I go to save my life?

How can I get free from what has been done?

I killed a man, but not by strife

In innocence have I slain this one

*But the avenger of blood waits for me
To take my life for what I have done
Is there a place where I can flee?
Is there a place where I can run?*

*Who will save me from what has come about?
Who can rescue me from what I have done?
Is there a chance for me? How will it come about?
Lord, my only hope is that to You I run*

III. Pictures of Christ

By listing these cities of refuge prior to naming the Levitical cities, it emphasizes them as the cities of refuge, not that they are Levitical cities. This same idea was expressed in Numbers 35 where it said, “And the cities which you will give to *the* Levities – six cities, the refuge.”

The number six in Scripture speaks of man. Specifically, it speaks of the imperfection of man. It is five plus one, or grace plus man’s addition to it. It is seven minus one, or coming short of spiritual perfection. The number of cities is purposeful, and the meaning of these cities of refuge will reveal why six is the chosen number.

These, even before being named, are referred to as a whole, *ha’miqlath*, the Refuge. Coming from *qalath*, stunted, is not to be taken negatively. Rather, it is the state in which the person exists, meaning protected. It is the thought expressed by Paul in our relationship to Jesus –

“For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” Colossians 3:3, 4

It is to these cities that one who killed accidentally could flee for refuge from “avenging the blood.” In this sense, the idea of blood is directly equated to life. There is to be a redeeming of the life lost by the one who shed the blood.

To save the person from this act because it was inadvertent, even though he is guilty of it, the cities of refuge were consecrated. They are a place of grace for those who fall short, but who seek refuge. The cities themselves do not save; they only protect. And they only do so by the voluntary act of the man staying in them.

Thus, the cities were anticipatory of Christ for Israel. One under the law still had the hope of Messiah, and in such a hope, the sin of the man was not imputed. This was spoken by David, and cited by Paul with these words –

“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

⁷ ‘Blessed *are those* whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered;

⁸ ‘Blessed *is the* man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.’” Romans 4:5-8

David was a man under the law. It was a law that said sin was to be imputed. And yet David wrote that there was a blessedness for the man to whom the Lord did not impute sin. The law is of works, and yet a person could be deemed righteous by faith.

The city of refuge was such a place. The man was guilty, but his guilt could be taken away, although not by law. It could only be taken away by a provision of grace within the law – the anticipation of Messiah.

This was seen in the law when the priests ate the sacrifice of the sin offering in order to bear the sins of the people. However, Hebrews says that such sacrifices actually did nothing. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. And so, these sacrifices were only anticipatory of the coming of Christ.

It was seen in each of the countless sacrifices of Leviticus and Numbers. Every detail anticipated Christ. And so, the sin animal offerings eaten by the priests did not actually take away the sin. The high priest alone bore the sin of the people in an anticipatory manner. That anticipation was of Christ to come.

And that leads to what is said of the high priest. He was the one anointed with the oil of the priesthood. That takes us back to Leviticus and what the anointing anticipated. The word *mashakh*, or anoint, is the root of *mashiakh*, Messiah, or Anointed One. In Isaiah 61, that Anointed One was anticipated –

“The Spirit of the Lord God *is* upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to *those who are bound.*” Isaiah 61:1

Luke says that Christ went into the synagogue, read that portion of Scripture, and stated that it was fulfilled in their hearing. He was proclaiming that He was the One anointed by God as Messiah.

Those who had transgressed the law through bloodshed were safe in the Levitical city of refuge. When the high priest was alive, he bore the judgment and guilt of the offender. His role was given as an anticipatory type of Christ.

When Christ came, He actually could bear the guilt – and He did. He is the fulfillment of the Levitical city of refuge, of the animal bearer-of-guilt substitute, and also of the anointed high priest who then bore the guilt.

In that capacity, and with that burden of guilt, He died. As we said of the high priest of Israel, we can now say of the fulfillment of that high priestly position in Christ. When He died, because He bore the guilt of the act, the act of the law – and thus the law of the act – died with Him. The manslayer was now free from his guilt.

This is what Paul wrote about in Colossians 2. Though he is speaking to Gentiles, the premise remains the same concerning what occurred –

“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” Colossians 2:13-15

The Anointed One, the Messiah, the true High Priest, died on the cross of Calvary, and the power of the law died with Him. In that death, the law is taken away, and the captives are set free.

Some claim that the idea of the city of refuge means that a person could lose his salvation. If he left the city, he was subject to the avenger of blood. Such is exactly the opposite. That is speaking of before, not after, the high priest dies.

That looked to Israel before the coming of Messiah. Those who trusted in Messiah, died in faith. They were kept in the City of Refuge until His coming. In the death of Messiah, the captives are freed. This thought cannot be taken to indicate a loss of salvation. Rather, it loudly proclaims eternal salvation.

As for the names of the cities, they explain the state of those in relation to Christ:

Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali speaks of those made Holy (Qedesh) in Liberty (Galil), meaning freedom from the law. Being in Mount Naphtali signifies a gathering of people brought in because of the work of Christ (Naphtali, My Wrestlings).

Shechem, (Having a Sense of) Responsibility, looks to the believer who understands his violation of the law and has accepted Christ's fulfillment of it. Being in Mount Ephraim, Twice Fruitful/Ashes, signifies a gathering of people brought in because of the work of Christ – Jew and Gentile – because of His sufferings, hence the ashes.

Kirjath Arba, City of Four. Four "is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created ... It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the 'city' number" according to Bullinger.

Calling it Hebron, Alliance, looks to the relationship established between Christ and His people because of His work. Being in Mount of Judah, Praise, signifies a gathering of people who have been brought in because of Christ who is the Praise of God.

With those noted, verse 8 then renamed the cities east of the Jordan (the Descender/Christ in His incarnation) by Jericho (Place of Fragrance/surety of heaven) eastward (before the coming of Christ). It is all given in anticipation of the work of Christ.

Bezer, Defense, signifies that the manslayer can run to the Defense found in Christ, laying aside his own "gold" or protection, coming to the One who will protect him in Himself.

It is in the wilderness, the place where God's grace is displayed, and it is in the plain, the place of the uprightness. As Paul says in Romans 10:4, "For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." It is the state that one possesses in coming to Messiah.

That is found in the territory of Reuben, or See, a Son. It refers to the sonship relationship that has been established.

Ramoth – The manslayer can run to the Lofty Place. Though his actions deserve death, in Christ, God is willing to accept the one who comes to Him through Christ. As it says in 1 Peter 5:6, “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

In this, the person comes to the Gilead, The Perpetual Fountain, and is granted eternal life. Being in the land of Gad, it signifies a fortune for which a troublesome, invasive effort is made. In other words, it acknowledges the trials Christ went through in order to bring him to this spot of favor.

Golan – Exile. The person who flees into exile is the freest person of all, if it is captivity in Christ. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10:5, “...bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” This is said to be in the Bashan, or “The Place of Fertile Soil.”

It speaks of the fertile soil of the word of God. As Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” It was then said to be in the land of Manasseh, or He Shall Forget/From a Debt, signifying that Christ shall forget the past deeds of the person who has come to Him as He has paid their sin debt. The person is secure in the place of refuge, meaning Christ.

A careful study of the words shows that the Lord is conveying to believers the work of Christ and their state in these six cities of refuge, set aside for fallen man to be kept secure in Christ until the day he is brought back into the presence of God.

It must be remembered that if the manslayer left the city of refuge, it meant that he was under law, not under grace. That choice remains today. One can choose law, or he can choose grace, but he cannot have both. The author of Hebrews makes this clear when speaking of the New and the Old covenants –

“But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.
¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to

God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:11-15

Under law, the priest died and stayed dead but the law continued to condemn. In Christ, the High Priest died to remove the law, but because of the resurrection, He lives forever. His grace is offered freely unto eternal salvation.

The apostle John says that if we hate our brother, it is an act of murder. The intent of the heart is what God looks at, and we have all been found guilty because of the law. It may have been unintentional, but the stain remains. However, in Christ, we have a better hope than our failed actions. As Hebrews says –

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.” Hebrews 6:17, 18

Israel had cities of refuge set up until the coming of Christ. The tragically flawed thinking that we must continue to adhere to the Law of Moses since His coming is shown false in this passage.

In fact, it is a self-condemning act because such a person rejects what the law only anticipated – freedom in Christ. We have a Place of Refuge that we can flee to, in order to keep us from death. Let us flee to the grace of God in Christ and be saved from what we otherwise deserve.

Closing Verse: *“O Lord, You have pleaded the case for my soul; You have redeemed my life.” Lamentations 3:58*

Next Week: Joshua 21:1-8 *They’ll need these as the population starts a’swellin’...* (Cities to Dwell In) (45th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Cities of Refuge

The LORD also spoke to Joshua, saying
“Speak to the children of Israel,” so He was relaying

“Appoint for yourselves cities of refuge
Of which I spoke to you through Moses, as you are aware
That the slayer who kills a person
Accidentally or unintentionally may flee there

“And they shall your refuge be
From the avenger of blood as directed by Me

“And when he flees to one of those cities
And stands at the entrance of the city gate
And declares his case in the hearing
Of the elders of that city, on that date

“They shall take him into the city
As one of them, so to you I tell
And give him a place
That he may among them dwell

“Then if the avenger of blood pursues him
They shall not deliver the slayer into his hand
Because he struck his neighbor unintentionally
But did not hate him beforehand

“And he shall dwell in that city
Until he stands for judgment before the congregation
And until the death of the one
Who is high priest in those days, the mediator for the nation

“Then the slayer may return and to his own city he shall tread
And his own house, to the city from which he fled”

So they appointed Kedesh in Galilee, in the mountains of Naphtali
Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim also
And Kirjath Arba (which is Hebron)

In the mountains of Judah is where the third was to go

And on the other side of the Jordan, by Jericho eastward
They assigned Bezer in the wilderness on the plain
-----from the tribe of Reuben on that day
Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad
And Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh

These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel
And for the stranger who dwelt among them, so we understand
That whoever killed a person accidentally might flee there
And not die by the avenger of blood's hand

Until he stood before the congregation
These were the cities designated for all the nation

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 21:1-8 (CITIES TO DWELL IN)

Quite often, our sermons cite the work of E.W. Bullinger. More than anyone else, he revealed the meaning of numbers used in Scripture. Anyone doing a study on Bible numbers would save a lot of time if they had his book, *Number in Scripture*, handy.

Today, anyone with an internet connection can have it handy because it is on several websites and some even make it easy to download it as a PDF. The thing about citing Bullinger isn't just that what he says "seems to make sense." Rather, he normally cites detailed examples of his conclusions concerning the meaning of numbers right from Scripture. Sometimes, he cites dozens of examples.

Because of this, you can be relatively certain that when someone cites Bullinger, the citation is reliable, even if the analysis given by the person citing him isn't. In other words, there are times when someone will cite Bullinger, but will then botch the analysis and conclusion.

Therefore, just because someone cites him, or any other reliable scholar, it is always good to not accept the conclusion at face value. So, be sure to check up on what you hear.

Concerning Bullinger's work, you will hear it referenced many times today. The passage before us is filled with numerical and typological patterns. It really is a marvelous treasure of God's wisdom.

Text Verse: *"Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.
6 Let not my soul enter their council;
Let not my honor be united to their assembly;
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel."* Genesis 49:5-7

In Genesis 49, Jacob prophesied over his son Levi that he would be divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Though brought into the narrative in several ways since then, the

actual allotment of cities to Levi starting in today's passage is the fulfillment of that prophecy.

The Bible has meticulously, even minutely, detailed how this would come about. Step by step, everything in Scripture moves us toward clarity of what God is doing. And yet, some people miss out on this obvious truth. The Pulpit Commentary on Joshua 21:2 says—

“First, the six cities of refuge were to be appointed, and then forty-two more were to be added to them. Calvin, not noticing this, has complained that this narrative is not in its proper place, and that it should have been inserted before the details in ch. 20.” Pulpit Commentary

Despite being almost idolized by many, Calvin's comment is so far out of line with reality that it's hard to imagine what he was thinking. What the Pulpit Commentary references was explicitly stated in Numbers 35, as will be seen below. But even if it wasn't, his statement calls the order of Joshua into question. That alone opens up a can of worms concerning the reliability of the biblical text.

This is why it is so important to check what you are told, consider what is in a printed commentary, and – above all – to be familiar with what is said in Scripture. John Calvin was just a guy. The commentator of the Pulpit Commentary was just a guy. We are all fallible and prone to error. The word of God is not.

The word is reliable, so be confident in it alone. Everything else needs to be measured against this marvelous standard we call the Holy Bible. Wonderful things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. By the Hand of Moses (verses 1-8)

¹ Then the heads of the fathers' *houses* of the Levites came near to Eleazar the priest,

The heads of the fathers' of the Levites are those who lead the three divisions of the Levites, descending from Levi's three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Of them, it says they came near to Eleazar the priest. Eleazar means Whom God Helps or God Has Helped.

The matter to be resolved is the granting of Levitical cities for the people of the tribe to dwell in. As it is a matter to be determined by lot, Eleazar, being the high priest, is named first just as in Joshua 14:1 with the division of the land for the tribes. This same order was stated again in Joshua 17:4 and 19:51.

^{1 (con't)} **to Joshua the son of Nun,**

The same order as the verses just mentioned continues where Eleazar is named before Joshua. Eleazar is the one to determine the will of the Lord. He then conveys that will to Joshua. One must know the will of the Lord prior to abiding by that will. In the case of the division of the land, it will come from the Lord through the hand of Eleazar.

Joshua is the civil and military leader of the nation and was naturally to be included in any such matter. Joshua means The Lord is Salvation.

^{1 (con't)} **and to the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the children of Israel.**

These would be the men named in Numbers 34:16-28 who were also mentioned at the beginning of the land division in Joshua 14:1. At that time, they came before Eleazar and Joshua to receive their land inheritances.

They are now gathered together because of a law matter that must be settled which deals with cities within their land. These cities are to be made the possession of the Levites and this is now the appropriate time to settle the issue.

Of this, John Calvin's comments completely miss the point of what is happening. He assumes that the people simply forgot about the Levites, saying, "For thus it usually happens, while everyone is paying attention to his own care, that he forgets his brothers."

It is a ridiculous statement when considered. As the cities were within the borders of individual tribes, and those tribes are only now defined, it would have been impossible to assign the Levitical cities according to tribal inheritances until this point.

The assignment of the tribes and the granting of Joshua's inheritance was complete at the end of Chapter 19. The designation of the cities of refuge comprised Chapter 20.

As seen, those cities were logically determined before the assignment of the Levitical cities, even though they are a part of the Levitical cities. Only now, and not through

incompetence on behalf of the people, is it appropriate to define Levitical cities within the tribes. Therefore, only now do they come forward...

² And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan,

Shiloh is the place of the Tent of Meeting as first noted in Joshua 18:1. The congregation had moved from Gilgal to this more central location. Shiloh means Tranquility. Canaan signifies Humbled, Humiliated, or even Subdued.

^{2 (con't)} saying, “The LORD commanded through Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for our livestock.”

More correctly, it reads: *Yehovah tsivah b'yad Mosheh* – “Yehovah commanded in hand Moses.” The term “in hand” signifies “by the authority of,” but that authority was transferred to the scroll. The Lord commanded it to Moses and Moses committed it to writing as a permanent written command. The matter now to be considered was specifically mentioned in Numbers 35 –

“And the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan *across from* Jericho, saying: ² “Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall *also* give the Levites common-land around the cities. ³ They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle, for their herds, and for all their animals.” Numbers 35:1-3

This is what is being considered, in compliance with the mandate of law. Saying “from the inheritance of their possession” means that the matter was not ignorantly forgotten, but this is the time when it can be properly settled. The inheritance of the children of Israel is complete in the division of the land. Thus, the Levitical cities may be assigned accordingly.

³ So the children of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance,

The word “gave” is correct, but it may not mean, “Here are the cities we have decided to give to you,” as if the individual tribes determined the matter. Rather, it likely means that the process is directed by the Lord. The Lord gave the tribal inheritances to the children of Israel. From there, these cities are given out of those inheritances by the Lord.

Or it could be that the tribes allocated Levitical cities that were then assigned to the families of Levi according to the lot. If so, the Levities might have looked over the cities and given their preferences during the surveying of the land. Either way, the process of allotting them begins to be realized in the next words. They were...

³ (con't) **at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their common-lands:**

el pi Yehovah – “unto mouth Yehovah.” This must be referring to what lies ahead because the cities were not named in Numbers 35, only the number of them was given. Therefore, the lot itself is being equated to the mouth (command) of Yehovah. This is what Numbers 35 says –

“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. ⁷ So all the cities you will give to the Levites *shall be* forty-eight; these *you shall give* with their common-land. ⁸ And the cities which you will give *shall be* from the possession of the children of Israel; from the larger *tribe* you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives.” Numbers 35:6-8

With that remembered, it next says...

⁴ **Now the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites.**

Kohath was the second son of Levi, but from him descends the priestly line of Aaron. Thus, he is allotted the first portion. Depending on the root used for the name Kohath, it means either Obedience or Gathering/Assembly. From him, the first allotted portion will go to the priests...

⁴ (con't) **And the children of Aaron the priest, *who were* of the Levites, had thirteen cities by lot**

The translation is understandable, but it is completely out of order from the Hebrew, which reads, “and it was to the sons of Aaron the priest (from the Levites) ...”

The way the Hebrew is worded, it clearly sets the priests off as a distinct class within the Levites. The meaning of the name Aaron is debated. Jones' Dictionary renders it Very High.

Kohath received the first lot and then from there the sons of Aaron, descended from Kohath, then received the first lot of Kohath. It was...

⁴ (con't) from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin.

The words are correctly translated, and then in the Hebrew, the text ends with the words “in the lot, cities three ten.” The total is given at the end of the verse, not in the middle. It is to be noticed that even without naming them yet, the cities are located directly around Jerusalem.

Judah (Praise) is to its south, Simeon (He Who Hears) is within Judah, and Benjamin (Son of the Right Hand) is to its north. Thus, the priestly cities, by the providence of the lot from the Lord, place the priests in a somewhat circular fashion around the city.

As for the number thirteen, Bullinger says that “every occurrence of the number thirteen, and likewise of every multiple of it, stamps that with which it stands in connection with rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.”

⁵ The rest of the children of Kohath had ten cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.

The Hebrew reads in a completely different order, “And to sons Kohath, the remainings, from families tribe Ephraim, and from tribe Dan, and from half-tribe Manasseh, in the lot, cities ten.”

Ephraim (Twice Fruitful/Ashes), Dan (Judge), and the half-tribe of Manasseh (He Shall Forget/From a Debt) are located just west and north of Benjamin. Ten signifies the perfection of divine order. As Bullinger notes, “It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.”

Albert Barnes states, “The non-priestly Kohathites had been diminished by the destruction of Korah and his company (Numbers 16). On comparing Numbers 26:57 following with Numbers 3:27 ff, two of the families of the Kohathites seem to have disappeared altogether. Hence, it is not surprising that the rest of the Kohathites were sufficiently accommodated in ten cities.”

The total number of cities for Kohath is twenty-three.

⁶And the children of Gershon had thirteen cities by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

Gershon was the first son born to Levi. His name means Expelled One or Exiled One. His allotment is also thirteen cities coming from Issachar (He is Wages), Asher (Happy), Naphtali (My Twistings/My Wrestlings), and from the other half-tribe of Manasseh across the Jordan in the Bashan (The Place of Fertile Soil).

The tribes within Canaan are located north of the half-tribe of Manasseh, but the area of Zebulun is omitted. The other half-tribe of Manasseh, east of the Jordan, is to the very north of the tribal inheritances.

⁷The children of Merari according to their families had twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun.

The name Merari comes from *marar*, to be bitter or to be strong. The i at the end may be possessive, and so it means either Bitterness or Strong or My Bitterness or My Strength.

He is the youngest son of Levi and his cities are somewhat dispersed. Reuben's tribal land is the southernmost portion east of the Jordan. Gad is the middle tribe east of Jordan, just north of Reuben but south of Manasseh. However, the third area for his cities, which is in the land of Zebulun, is west of the Jordan in land locked between Issachar, Manasseh, Asher, and Naphtali.

Together, they will possess twelve cities, the number of perfection of government or of governmental perfection. Thus, all combined, there are – as directed by the Lord in Numbers 35 – forty-eight Levitical cities, six of which are cities of refuge.

⁸And the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands by lot to the Levites,

As noted in verse 3, these were either chosen by the children of Israel and then allocated by lot or they were chosen by the Lord and then allocated by lot. Either way, they were given from within the tribal inheritances of the children of Israel. The common-lands are those lands explicitly described in Numbers 35 –

“The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. ⁵ And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.” Numbers 35:4, 5

However the decision was made, the entire process was...

⁸ (con’t) **as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.**

ka’asher tsivah Yehovah b’yad Mosheh ba’goral – “According to which commanded in hand Moses, in the lot.” The Lord commanded Moses, Moses wrote out the words of law, and from the law, the lot was cast to determine these cities.

Concerning these cities, and of the Bible in general, there are always people who deny that these words could have been written at this time in Israel’s history. There simply were not enough priests and Levites to properly fill the cities. That is an error in understanding the layout and purpose of Levitical cities.

Just because these are designated as Levitical cities, it does not mean that only Levites lived in them. Nor does it mean that Levites only lived in Levitical cities. Though lengthy, Adam Clarke does a noble job of explaining the situation of these cities in relation to Israel –

“It has been asked in what sense did the Levites possess those cities, seeing they had no inheritance? To which it may be answered that it is not likely the Levites had the exclusive property of the cities in which they dwelt, for it is evident that the other Israelites dwelt among them. We know, says Calmet, by history, that the cities of the Levites were almost entirely filled with Israelites of other tribes. For instance, Gibeah of Benjamin, which is here given to the Levites, Joshua 21:17, was always peopled by the Benjamites, as appears from the history of the Levite, whose wife was so horribly abused by them; Judges 19:22-27. Saul and all his family dwelt in the same city; and David and his court spent the first years of his reign at Hebron, which was also a city of the Levites, Joshua 21:10. It appears, therefore, that they had no other property in those cities than merely the right to certain houses, which they might sell, but always with the right of perpetual redemption, for they could finally alienate nothing; and if the possessor of such a house, having sold it, did not redeem it at the year of jubilee, it reverted to the Levites. And as to their lands for their cattle, which extended two

thousand cubits without the city, these they were not permitted to sell: they were considered as the Lord's property. See Leviticus 25:32-34 (note), and the notes there. It is therefore very likely that, in the first instance, the Levites had simply the right to choose, in all the cities assigned them, the houses in which they were to dwell, and that those of the tribe to which the city belonged occupied all the other dwellings. There is also reason to believe that in process of time, when the families of the Levites increased, they had more dwellings assigned to them, which were probably built at the public expense. We may also observe that the Levites were not absolutely bound to live in these and no other cities: for when the tabernacle was at Nob, priests and Levites dwelt there, see 1 Samuel 21:1, etc.; and when the worship of God was established at Jerusalem, multitudes both of priests and Levites dwelt there, though it was no Levitical city: as did the courses of priests afterwards at Jericho. This was a circumstance which Moses had foreseen, and for which he had provided. See Deuteronomy 18:6, etc.”

He is correct in this. As this is so, there must be more than what is seen on the surface. The Lord chose the number of the cities before Israel ever entered the land. The lot determined who went where within these cities, and yet, they were not bound to these cities, as if they had to permanently dwell in them. More is going on for us to consider.

*Separated in Jacob and divided in Israel
The tribe of Levi is to be dispersed
And yet, from it there is a marvelous story to tell
Redemption from the land that was cursed*

*God's Christ will come and bring healing
Into the world that He created
This blessed way that God is dealing
With those who upon the Messiah have waited*

*A world at enmity with God
Is what Messiah will come to restore
Among His creatures He will tread
In the new world will be treasures galore*

II. Pictures of Christ – Numbers and Names

The inheritances of the tribes are being used to reveal Christ in a marvelous way. Levi has no land inheritance of its own, and yet they do possess an inheritance. That was seen in Joshua 14:1-5 where it was noted –

“Because Levi, who anticipates Christ, has the Lord as their inheritance, there is no need for a land grant. ... In other words, just as the Lord is Levi’s inheritance, so the Lord is Jesus’ inheritance. What belonged to the Lord from Israel passed to and through Levi. What belongs to the Lord from redeemed humanity passes to and through Jesus.”

What we are dealing with now follows in thought with the contents of that sermon. There are thirteen individual land grants. In order, they were Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Ephraim, Dan, half-Manasseh, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, half-Manasseh, Reuben, Gad, Zebulun.

As was noted earlier concerning the number thirteen, Bullinger says that “every occurrence of the number thirteen, and likewise of every multiple of it, stamps that with which it stands in connection with rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.”

This is the state of the world without Christ. Israel is being used to reveal this. However, Bullinger explains further concerning the number later in his book. He says –

“THE CONNECTION OF THE NUMBER THIRTEEN WITH SUBSTITUTION AND ATONEMENT
The Saviour, though without sin, was ‘made sin,’ or a sin-offering, for His people. He was ‘wounded for our transgressions,’ and bruised for their iniquities. He was, in fact, ‘NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS’ (Isa 53:12). Therefore this number is not only the all-pervading factor of SIN, but also of sin’s atonement. It is not only the number which brands the sinner as a rebel against God, but it is the number borne by the sinner's Substitute. His very names in the Old Testament, before the work of Atonement was entered on or accomplished, are all multiples of 13, just as His names, afterwards in the New Testament and when the work of Atonement was carried out, are all multiples of 8.

- Christ 1480 (8x185)
- Lord 800 (8x100)
- Our Lord 1768 (8x221)
- Saviour 1408 (8x8x22)
- Emmanuel 25600 (8x8x8x50)
- Messiah 656 (8x82) ● Son 880 (8x110) The Old Testament names are:--
- Jehovah = 26 (13x2)
- Adonai = 65 (13x5)
- Ha-Elohim = 91 (13x7)
- Messiah, as given in Psalm 2, a form in which it occurs 10 times, ‘His Anointed’ = 364 (13x28)--the very number of Satan himself.”

The world without Christ is fallen, and Christ came to redeem the world, taking on the appearance of sinful man and bearing his guilt. By adding Levi to the inheritance, the grants total fourteen. Bullinger defines the number, saying –

“FOURTEEN being a multiple of seven, partakes of its significance; and, being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. The number two with which it is combined (2x7) may, however, bring its own significance into its meaning, as in Matthew 1, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is divided up and given in sets of 14 (2x7) generations, two being the number associated with incarnation.” Bullinger

Using Israel as a picture of the world, despite their rebellion and apostasy in the earthly realm, because of Levi, the Lord has placed His stamp upon them in the spiritual realm.

Likewise, with Jesus’ incarnation, the fallen world can be brought to a state of perfection once again. Christ is like the glue that binds all else together. This connection between Christ and fallen man is further explained in the passage today.

There are three sons of Levi. Three is the number of Divine Perfection. Bullinger says it “points us to what is real, essential, perfect, substantial, complete, and Divine.”

Despite there being three sons, there are four allotments because Kohath is divided into two – the sons of Aaron and the rest. Bullinger notes that four refers to all that is created. It points to material completeness. It is the world number and especially the city number.

The first family, that of Kohath, is divided into two portions. Two is the number of difference. In two, there is a contrast and yet there is a confirmation of things. For example, the Bible has two testaments. They contrast and yet they confirm the whole word of God.

Kohath, Obedience, is so divided. The first lot was for the sons of Aaron (Very High), each tribe of his allotted cities is a picture of Jesus, the Son of the Most High. He is the Praise of God (Judah). He is He Who Hears (meaning obeys) God (Simeon), He is the Son of the Right Hand (Benjamin).

And yet, they are given thirteen cities, the number of disorder, disintegration, etc. It is the state of the world into which Christ entered. But, as Bullinger explained, thirteen is connected to substitution and atonement. He is the fulfillment of everything associated

with the priestly duties of substitution and atonement, as was made perfectly evident in the Leviticus sermons.

The second lot, the contrast and yet the confirmation, is seen in the remaining ten cities given to the rest of Kohath. Christ's work is the perfection of divine order. He was Twice Fruitful in His Work through the Ashes of His afflictions (Ephraim), bringing in Jew and Gentile. He is the Judge of sin (Dan), it having been judged in Him. With that He Shall Forget their Sin, having paid sin's penalty, From a Debt (Manasseh).

The second son is Gershon, Exiled One. This speaks of Christ in His work as well. He is Wages (Issachar) for the sin of man. He is Happy/Blessed (Asher) in the completion of His effort which was revealed in (Naphtali) My Wrestlings. He, the true Israel, wrestled with God and prevailed.

This was an allotment of thirteen cities, signifying the substitutionary and atoning work of Christ, despite the state of disorder and disintegration in the world which He entered.

The third son, Merari, anticipates Christ. The name means either My Bitterness or My Strength. They are two sides of the same coin because bitterness includes the idea of that which is strong. Either name will suffice. The completion of Christ's work is the proof of God's declaration of the Sonship of Christ – See a Son (Reuben). In the resurrection is realized His Fortune (Gad) and the granting of the Glorious Dwelling Place (Zebulun) as His rightful due.

This was an allotment of twelve cities, governmental perfection/perfection of government.

Everything about these allotted cities reveals the workings of God in Christ. And yet, there is another aspect of them seen in the Numbers 35 sermon which began to be revealed again in the Joshua 20 sermon. The six cities of refuge, although being a part of Levi's allotment, are separate and unique.

There are 48 cities, but six are set apart from the others. In numbers 35:6, it said –

“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities.”

The forty-two cities are secondary to the highly important designation of six cities of refuge. The Levitical cities are six plus forty-two first and foremost. One could say that the United States was first 13 with 37 states added later. Although all are equal, there is a special note of honor held among those designated first.

Without the need to count on your fingers, I can tell you that $6 + 42 = 48$. Bullinger notes that six “has to do with man; it is the number of imperfection; the human number; the number of MAN as destitute of God, without God, without Christ.” Simply put, it reveals fallen man. However, it also reveals Christ who came in the appearance of fallen man.

Forty-two is a most interesting number. Bullinger says it is a number connected with Antichrist, giving examples to support this. He then notes –

“Being a multiple of seven, it might be supposed that it would be connected with spiritual perfection. But it is the product of six times seven. Six, therefore, being the number of Man, and man's opposition to God, forty-two becomes significant of the working out of man's opposition to God.

There may be something more in the common phrase about things being all ‘sixes and sevens.’ They are so, indeed, when man is mixed up with the things of God, and when religious ‘flesh’ engages in spiritual things.”

Of the number 48, the obvious division of it by 12 and 4 is not to be missed. Twelve signifies the perfection of government. Four represents the number of material completeness. It is the world number, and especially the “city” number.

Thus, in these cities, one can see a representation of the kingdom of God in the world, with a special focus on 1) fallen man which is represented by the six cities of refuge, as well as 2) the kingdom of antichrist (the world opposed to God where religious flesh engages in spiritual things).

Despite the seeming contradiction in the individual numbers 6 and 42, with that of 48, it reveals that when taken together, the first two combine to form the perfection of God’s government in creation, or – more specifically – what God has used to form the kingdom of God in the world through the work of Christ.

It is a rather marvelous picture of Him, working through Christ, and forming this universal government, highlighted by those who come to take refuge in Him.

As seen earlier in Joshua 14:1-5, in these allotments, Levi anticipates Christ and His work in numerous ways. Levi is allotted his inheritance (the Lord is his inheritance) within Israel, dispersed among the other thirteen allotments.

Despite the disorder, disintegration, corruption, and so forth of Israel, God brought Jesus into the world through them. In His incarnation, He resided among them and brought them – meaning the commonwealth of Israel – into a double measure of spiritual perfection, inclusive of both Jew and Gentile.

The dispersion of Levi throughout the land meant that Levi always walked among the people. This is what is reflected about God in Christ according to Paul in 2 Corinthians 6–

“I will dwell in them
And walk among *them*.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.” 2 Corinthians 6:16

The actual residing of Levi among Israel was to keep the people’s focus, understanding, and thoughts concentrated on the Lord. The Levites were to minister to the people in the things of the Lord, keeping them properly educated in the law. Someday the fulfillment of that will be seen when we dwell in heaven and Christ dwells in us and walks among us.

Everything mentioned about Levi throughout the books of Moses and here in Joshua is given to help us understand the work of Christ on our behalf and then to point us to our relationship with God because of Him.

When we consider Levi, as a tribe, their duties, their inheritance – all of it – anticipates the Person and work of Jesus. But this should not be unexpected. God used this imperfect tribe that is a portion of the imperfect people known as Israel to reveal to us the perfection of Christ Jesus. It is all in the numbers and names and it is marvelous.

Closing Verse: *“Mercy and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed.
¹¹ Truth shall spring out of the earth,
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.” Psalm 85:10, 11*

Next Week: Joshua 21:9-19 *They are designated for all of them, from the greatest to the least...* (The Cities of the Children of Aaron, the Priest) (46th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Cities to Dwell In

Then the heads of the fathers' houses
Of the Levites came near to Eleazar the priest
To Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers' houses
Of the tribes of the children of Israel – the greatest to the least

And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan
Saying, "The LORD commanded, through Moses He did talk
To give us cities to dwell in
With their common-lands for our livestock

So the children of Israel
Gave to the Levites from their inheritance, as the law demands
At the commandment of the LORD
These cities and their common-lands:

Now the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites
And the children of Aaron the priest, who were
-----of the Levites we know
Had thirteen cities by lot from the tribe of Judah
From the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin also

The rest of the children of Kohath
Had ten cities by lot on that day
From the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan
And from the half-tribe of Manasseh

And the children of Gershon had thirteen cities by lot
From the families of the tribe of Issachar, they came on
From the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali
And from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan

The children of Merari
According to their families had twelve cities, these they did accrue

From the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad
And from the tribe of Zebulun too

And the children of Israel gave these cities
With their common-lands by lot to the Levites
As the LORD had commanded
By the hand of Moses, they were given these sites

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 21:9-19

(THE CITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF AARON, THE PRIEST)

A few years ago, I got an email from Sergio about 2 Corinthians 1:20. He said he had heard a pastor using that verse to describe the great things we can do because we are in Christ. In other words, the pastor was saying the verse is about us.

Sergio said that the analysis just didn't make sense to him because the Bible is about Jesus, but he couldn't figure out what was wrong with it. So I copied that verse and its explanation from my 2 Corinthians commentary and sent it to him. This is that short commentary –

For all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 2 Corinthians 1:20

Speaking of Christ Jesus, Paul says that “all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes.” However, the translation here with the inserted “are” makes “Yes” the predicate of the promises. That is not the intent. Rather, what Paul is saying is that Christ is the incarnate answer to the promises of God. Thus, it should be stated as a separate clause. “For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea.” (ERV)

It is Christ who is the fulfillment of the promises. When we call on Him, those promises which were fulfilled in Him now belong to us. Going on it says “and in Him Amen.” Vincent's Word Studies notes that “In giving this answer in His person and life, Christ puts the emphatic confirmation upon God's promises.” God made promises and those promises are emphatically fulfilled in Jesus.

This is explained by Him when He spoke to the leaders of Israel in John 5 –

“And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. ³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.”

-John 5:37-39

He is the fulfillment of Scripture and therefore the promises of God which were made to the people of God (to Abraham for example, explaining that in his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed) are realized in Him. Paul gives this thought in Romans 15 –

“Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* to the fathers, ⁹ and that the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy...” Romans 15:8, 9

And in the book of Hebrews, we read this -

“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15

Every Messianic promise is realized in Jesus and in Him is the Amen. It means he is faithful and true. In Him is the confirmation and establishment of those promises. In Revelation 3:14 He is called the “Amen” to demonstrate this.

Text Verse: *“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Colossians 1:28*

Unfortunately, I don’t have the conversation from Sergio to quote exactly because he failed to keep it or even remember us having it. That’s two strikes on him. At least I remember us having it. Also, it was a bit disappointing that he didn’t just go to the commentary without asking me. Strike three.

Despite this, you get the point from the analysis. The promises of God have been made. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of them all. He is the Answer to questions about what God is doing. How is that relevant to today’s passage? Once again, it is all in the details.

He is the Response from God as to what is needed to be right with Him. Without Jesus Christ, there would only be one path leading to condemnation. But since the fall of man, another path has been hinted at. Jesus Christ is the One who has made that other avenue available.

Thank God for Jesus Christ who has made it so. The details are to be found in our passage today. Such great things are revealed in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Cities from Judah and Simeon (verses 9-12)

The first eight verses of the chapter detailed the lot for each of the sons of Levi concerning their tribal land grants. The first lot was to the priests, the Kohathites, who are the children of Aaron, son of Kohath. The second lot went to the rest of the sons of Kohath.

The third lot went to the sons of Gershon, son of Levi. That was followed by the fourth lot being designated to the sons of Merari, son of Levi. Those first eight verses ended with the words, “And the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands by lot to the Levites, as the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses.”

With that, the tribal land grants, according to those lots, will now be designated, beginning with the words...

⁹ So they gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon these cities which are designated by name,

The tribes of Judah and Simeon are the first to have their Levitical cities delineated. All of their Levitical cities are to be given to the priestly class, the sons of Aaron, son of Kohath. Judah means Praise. Simeon means He Who Hears.

For the sake of remembrance, the tribe of Simeon received its inheritance within the borders of Judah. Thus, with the exception of four cities to be designated in Benjamin, all of the priestly cities will be located around Jerusalem within the overall borders of Judah.

Those four cities in Benjamin are in the area bordering Jerusalem today. Thus, by God’s overarching hand of providence, they are all located around where the temple will eventually be erected hundreds of years later. These are cities...

¹⁰ which were for the children of Aaron,

It is singular: *vay’hi livne Aharon* – “And it was to sons Aaron.” Though seemingly awkward, the subject is the lot that is mentioned in the final clause of the verse. Thus, it is saying that “the lot was,” not “the cities were.” What seems awkward is actually a note defining the importance of how the lot is given.

By noting Aaron’s sons now, it is highlighting their importance within the tribe of Levi, being set apart as the priestly caste. Aaron means Very High. Once this division has been noted, only then does it name the family of the tribe...

¹⁰ (con't) **one of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi;**

Again, it is more specific, noting the chief of the families, the son, in the singular: *mi'mish'poth haq'hathi mi'bene Levi* – “from families the Kohathite from sons Levi.”

There is one family of Kohath that is then divided into sons, Aaron is the first son noted just as Kohath is the first son of Aaron. Depending on the root used for the name Kohath, it means either Obedience or Gathering/Assembly. Levi means Attached.

¹⁰ (con't) **for the lot was theirs first.**

ki lahem hayah ha'goral rishonah – “for to them was the lot, first.” As noted, the *goral*, or lot, is the subject of the verse, but it is only introduced now. Thus, the priestly class of Aaron is set apart, almost emphatically, by the structure of the sentence. With that, their cities are now to be named...

¹¹ **And they gave them Kirjath Arba (*Arba was* the father of Anak), which *is* Hebron,**

To be precise, it reads, “And gave to them Kirjath Arba, father the Anok, it Hebron.” The spelling of the name is different here than at any other time. Instead of *Anaq*, it reads *Anoq*. The addition of the sixth letter, vav, is what changes the spelling and pronunciation

ענוק

ענק

This is the first designated Levitical city. It is the area claimed by Caleb as his possession as promised by the Lord after his faithfulness noted in Numbers 13 & 14. The area was actually designated to him in Joshua 14.

Kirjath Arba means City of Four. Hebron means Alliance. Anak means Long Neck or Necklace. But that requires more explanation. *Anaq* signifies being fitted out with supplies, and thus furnished liberally, just as a necklace is made up of many pieces. This city is next said to be...

¹¹ (con't) **in the mountains of Judah, with the common-land surrounding it.**

Being a city, it is referred to in the feminine: *b'har Yehuda v'eth migrasheha s'vivotheha* – “in mount Judah and her common-lands and her surroundings.” As noted, this was the area given to Caleb. That point is now explicitly stated to remind Israel of this fact...

12 But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

Though only the Peshitta, the standard Bible of the Syriac tradition, translates the preposition this way, it literally says, “in his possession.” The whole verse more literally reads, “And field, the city, and her villages, gave to Caleb son Yephuneh, in his possession.”

The entire area, stated in the singular as “field,” along with all of the villages of that area, belonged to Caleb. The common land noted in the previous verse was the area surrounding the city and which extended out for two thousand cubits. This was reserved for the flocks and herds of the Levites within the city as noted in Numbers 35:5 concerning Levitical cities –

“And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.”

Remember that cities designated as Levitical cities had other people living in them. The city itself was specially set apart for the Levites, but this did not mean it was only for them. This is evidenced as Scripture continues to unfold. As for the names, Caleb means Dog. Yephuneh means He Will Be Beheld.

13 Thus to the children of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer),

The order is not as laid out in the Hebrew. The stress is on the fact that this is a city of refuge: “And to sons Aaron the priest gave city refuge the slayer – Hebron and her common-lands.” It is one of the six cities of refuge and the first of the three to be designated within the land of Canaan, west of the Jordan. Next...

13 (con’t) Libnah with its common-land,

More precisely: *v’eth livnah v’eth migrasheha* – “and Libnah and her common-lands.” Libnah means “Whiteness.” However, that comes from *lavan*, a verb meaning to make white or make bricks because bricks whiten when they are made.

14 Jattir with its common-land, Eshtemoa with its common-land,

Depending on the root, Jattir means Remainings or Remnant, Surplus, Preeminence, Abundance, Excellence, or something similar. Despite the variations, there is general agreement that the name is best defined as Preeminence.

Eshtemoa comes from *shama*, to hear. Thus, it means Hearing but in the sense of Obedience.

¹⁵ Holon with its common-land, Debir with its common-land,

Depending on the root, Holon means Strong Place or Sandy Place. Debir means Place of the Word.

¹⁶ Ain with its common-land, Juttah with its common-land, and Beth Shemesh with its common-land:

Ain means Eye or Fountain. Juttah means Extended, Leveraged, or It Will Be Stretched Out. Abarim explains the root, saying –

“The verb נטא (*nata*) means to leverage: to manipulate one’s environment beyond one’s natural powers, but at the price of range, accuracy, diversity, duration, and so on — a price that when unpaid drags the entire enterprise into a net-negative collapse. All technology, including information technology, is leverage, which is always to be wielded with great care, whilst always respecting its inevitable price.”

The word *mateh*, or tribe, is derived from this word. It indicates a staff that represents the tribe.

Beth Shemesh means House of the Sun. In total from Judah and Simeon, there are...

¹⁶ (con’t) nine cities from those two tribes;

These nine cities come from within the land of Judah, but Simeon is within the borders of Judah. As some of the cities came from within Simeon, it means that the nine cities are from both tribes. Of the number nine, Bullinger says –

“It is the last of the digits, and thus marks the end; and is significant of the conclusion of a matter. It is akin to the number six, six being the sum of its factors ($3 \times 3 = 9$, and $3 + 3 = 6$), and is thus significant of the end of man, and the summation of all man's works. Nine is, therefore, THE NUMBER OF FINALITY OR JUDGMENT.”

The number two is the number of division or difference. However, when there are two things, they will contrast but will also confirm a whole. For example, the two testaments of the Bible contrast, but they confirm the whole of the word of God. Next, more cities are noted...

*The whole world is at stake because of sin
Nothing will stop the judgment to come
Without Christ Jesus, we are all done in
Without Him, the future is bleak and glum*

*But because of the work that He has wrought
We can be free from condemnation
With His own blood He has bought
Precious souls from every nation*

*The cities have a story to tell us
They reveal the glory of what God has done
In the giving of our Lord, our Savior, Jesus
Sin is judged and the victory is won*

II. Cities from Benjamin (verses 17-19)

¹⁷ and from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its common-land, Geba with its common-land,

These are from the third designated tribal inheritance that extends from the northern border of Judah, that of Benjamin. Benjamin means Son of the Right Hand. Gibeon, or *Giv'on*, comes from *gavia*, meaning a cup or a bowl. When upside down, it looks like a hill. As such, it means Hill Town or Hilly.

Geba has the same essential meaning, Hill. Of these similar names, Abarim adds in a notable comment –

“There are no two ways about it: the names Geba, Gibeah and Gibeath mean Hill, but it’s clear that in the Hebrew experience of reality, hills didn't only occur in the landscape (collections of earth) but also in the human populations that peopled it.

“The ‘hill of Benjamin’ may have been an actual hill but it also represented the culture that formed within Benjamin. The ‘hill of Saul’ may also have been an actual hill but also referred to the national mood and atmosphere that he generated.

“To the Hebrews, a hill country resembled a humanity that consisted of separate and rivaling tribes, clans and families, while a plain resembled a humanity at peace.”

Of the next verse, a famous biblical figure resided there...

¹⁸ Anathoth with its common-land, and Almon with its common-land: four cities.

Anathoth was where the prophet Jeremiah, also of the priestly class, came from –

“The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who *were* in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, ²to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.”

-Jeremiah 1:1, 2

The root of Anathoth, *anah*, has one of four separate usages. Thus, it can mean Answer/Response, Occupation, Humbled or Afflicted, or Sing. Jones’ Dictionary says it means Answers to Prayers.

Almon comes from *alam*, to hide or conceal. Thus it means Hidden or Concealed. But it is not necessarily the type of hidden that means, “Hidden away as a secret.” Rather, it looks to something that is not noticed, purposefully or unintentionally, but which may be revealed later. An example of this is found in Leviticus 4:13 –

“Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally, and the thing is hidden [*alam*] from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *something against* any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which should not be done, and are guilty...” Leviticus 4:13

A purposeful example is found in the words of Psalm 10:1 –

“Why, LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you pay no attention [*alam*] during times of trouble?” Psalm 10:1 (NET Bible)

As such, it could very well signify Unnoticed. As for the number four, Bullinger says –

“It is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created; while six is the number of man in his opposition to and independence of God. It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number.” Bullinger

¹⁹ All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their common-lands.

The cities come from three separate tribes, but all are in close proximity to Jerusalem. Thus, the Lord designated the priests to be close to the city where His name would reside long before the move to that location was made. Everything was prepared in advance for the time when the kingship and the priesthood would both be established in Jerusalem from that time forward.

As for the number thirteen, Bullinger says that “every occurrence of the number thirteen, and likewise of every multiple of it, stamps that with which it stands in connection with rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.”

This is the state of the world without Christ. Israel is being used to reveal this. However, as we saw last week, Bullinger goes further concerning the number. He says –

“THE CONNECTION OF THE NUMBER THIRTEEN WITH SUBSTITUTION AND ATONEMENT
The Saviour, though without sin, was ‘made sin,’ or a sin-offering, for His people. He was ‘wounded for our transgressions,’ and bruised for their iniquities. He was, in fact, ‘NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS’ (Isa 53:12). Therefore this number is not only the all-pervading factor of SIN, but also of sin’s atonement. It is not only the number which brands the sinner as a rebel against God, but it is the number borne by the sinner's Substitute. His very names in the Old Testament, before the work of Atonement was entered on or accomplished, are all multiples of 13, just as His names, afterwards in the New Testament and when the work of Atonement was carried out, are all multiples of 8.”

These are the cities of the priestly class of the Levites, the sons of Aaron, and they have a story to tell...

*What works will suffice to please our God?
Who has the preeminence that it will take?*

*Who has accomplished enough that He would applaud?
And extend His hand out for a shake*

*Is there any who has heard and obeyed?
So that God will listen and favorably reply
Who has done enough for His wrath to be stayed?
Has anyone done enough to even squeak by?*

*The cities have a story to tell
About the marvelous thing that God has done
If we pay heed, things will go well
When we learn of the deeds of God's own Son*

III. Our Great High Priest

The previous passage in last week's sermon showed the overall picture of what Levi's inheritances point to. There were thirteen inheritances in Israel, showing the rebellion and apostasy of the world, but when Christ is included, it is brought to a state of perfection once again.

The verses today define the priestly role of Christ in that matter. The priests are included in three separate tribes: Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The number three defines what is "real, substantial, complete, and entire" (Bullinger).

This reveals the full scope of Christ's priestly duties for all people at all times. However, there are divisions to be seen within these three inheritances as well. The first is that of Judah (Praise) and Simeon (He Who Hears). As noted, these were for the sons of Aaron (Very High), who is referred to as being from the family of Kohath (Obedience) of the sons of Levi (Attached).

Christ is the Praise of God and He Who Hears, meaning being obedient to, God. He is the exalted (Very High) High Priest (Hebrews 4:14) who was Obedient, even to death while being Attached to God through the incarnation –

*"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross."*

-Philippians 2:8

With that defined, thus establishing the setting of the inheritance, it went on to naming the cities, identifying the first one in several ways over three verses –

“And they gave them Kirjath Arba (*Arba* was the father of Anak), which *is* Hebron, in the mountains of Judah, with the common-land surrounding it. ¹² But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

¹³ Thus to the children of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer).” Joshua 21:11-13

Kirjath Arba, City of Four, is first named. As has been seen, four “is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created ... It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number” according to Bullinger.

It refers to Christ’s work in the material creation to reclaim it from the power of Satan. With that, it then noted Arba as “father the Anok.”

Previous sermons explained that the word *anaq* signifies being fitted out with supplies, and thus furnished liberally, just as a necklace is made up of many pieces. For example, it is used figurately as a sign of pride as in Psalm 73:6 when referring to the wicked where it says, “Therefore pride serves as their necklace.”

With that understood, it was seen that this is the only time that the word is spelled with an additional letter, a *vav*, the sixth letter of the Aleph-Bet. Six is the number of man, especially fallen man. This then refers to Christ, the One who was furnished with everything necessary to redeem man through His priestly duties, and which is explained in the words of Hebrews 2 –

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” Hebrews 2:17, 18

Christ came in the appearance of sinful man, hence, the additional *vav*. Next, calling it Hebron, Alliance, looks to the relationship established between Christ and His people because of His work. Being in the mountains of Judah, Praise, signifies a gathering of a

large, centralized group of people who have been brought to God through Christ's priestly work because He is the Praise of God.

The note concerning Caleb is given as a historical reference to remind Israel concerning his inheritance, but it is also a typological reminder that he, despite being identified as a Gentile, is included in the inheritance of Judah, and thus the commonwealth of Israel –

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:11-13

With that explained, the identification of Hebron continued in verse 13 noting that it was given to Aaron (Very High) the priest as a city of refuge. When one is in alliance with Christ, He is the refuge for all who come to God through Him –

“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath,¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*.” Hebrews 6:17, 18

Libnah was next named. As stated, that comes from *lavan*, a verb meaning to make white or make bricks because bricks whiten when they are made. Following the use of this word, ever since the early Genesis account where the people made *lavan*, or bricks, to build the tower of Babel, it has consistently pictured works-based salvation.

In this case, because it is referring to a city of the Levites, and thus to Christ, it is a picture defining His works. We rightly say that our salvation is the gift of God, not of works. But that does not mean that salvation is not of works. It is; just not our works. It is Christ's work that saves, His works are then imputed to us who do not work. Thus it is a gift.

The next named city was Jattir, Preeminence. It defines the Person of Jesus Christ because of His work –

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and

invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” Colossians 1:15-18

Next Eshtemoa was named. Like the name Simeon, it comes from the word *shama* and is defined as Hearing, as in Obedience. It looks to the obedience of Christ as was noted earlier when Philippians 2:8 was cited.

After that was named Holon. It signifies Strong Place. Several verses could be used to explain this, but Romans 5:6 is sufficient –

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

-Romans 5:6

Likewise, 2 Corinthians 12:9 is just as beautiful to express this. Romans 5:6 defines the salvation obtained through the strength of Christ while 2 Corinthians 12:9 defines our capabilities in our state of salvation because of Christ –

“And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’” 2 Corinthians 12:9

These and other verses clearly explain the city named Holon.

Next was named Ain or Fountain. Jesus explained the meaning as He spoke to the woman at the well –

“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’” John 4:13, 14

Jesus is the Fountain by which our own fountains of everlasting life are derived.

After that, Juttah was named. That comes from *natah*, to leverage, and thus it means Leveraged. As noted, it is where the symbol of authority, the *mateh*, or staff is derived from. When Moses stretched out the staff (*mateh*) which was a picture of Christ Jesus,

he was leveraging the power of God. This should explain the symbolism. Christ is the manner in which God's power is leveraged for salvation.

Lastly, Beth Shemesh, House of the Sun, was noted from Judah and Simeon. That has been seen in several Joshua sermons as being typical of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness who shines forth as the Light of God described in Revelation 21:23 and which John speaks elsewhere of as the Light of the World.

With those complete, it then noted that there were nine cities from Judah and Simeon. Nine, being the number of finality or judgment, as applied to Christ in these cities is a clear reference to Him as the completion (9) of all things either for salvation or for condemnation (2). There is a contrast between the two, but they confirm the final state of all men.

From there, verse 17, Benjamin, or Son of the Right Hand, was named. Christ is the Son of the Right hand –

“So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.” Mark 16:19

The first two cities, Gibeon and Geba, are etymologically the same. The connection to Gabbatha has been made several times already in Joshua. Having two cities named one after another with this same etymological root is a Hebrew way of providing emphasis by repeating a word or thought.

It is a way of emphatically identifying Christ's Passion as the defining event that is pertinent to all humanity. Being typologically one out of two, it is as if there are separate rivaling tribes. There is the Hill for the Saved, and there is the Hill for the condemned.

From there, verse 18 first mentioned Anathoth, Answer. Jesus Christ is the Answer. As noted in the opening comments today, He is the Yes and the Amen. The priestly city of Anathoth is given as an advanced hint of this. He is the fulfillment of all Messianic expectations.

Finally, the last city was Almon, which I translated for clarity as Unnoticed. It looks to Christ as our High Priest where no sin goes unnoticed in atonement, but for those who have rejected Him, no sin goes without being noticed for condemnation.

The verse ended by noting they are “four cities.” It is again the number of creation, the world number, and the city number. The scope of Christ’s work is all-inclusive as is indicated in the names of these four cities from Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand.

Finally, verse 19 finished with the note that together, these comprise thirteen cities. It is the number of “rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.” That is the world in which we live. And yet, it is also the number of “SUBSTITUTION AND ATONEMENT. The Saviour, though without sin, was ‘made sin,’ or a sin-offering, for His people” Bullinger.

This is our High Priest. This is Jesus who has been meticulously described in the priestly Levitical cities of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

An interesting thought is that despite being divided between three tribes, and despite the two tribes, Judah and Simeon, being mentioned separately in verses 9 and 16, they are still counted together for their nine cities.

Thus, the division is 9 and 4 to equal 13. Therefore, there are two overall divisions. As such, the 9 (finality and judgment) contrast the 4 (the number of creation). Just as the cities (9) and the tribes (2) contrast. And yet, they also confirm the entire scope of Christ’s authority over all creation to finalize all things and bring all things to judgment.

The reason He can do this is because He is the One who has already received the judgment of the world upon Himself as He stood on the Pavement, Gabbatha, before the authority set over Him. The King of Israel, the perfect Lamb of God, and our Passover sacrifice was judged despite His perfection.

God has allowed His sacrifice to be vicariously applied to us as the only suitable atonement for our sins. As this is so, and because God must judge sin, He has appointed Jesus Christ to be the One to accomplish this. This is His role as our High Priest.

Those for whom He mediates no longer face a judgment for sin. For those who do not come to Him, there is only the expectation of judgment upon them for their sins. Let us be wise and discerning. The cities have been named and they had a story to tell. Pay heed and come to Jesus who alone can restore you to God through what He has done.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.” Hebrews 3:1*

Next Week: Joshua 21:20-26 *How many? Do the math, all rights?...* (The Cities of Kohath, the Levites) (47th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Cities of the Children of Aaron, the Priest

So they gave from the tribe of the children of Judah
And from the tribe of the children of Simeon also
These cities which are designated by name
Which were for the children of Aaron. To them, they did go

One of the families of the Kohathites, an initial burst
Who were of the children of Levi; for the lot was theirs first

And they gave them Kirjath Arba
(Arba was the father of Anak), a point we can't omit
Which is Hebron, in the mountains of Judah
With the common-land surrounding it

But the fields of the city and its villages (this is not a digression)
They gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession

Thus to the children of Aaron the priest they gave
Hebron with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer)
Libnah with its common-land
Jattir with its common-land, maybe they needed a brick layer

Eshtemoa with its common-land
Holon with its common-land a place pretty swell
Debir with its common-land
Ain with its common-land. With a fountain
----- there was no need to dig a well

Juttah with its common-land
And Beth Shemesh with its common-land also
Nine cities from those two tribes

To the sons of Aaron they did go

And from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its common-land
Geba with its common-land, and more
Anathoth with its common-land
And Almon with its common-land: cities four

All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests
Were thirteen cities with their common-lands
-----sweet places to hold feasts

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 21:20-26 (THE CITIES OF KOHATH, THE LEVITES)

Repetition is an important tool in remembering key points concerning various aspects of life. I repeat, repetition is an important tool in remembering key points concerning various aspects of life. Got it? 😊

God knows this is true, so His word is chock full of repetition. Once, Black Hat Jay called me on Friday as he always does and said something like, “We’re reading the prophets right now and they say the same thing that we’ve already read several times.”

First, hats off to Black Hat Jay for reading the Bible. Second, this means he wasn’t dozing while reading the other passages. Hats off to that as well. When you read 1 and 2 Kings, you’ll find passages that are very similar, and at times identical, in 1 and 2 Chronicles.

After that, you will read many of the same themes again in the prophets. But there is also repetition in the later books from the earlier books, such as the genealogies in Moses that are repeated in Chronicles. And then, the New Testament will repeat some of those things again.

The reason for this is obvious; it is to make logical connections that we have not made before. However, it is also important because we simply don’t pay attention to key points unless they are repeated.

For example, in the New Testament, we are clearly and unambiguously told that the law is fulfilled. We are told many times as well. And yet, for various reasons we may not pay heed to it. That will be discussed in more detail later.

Text Verse: *“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19*

Our text verse will be repeated later while making a point about the need for repetition in Scripture. But as an example to get us thinking about it, my mom once sent me a video by one of the big wigs at Ligonier Ministries who was being interviewed during a conference.

The person doing the interview asked this obviously well-versed theologian about the status of the law. He responded with something like, “The law is done. It is over. We are not under law but grace.”

Well, isn't that special? He got it right. The next question, I mean the very next thing that was asked by the interviewer was, “Are Christians required to tithe?”

The guy looked apoplectic. He started hemming and hawing. He breathed in heavily and exhaled accordingly. He got flush; he went pasty. He stammered and bumbled through his words. He grunted in apparent agony and then he carefully tried to expedit his thoughts as if he were Orator Orvie.

His guts groaned and his knees creaked under the stress of the tightened sinews. And, of course, through all of the convoluted words and phrases that emanated from his stammering mouth, he defended the notion that Christians are, in fact, required to tithe, thus negating the truth of his answer to the first question he was asked.

Why is repetition necessary? It is to, hopefully, convince us that doctrines are set and fixed, and that it is how the Lord expects us to see those things. The reason for these repetitious opening words is because there is a lot of repetition in today's passage from what has been seen in previous passages.

We are being shown a truth that repetition is an important tool in remembering key points concerning various aspects of life. This is especially so when it comes to theology and doctrine. We are told the same things again and again in the Bible to assure us that this is what God really means.

He says something, He says the same thing again in a different way, and then He says it again in yet another way. And sometimes, He even says the exact same thing several times. He does this explicitly, or in metaphor, simile, typology, or in various other ways as well.

Let us pay heed to what the Lord says, especially when He repeats Himself, because He wants us to be certain about His intentions when He does. This is a great lesson that is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Four, Four, Two, and Ten (verses 20-26)

²⁰ And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites, the rest of the children of Kohath,

The Hebrew uses a verb as a noun, *ha'notarim*. It more literally says, "And to families sons Kohath, the Levites, the remainings from sons Kohath." The meaning is derived from the previous verses.

The allotment for the tribe of Kohath was divided into two portions, the first half went to the sons of Aaron, meaning the priestly class. This was described in verses 9-19 that we looked at previously.

Here, those of the tribe of Kohath who are not priests are to receive their allotment. As they are non-priestly Levites, their work will not look to the Firstborn role of the priestly work of Christ, but to His other roles as the Firstborn, remembering that the Levites were taken in place of the firstborn of Israel –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹² ‘Now behold, I Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine, ¹³ because all the firstborn *are* Mine. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: I *am* the LORD.’” Numbers 3:11-13

The work of the priests’ duties reflects that of the firstborn in sacrifices and atonement whereas the other Levites reflect all of the other duties in bearing the weight and responsibility of the law. The duties do overlap to some extent, but for these allotments next to be named, it is the latter of the two that will be referred to.

As for the name Kohath, it means either Obedience or Gathering/Assembly. Of them it next says...

²⁰ (con’t) even they had the cities of their lot from the tribe of Ephraim.

Rather, it precisely reads, “And it was, cities their lot, from tribe Ephraim.” The cities of the first half, those of the priesthood, were found in Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, all very near the area of Jerusalem which will someday be the focal point of worship for Israel. The providence of God, centuries in advance of it happening, determined that it would be this way.

As Ephraim borders Benjamin to the north, it means that these allotted cities are not separated any great distance from their brothers, the priests. Of the cities of Ephraim, it says...

21 For they gave them Shechem with its common-land in the mountains of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the slayer),

The translation is out of the order of the text and misses some of the necessary nuances: “And gave to them city refuge the slayer, Shechem, and her common lands, in Mount Ephraim.”

The name Shechem is identical to *shekem*, shoulder. Thus, it literally means Shoulder. However, that comes from *shakam* signifying to incline, as in inclining the shoulder to a burden. Hence, it is normally translated as to rise or start early. Abarim defines Shechem as “[Having a Sense Of] Responsibility.”

Ephraim has a dual meaning of Twice Fruitful and Ashes. As has been seen in many sermons, a mountain (*har*) is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. Along with this is...

21 (con't) Gezer with its common-land,

v'eth gezer v'eth migrasheha – “And Gezer and her common-lands.” Gezer means Part or Portion.

22 Kibzaim with its common-land,

Again, it more precisely reads, “And Kibzaim and her common-land.” The name Kibzaim is found only here in Scripture. Because of this, it is believed to be the same as Jokmeam found in 1 Chronicles 6:68. The German scholar Gesenius notes that both names have a similar etymology and the name may have evolved over the years.

As for the name, Kibzaim comes from *qabats*, to gather or to collect. Being a plural, it therefore means Double Gathering or Double Heap...

22 (con't) and Beth Horon with its common-land: four cities;

More precisely: “and Beth Horon and her common-lands, cities four.” Beth Horon means House of the Hollow and also House of Freedom.

Four, according to Bullinger, “is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number.” Next, the list continues with designations in another tribe...

²³ and from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its common-land,

As before, it is more precise, “Eltekeh and her common-lands.” Dan means Judge. Eltekeh was seen in Joshua 19:44 and this will be its last appearance in Scripture. It is an interesting name. The first portion is from *el*, God (god).

The second half may be from a root, *tq'*, not used in the Bible, but which is found in Arabic. It means to fear or to take heed. Thus, it would mean God is Dread or God-fearing. However, it could also come from *qo*, a feminine word meaning to vomit. As such, it may mean God Vomits, God Vomits Her, etc. Along with it...

²³ (con't) Gibbethon with its common-land,

“Gibbethon and her common-lands.” Gibbethon is an intensive form of *givah*, a hill. Thus it means Mound, Height, or Lofty Place. But, as has been seen before, *givah* is connected in the New Testament to Gabbatha, the elevated knoll where Christ was judged prior to His crucifixion. That is followed by...

²⁴ Aijalon with its common-land,

“Aijalon and her common lands.” Aijalon comes from *ayyal* or deer. It means Place of the Deer. However, that comes from the same as *ayil*, or ram, which is derived from a word indicating strength. Thus, as seen in Joshua 10, Place of Strength is not out of line.

²⁴ (con't) and Gath Rimmon with its common-land: four cities;

“Gath Rimmon and her common-lands, cities four.” Gath Rimmon comes from *gath*, winepress, and *rimmon*, pomegranate. However, as has been previously seen, the pomegranate symbolizes harvest-ready fruit and so it can further mean Mature Mind or Harvest Ready. Thus, it is interpreted as Winepress of the Mature Mind or Winepress of the Harvest Ready.

Dan is directly west of Ephraim. Therefore, these Levitical cities are again closely joined with the others, keeping the family together in their allotments.

²⁵ and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with its common-land

“And from half-tribe Manasseh, Tanach and her common-lands.” Manasseh means both To Forget and From a Debt. Tanach is a KJV misspelling which simply followed the mistake of the Geneva Bible. This was then subsequently followed by the NKJV. It is the same name used five other times in Scripture and translated as Taanach.

The meaning of it is uncertain. Some think it is derived from an Egyptian or Arabic word. There is no corresponding root word found in Scripture. Jones’ Dictionary of Old Testament Proper Names notes an equivalent Arabic verb that means to wander and thus translates it as Wandering Through. Also, it next says...

²⁵ (con’t) and Gath Rimmon with its common-land: two cities.

“and Gath Rimmon and her common-lands, cities two.” Gath Rimmon is the same name just noted in the territory of Dan. John Lange takes this repetition as a copyist’s error by stating Gath Rimmon instead of Ibleam that was noted in Joshua 17:11 and which is identified later in 1 Chronicles 6:70 as Bileam, a Levitical city. The Greek translation would tend to support this but other translations such as the Vulgate, Peshitta, and Lamsa all say Gath Rimmon.

The number two is the number of division or difference. However, when there are two things, they will contrast but also confirm a whole, such as the two natures of Christ Jesus. They contrast, but they confirm His full nature, being both God and Man.

This half-tribe of Manasseh is directly north of Ephraim. Therefore, like the other allotments for Kohath, these Levitical cities are again closely joined with the others. Because of this, the entire family is tightly knit together in their allotments. With that, the allotment ends with...

²⁶ All the ten cities with their common-lands were for the rest of the families of the children of Kohath.

It more precisely reads, “All cities ten, with their common-lands, to families sons Kohath, the remainings.” This then defines the second allotment to the Kohathites, the non-priestly class.

Ten signifies the perfection of divine order. As Bullinger notes, “It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.” As

Kohath has been divided into two separate portions of allotted cities, those for priests and those for the Levites, it means there is a contrast between the two and yet they are two parts of a whole.

*Again and again, the truth is there for us to see
The work of Christ is not limited to just one group of people
His grace is available to all who will bow the knee
Together anyone can come worship 'neath the steeple*

*He is the God of the Jew, it is true
But He is also the God of Gentiles from every nation
There is nothing to exclude either me or you
Whether Japanese, British, German, or Haitian*

*God shows us this repeatedly
That He is the God of all mankind
When we call out to Him through Jesus, He sets us free
The chains are gone and we are no longer blind*

*Children of God! See what He has done for us!
Thank You, O God, for having sent Jesus*

II. Explaining the Typology

Of these allotments to Kohath, most of the names have been seen and explained in previous passages. A careful study, using the same meanings and typology as before, will reveal the meaning of what is being pictured.

As these allotments are to Levites, they will obviously detail aspects regarding Christ as the Firstborn in His work under the law. However, the content of the passage is mostly centered on the naming of the cities. And so, this will not only reflect the work of Christ, but how it then applies to His people.

In the naming of these tribal lands, Christ's work is typologically anticipated. In the naming of the cities, the effect of His work as it is realized in His people is anticipated. Together, you will see that these verses anticipate the gathering together of Jews and Gentiles into one body. In other words, the pattern runs consistently. There is the work of Christ and then there is how His work is realized in His people.

Mount Ephraim (Twice Fruitful/Ashes) looks to the gathering together of a group of people (the mount) based on the work of Christ who is Twice Fruitful through His work, bringing in Jew and Gentile. But the work itself is represented by the Ashes, signifying His afflictions to bring this about.

Shechem, [Having a Sense of] Responsibility, looks to the believer who understands his violation of the law and has accepted Christ's fulfillment of it. Being a city of refuge, it indicates the fully sufficient work of Christ both for salvation and for eternal security in that salvation.

Gezer (Portion) signifies the inheritance that has been received because of Christ's work. That is further explained in the next city, Kibzaim (Double Gathering) – the effects of Christ's work as Paul explains in Romans 9:24, saying, "even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

It is, therefore, another confirmation of what Ephraim (Twice Fruitful) signifies. Ephraim reveals the matter from the perspective of Christ accomplishing it while Kibzaim reveals it from the perspective of how it is realized in those He saves. He is Twice Fruitful; they are a double gathering.

Beth Horon explains the state of this gathering, dwelling in the House of Freedom, meaning from the guilt of imputed sin.

As there are four allotted cities (the world/city number) in Ephraim, it signifies that its effects encompass the entire world. No ethnicity or group is left out. This is seen, for example in the words of Matthew 28 –

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.' Amen." Matthew 28:18-20

The next tribe for allotments is Dan. It refers to Christ who is the Judge of all people. The named cities show how that is then realized in those who are His people.

Eltekeh, God-fearing, speaks for itself. Having come to Christ, those who are His have demonstrated that this is our position in Him.

This is more precisely reflected in the next name, Gibbethon, or Mound. It looks to the spot where Christ was judged (Gabbatha), and in turn, the place where our sin was judged by God in Him. It is this that brought us to the God-fearing state.

That is next followed by Aijalon (Place of Strength). It is where the believer looks to, meaning to the full, final, finished, and forever work of Christ Jesus as our place of strength for eternal salvation.

Gath Rimmon (Winepress of the Mature Mind) follows logically next. It refers to the effects of Christ's work in us. Everything that is contrary to holiness and godliness will be pressed out of us as we grow in Christ. Obviously, this is something that is different in each person.

But to God, for those in Christ, we are already positionally in this state, even if not yet actualized. However, the great day ahead will be when it is fully realized in us. Until then, we are to press on in Christ –

“Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.” 1 Corinthians 14:20

In Dan, there were also four allotted cities. This conveys the same meaning as in Ephraim. The effects of Christ cover all people groups in the world; none are excluded from His work.

Finally came the half-tribe of Manasseh. The dual meaning of He Shall Forget/From a Debt, signifies that Christ shall forget the past deeds of the person who has come to Him because He has paid their sin debt.

Due to the nature of the name Taanach, only speculation can be made. But if Jones' definition, Wandering Through, is correct, it is a sufficient description of believers as they await glorification. How many times do believers use this, or a similar phrase, to speak of their lives in Christ?

Gath Rimmon carries the same signification as just named in the allotments in Dan.

The two cities confirm the scope of Christ's work. It contrasts, for Jews and for Gentiles, and yet it confirms the whole body of believers, thus supporting the two mentions of four cities each.

Though it is only a few verses, they form a marvelous rendering of what God has done for us in and through the Person of Jesus Christ. And more, the pattern is consistent with all that has been seen so far. Time and again, there is seen the work of Christ and then there is seen the effects of that work for His people.

Understanding this, the final note of there being ten cities confirms this as well. As a whole, ten total cities reveal the perfection of divine order being worked out through Jesus Christ. Nothing is wanting. The number and order are perfect. The whole cycle is complete.

With that noted, a look at the totality of the Kohathite allotments can be considered. The two divisions look to the work of the Firstborn, that of His priestly work of sacrifice and atonement as well as that of the other Levitical work of Christ, bearing the responsibility of the law. As a whole, these tribal allotments explain the work of Christ, and the cities speak of how that is realized in His people.

Though these verses repeat a lot of info, they are also structured in a way that provides new information while also confirming the same thought that has been presented in numerous ways already.

The great thing about this approach is that the more we see such repetition in typology, we can be assured that the typology is correct because the pictures keep matching, even if they have been presented with different aspects, such as borders, cities, tribes, etc., or be it peculiar stories about various travels, certain objects (such as the serpent on the pole), and so on.

When the typology results in the same thing being expressed again and again, we can conclude that God must be repeating this so that there is no mistake in our theology.

To understand this, we can look at what is open and explicit in Scripture and see how absolutely necessary it is to repeat the same thought again and again. For example, the fulfillment and ending of the law by Christ is mentioned so many times in the New Testament that there should be no doubt among Christians that it is true. A short, but not all-inclusive list will show us this –

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” Matthew 5:17

“So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” John 19:30

“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Romans 3:31

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” Romans 6:14

“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.” Romans 7:4

“But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.” Romans 7:6

“For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”
-Romans 10:4

“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.” Romans 2:16

“For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.” Galatians 2:19

“I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.” Galatians 2:21

“This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” Galatians 3:2

“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’” Galatians 3:11

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’).” Galatians 3:13

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” Galatians 5:18

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.” Ephesians 2:14-16

“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”
-Colossians 2:13, 14

“For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, ¹⁹ for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.” Hebrews 7:18, 19

“In that He says, ‘A new *covenant*,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:13

“Previously saying, ‘Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and *offerings* for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure *in them*’ (which are offered according to the law), ⁹ then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second.” Hebrews 10:8, 9

That is only twenty examples of the law being completed and ended. It took a few minutes to compile and a couple of minutes to read. And yet, it is only a very brief representation of what the New Testament says about this issue.

If one were to take all of the examples, explanations, metaphors, and subtle hints that are made concerning the matter, we would be here for a long time. It is a point of

doctrine that is so clearly and precisely stated that surely nobody could get it wrong, could they?

Well, no. Such is sadly not the case. In fact, to one degree or another, and speaking in the broadest sense, almost nobody gets it right. Sometimes it is purposeful, like Stammering Stanley that was mentioned in our opening comments concerning tithing. He could not give up on the law when it came to money.

Sometimes it is purposeful because of pride. That is the type Paul warns the most vehemently against. They are the Judaizers of the world, boasting in flesh, and thus rejecting the grace of God in Christ. To them, the law is a means to an end. Christ, even if He is brought into the picture, is really only an object to be placed on a shelf, out of the way of the one whose works are to bring attention to prideful self.

There are those who say they get grace, but who still personally cling to one or two or ten points of law, thinking, "Surely I need to do this or not do this." Grace is that hard to understand, and it is reflected in the teaching of innumerable people who claim that we must do something from the law in order to please God. Eventually, you can see where grace really is not their stand at all.

Although the passage today wasn't really focused on the law versus grace, that doctrine is a marvelous point to show how hard it is for us to get what God is telling us. It is seen moments after the fall in Genesis 3, again and again throughout the books of Moses, dozens of times so far in Joshua, and the verses just cited show us that it is a key point in the New Testament as well.

As for the typology of this passage, that of the sufficiency of Christ to save and the broadness of its effects upon Jews and Gentiles, that escapes many people as well. There are Jews who believe that only Jews will be saved. There are those who teach that Jews and Gentiles are saved in different ways. There are those who teach that various groups of Gentiles are outside of God's mercy. And so on.

This passage is clear, just as the many already studied are and as many will be as the Old Testament continues to unfold. This continues as the New Testament is properly studied. So pay attention to the repetition. It is there for a reason. And if you ever come across typology explained by someone that doesn't appear to match everything else you have learned, you can bet that he has misinterpreted what is being conveyed.

Pay attention to the word, pay attention to how people evaluate the word, and pay heed to stay on the straight path concerning key points of doctrine that are clearly and explicitly stated in Scripture. These things are important. So pay attention.

Closing Verse: *“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” 1 Timothy 4:16*

Next Week: Joshua 21:27-33 *What will we find out about the typology we are being shown? (The Cities of Gershon) (48th Joshua Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Cities of Kohath, the Levites

And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites
The rest of the children of Kohath it would seem
Even they had the cities of their lot
From the tribe of Ephraim

For they gave them Shechem with its common-land
In the mountains of Ephraim (a city of refuge for the slayer)
Gezer with its common-land
Did they ever produce a famous music player?

Kibzaim with its common-land and one more
Beth Horon with its common-land: cities four

And from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its common-land
Gibbethon with its common-land, pretty swell
Aijalon with its common-land
And Gath Rimmon with its common-land: four cities as well

And from the half-tribe of Manasseh
These they did accrue
Tanach with its common-land
And Gath Rimmon with its common-land: cities two

All the ten cities with their common-lands according to the math
Were for the rest of the families of the children of Kohath

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 21:27-33 (THE CITIES OF GERSHON)

Anytime someone disagrees with a Jewish person on social media, it is not uncommon to immediately hear back, “You are just an anti-Semite.” This is generally the default position. But this also goes both ways. On the day before typing this sermon, a friend sent me an article published in the Israel National News entitled The Three Pronged War Taking Place in Israel.

Although a bit too long to read the whole article, a few pertinent points should be highlighted. It is concerning the Erev Rav, the mixed multitude that came out with Israel as recorded in Exodus 12:38 –

“Moshe [Moses] endured a class-action lawsuit after leaving Egypt which prompted Yitro [Jethro] to advise him to set up a multi-tiered court system. Who brought this suit? The Erev Rav had a claim, says the Midrash. They wanted the money back that was taken from them in Egypt. But weren't they wholehearted converts that would be overjoyed to give it to those Jews who endured the slavery? No. ... G-d told Moshe not to take the Erev Rav out of Egypt, but Moshe chose to take them. They of course were responsible for the Golden Calf and complaining in the desert. Much suffering befell the Jewish people because of the Erev Rav. They are reincarnations of previous generations, originally stemming from a few children of Adam that were begot not with Eve.”

This is just a small portion of the dribble that was penned in the article. It would be laughable if it wasn't so sad to read.

Text Verse: *“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.” 1 Timothy 1:3, 4*

In these verses from Paul, he refers to “endless genealogies.” The Bible, especially Genesis and Chronicles, is full of genealogies. They are scattered throughout other books as well.

Such genealogies are inevitably twisted and spiritually manipulated to show a Jewish line that was superior to all others. Being a rabbi himself, Paul knew that this was the intent of constantly referring to these genealogies.

By allowing the Judaizers to teach these things, it would effectually end any idea of a church of both Jews and Gentiles who were unified as one. Instead, two distinct classes – one supposedly superior over the other – would develop and flourish.

All things Jewish would be considered as the ideal. All things Gentile would be considered as base and contemptible. The purpose of Scripture was never to highlight and exalt Israel, but that they would be a people used to highlight and exalt the Lord.

Everything about them was intended to lead us to an understanding of who God is and of what He would do in the world, not only for Israel, but for all people. That is once again an underlying theme that will be seen in our passage today.

God is not working to highlight the Jews. It is not His intent to exalt the Law of Moses, Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, or Baptists, even if that is what is often the perception of some people. God's intent in giving us Scripture is to reveal Jesus Christ. All else is secondary to that.

Until people grasp this, their faith will always be about self. When Christ is placed in the preeminent position, self just doesn't matter. God has a plan for us and that is great. But He doesn't need to include us. His plan graciously does include us when we acknowledge His Son.

This is what we are to be focusing on. Let us not get distracted from the main point. Jesus. This truth is to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Thirteen Cities (verses 27-33)

²⁷ Also to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites,

v'livne ger'shon mi'mishp'hot ha'levim – “And to sons Gershon from families the Levites.” Gershon was the first son born to Levi. Because the priestly class arose out of Kohath, the second son, they were listed first. Only now are the cities of Gershon to be named.

Gershon comes from *garash*, to drive out or cast out. Thus, his name means Expelled One or Exiled One. The cities to be allocated to him are next named...

²⁷ (con't) **from the *other* half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* Golan in Bashan with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer),**

The order in the Hebrew is reversed, placing the stress on the fact that it is a city of refuge – “from half-tribe Manasseh city refuge, the slayer, Golan in the Bashan, and her common-lands.”

Manasseh means He Shall Forget/From a Debt.

Golan comes from *golah*, meaning Exile. The NET Bible also defines it as “Their Captivity: Their Rejoicing.” The Bashan means something like The Place of Fertile Soil. With that, it next says...

²⁷ (con't) **and Be Eshterah with its common-land:**

The name comes from two words *beith*, House, and Ashtoreth. Thus, it means House of Ashtoreth. Ashtoreth, or the plural Ashtaroth, refers to a female fertility goddess that was worshipped throughout the Middle East. However, the word *ashtoroth* is also used four times in Deuteronomy in reference to flocking animals.

The word is a complicated study, but the root words all point to a type of unity or cohesiveness. As such, Abarim defines it as Unity of Instructions or One Law. Therefore, this would be the House of One Law (House of Unity of Instructions).

²⁷ (con't) **two cities;**

These two cities were east of the Jordan. The number two is the number of division or difference. However, when there are two things, they will contrast but also confirm a whole, such as the two main divisions of the Genesis creation, the heavens and the earth. They contrast and yet they confirm the totality of creation.

The cities for Gershon next named are those located west of the Jordan in the land of Canaan...

²⁸ **and from the tribe of Issachar,**

Issachar directly borders the Jordan. It is north of the half-tribe of Manasseh that resides in Canaan and it is bordered by Naphtali on the north and Zebulun to its west. Issachar means He Is Wages. Their cities in Canaan are next named...

28 (con't) Kishion with its common-land,

Qish'yon comes from a primitive root signifying to be dense. Thus it means hard, tough, stubborn, severe, etc. Therefore, it signifies Hardness, Hard Place, or Very Hard.

28 (con't) Daberath with its common-land,

The name Daberath is from *davar*, word, or to speak. The "t" at the end may indicate a simple perfect, second person singular – You Spoke or You Have Spoken. It is the same location named in Joshua 19:12 where it was prefixed by an article, The Daberath. That is not included now.

29 Jarmuth with its common-land,

Jarmuth means Elevation. This is believed to be the same as Remeth from Joshua 19:21 and what is later called Ramoth in 1 Chronicles 6:73. Each of the names is close in meaning.

29 (con't) and En Gannim with its common-land:

En Gannim comes from *ayin* – either a fountain or an eye, and the plural of garden. Hence, it means Fountain of Gardens. The *gan*, or garden, comes from a root signifying being covered, surrounded, and defended.

29 (con't) four cities;

As for the number four, Bullinger says –

“It is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created; while six is the number of man in his opposition to and independence of God. It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number.” Bullinger

30 and from the tribe of Asher,

Asher is the northwesternmost land allotment, bordering the Mediterranean Sea on the west, Lebanon on the north, Naphtali on the east, and Zebulun and the half-tribe of Manasseh towards the southeast and south.

Despite the seeming division at this time, these cities are somewhat closely grouped in overall geography and according to nearness by tribal allotment. This closer grouping will be more readily realized in verse 31 which will name the cities in Naphtali. Asher means Happy or Blessed.

30 (con't) Mishal with its common-land,

Mishal is from *shaal*, to ask or inquire. Strong's defines it as Request.

30 (con't) Abdon with its common-land,

The name Abdon comes from *abad*, to work or serve. The root is then extended with the Hebrew letters *vav* and *nun* to bring about a personification or localization of that root. Thus, it most likely means Place of Work or Working One. Some simply translate it as Servile or Hard Slavery.

This is believed to be the same city as Ebron named in Joshua 19:28.

31 Helkath with its common-land,

Khelqath comes from the verb *khalaq*, to divide or share, or from the noun *khelqah*, a parcel or portion. Hence, it is variously translated as Division, Portion, Field, or Possession. Strong's, however, takes a figurative meaning of the word *khelqah* and calls it Smoothness because a portion of arable ground is flat.

Hence, this figurative meaning is applied to the back of Jacob's neck as is described in Genesis 27 –

“Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part [*khelaqah*] of his neck. ¹⁷Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.” Genesis 27:15-17

Using this figurative sense, the word is also used to describe the smooth tongue. Thus, a figurative meaning could be Flattery.

31 (con't) and Rehob with its common-land:

Rekhov means Wide Space or Open Place.

31 (con't) four cities;

The meaning of the number four was just given in verse 29. In summary, it is the world number, especially the “city” number.

32 and from the tribe of Naphtali,

The tribe of Naphtali is between the Jordan River and Asher. Lebanon is to its north and it is bordered on the south by Issachar and Zebulun. Hence, there is a rather close grouping of the Levitical cities according to how the tribes are laid out.

The name Naphtali means My Twistings or My Wrestlings, but it has a secondary meaning of Crafty. Its Levitical cities are...

32 (con't) Kedesh in Galilee with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer),

As in verse 27, the emphasis is on the fact that this is a city of refuge. That is stated first, and only then is the name of the city given: “city refuge the slayer, Kedesh in the Galilee with her common-lands.”

Qedesh means Holy, Sacred Place, or Sanctuary.

Ha'Galil, or The Galilee, signifies a circular district. It is identical to *galil*, to pivot or turn. That, in turn, comes from *galal*, to roll away. Thus, like Gilgal, it is The Liberty.

32 (con't) Hammoth Dor with its common-land,

The name Khamoth Dor is not mentioned elsewhere. The first half of it comes from *khamah*, a noun signifying heat or sun. The second half is an unusual spelling of the word Dor. That comes from a word signifying to heap, cluster, or pile up. Thus, it is a concentration of activities or things.

Abarim defines it as Cluster of Hotnesses or Place Near the Heat.

32 (con't) and Kartan with its common-land:

Qartan is also only found here. The root signifies a town. That, in turn comes from a root meaning to be near, meet, encounter, or befall. The final *n* may be a remnant of the *vav-nun* couple that localizes the root, saying “place of.” Thus, it means Town or Place of Closeness.

³² (con’t) **three cities.**

Bullinger says, three “stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire.”

³³ **All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their common-lands.**

The name is singular and, curiously, the second use of the word city is also in the singular: *kal are ha’gershoni l’mishp’hotam sh’losh esreh ir u-mig’r’shehen* – “all cities the Gershonite to their families: three ten, city, and their common-lands.”

As for the number thirteen, Bullinger says that “every occurrence of the number thirteen, and likewise of every multiple of it, stamps that with which it stands in connection with rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.”

This is the state of the world without Christ. These cities are being used to reveal this. However, as we have seen elsewhere, Bullinger goes further concerning the number. He says –

“THE CONNECTION OF THE NUMBER THIRTEEN WITH SUBSTITUTION AND ATONEMENT
The Saviour, though without sin, was ‘made sin,’ or a sin-offering, for His people. He was ‘wounded for our transgressions,’ and bruised for their iniquities. He was, in fact, ‘NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS’ (Isa 53:12). Therefore this number is not only the all-pervading factor of SIN, but also of sin’s atonement. It is not only the number which brands the sinner as a rebel against God, but it is the number borne by the sinner's Substitute. His very names in the Old Testament, before the work of Atonement was entered on or accomplished, are all multiples of 13, just as His names, afterwards in the New Testament and when the work of Atonement was carried out, are all multiples of 8.”

These are the cities of Gershon and they are filled with wonderful hints of Jesus.

*There is a story being told
In the names and places set before us
It was we who to sin were sold
But while still sinners, God sent Jesus*

*He did the work to restore us and make us whole
Through His efforts we can now have life
By faith alone we are added to heaven's scroll
And through Him is ended the strife*

*The names tell the story of our Lord
And how what He has done is now realized in us
Wonderful treasure to be explored
That tells us of the many glories of Jesus*

II. Explaining the Typology

Of the allotments to Gershon, many of the names have been seen and explained in previous passages. A careful study, using the same meanings and typology as previously seen, will reveal what is being pictured.

As with the Levites of Kohath, these allotments of Gershon will detail aspects regarding Christ as the Firstborn in His work under the law. However, the content of the passage is mostly centered on the naming of the cities. And so, this will not only reflect the work of Christ, but how it then applies to His people.

In the naming of these tribal lands, Christ's work is typologically anticipated. In the naming of the cities, the effect of His work as it is realized in His people is anticipated. As with Kohath, these verses anticipate the gathering together of Jews and Gentiles into one body.

The passage began by mentioning the sons of Gershon or Exiled One. As noted, that comes from *garash*, to drive out or cast out. That was first used in Genesis 3 –

“So He drove out [garash] the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” Genesis 3:24

The name means Expelled One or Exiled One. It looks to man having been expelled from God's presence. The tribal allotment will reveal what Christ has done to rectify that and the cities will reflect the state of those who are restored through Him.

The first tribal allotment where Gershon is to dwell is in the half-tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh means He Shall Forget/From a Debt. Christ shall forget the past deeds of the person who has come to Him, having paid their sin debt.

The first city, Golan, is a city of refuge. The name comes from *golah* and means Exile. The NET Bible also defines it as Their Captivity: Their Rejoicing. I'm not sure how they came up with that, but it sure fits.

The person who flees into exile is the freest person of all if he is captive in Christ. As Paul says, "...bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). In Christ as our Refuge is the true place of rejoicing.

As for Golan, that was then described as being in the Bashan. It means something like The Place of Fertile Soil. As with the other times it was seen, the location speaks of the fertile soil of the word of God. As Paul says, "So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The next location was Be Eshterah, House of Unity of Instructions. A house is a place of dwelling. The unity of instructions for believers in Christ means that the instructions apply to all equally. Unlike the time of the law which applied only to Israel, the body of instruction for believers applies to the Jews who came out of the law and the Gentiles who were never under the law.

This tribal inheritance was then said to be "two cities." There being two confirms the scope of Christ's work. It contrasts, for Jews and for Gentiles, and yet it confirms the whole body of believers.

The next tribal allotment was for the tribe of Issachar or He Is Wages. It speaks of Christ and His work becoming the wages for our sin. Of this tribal allotment, the four cities fit together to form a picture of the process of coming to Christ.

The first is Qish'yon signifying Hardness, Hard Place, or Very Hard, coming from *qashah*, hard in both a literal and figurative sense. In this case, it would signify the grievous state of those before they come to Christ. This sense of the word is found, for example, in 1 Kings –

“Thy father made our yoke grievous [*qashah*]: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.” 1 Kings 12:4

The yoke of sin is a grievous burden which is only magnified by the law. However, in Christ, there is relief. That begins with the naming of the next city, Daberath, You Spoke or You Have Spoken. Whether this is referring to the word of God or our response to it, the outcome is the same.

If the word of God which He has spoken –

“In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13

That of course, is based on the source of the word, which is God, as just stated a moment ago –

“So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17

If our response to it –

“But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:8-10

That leads to the next city, Jarmuth, Elevation. That would correspond with many comparable thoughts in the New Testament, but simply enough –

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:4-6

In that state, the fourth city’s name applies, En Gannim. Fountain of Gardens. A fountain is that which wells up on its own freely offering of itself. The garden is a place of innocence, security, conscience, happiness, salvation, and purity.

The Fountain of Gardens speaks of the state of the believer perpetually receiving the waters of life because he has been deemed innocent, secure, aware, happy, saved, and purified.

Of the allotments within Issachar, it noted that they comprised four cities. Again, as cited earlier concerning the number –

“It is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created; while six is the number of man in his opposition to and independence of God. It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number.” Bullinger

It expands on the meaning of the two cities of the previous tribe being of Jews and Gentiles. Not only are any who come to Him included, but the effect of Christ’s work covers the whole of creation –

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:18-23

The third tribal allotment, Asher, meaning Happy or Blessed, coming from *ashar*, looks to the work of Christ. A good example of this is reflected in the 72nd Psalm which refers to the work of Christ –

“For He will deliver the needy when he cries,
The poor also, and *him* who has no helper.
¹³ He will spare the poor and needy,
And will save the souls of the needy.
¹⁴ He will redeem their life from oppression and violence;
And precious shall be their blood in His sight.

...

¹⁷ His name shall endure forever;
His name shall continue as long as the sun.
And *men* shall be blessed in Him;
All nations shall call Him blessed [*ashar*].” Psalm 72:12, 13, 14 & 17

The cities located in Asher are then named. They follow the same pattern as the previous four in Issachar. They begin with Mishal, which is from *shaal*, to ask or inquire, and which Strong’s defines as Request. The request or petition is made based on the work of Christ. But that is its own sort of work, not for merit, but for understanding, reflected in the next city, Abdon.

It comes from *abad*, to work or serve. As noted, the root is then extended with the Hebrew letters *vav* and *nun* to bring about a personification or localization of the name: Place of Work or Working One –

“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.’” John 6:29

Our Place of Work is Jesus, the Working One. It doesn’t really matter which thought is behind the name, the result is the same. Albert Barnes expresses the meaning of this verse from John quite well –

“This is the thing that will be acceptable to God, or which you are to do in order to be saved. Jesus did not tell them they had nothing to do, or that they were to sit down and wait, but that there was a work to perform, and that was a duty that was imperative. It was to believe on the Messiah. This is the work which sinners are to do; and doing this they will be saved, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, Romans 10:4.” Barnes

People get so caught up in semantics concerning “works” that they miss the point of faith, which is its own type of work. When Paul says we are saved not by works, he is referring to the Law of Moses or good deeds that call out for merit. Belief is a type of work, but it is not one that calls for merit before God.

In trusting in the work of Christ, the next city’s meaning is realized, Khelqath, coming from the verb, *khalaq*, to divide or share, or from the noun *khelqah*, a parcel or portion. It means Division, Portion, or Possession.

In believing in Jesus, whom God sent, He “has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light” (Colossians 1:12). That is then explained and expanded on by the next city, Rehob which means Wide Space or Open Place.

For believers, there is a narrow path to the Wide Spaces of heaven.

This tribal grant was, like the previous one, said to be comprised of “four cities.” The same meaning is ascribed here as to that of Issachar. Being stated one after the other is a Hebraic way of forming an emphasis. It would explain why the same pattern was followed in the effects seen when naming the cities, and it also emphasizes the totality of the effects of the work of Christ concerning creation.

It is interesting that the naming of the tribes follows the same pattern as in Joshua 19: Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali. One would think that the naming now would go from east to west, but Asher is stated before Naphtali, thus putting the two tribes with four cities each next to each other to form this emphasis.

The last tribe for Gershon’s allotments, Naphtali, or My Wrestlings, looks to the works of Christ as well, He being the One who struggled through His works to bring about our reconciliation with God.

Naphtali’s cities are named, the first being a city of refuge, Qedesh, Holy or Sacred Place, which is in ha’Galil or the Galilee. Kedesh speaks of those made Holy (*qadash*) in Liberty (*galil* from *galal*, the same thought expressed in the name Gilgal), meaning freedom from the law. This speaks of the state of believers in Christ, their Refuge.

The next city is Khamoth Dor. As was explained, the first half comes from *khamah*, a noun signifying heat or sun. The second half is an unusual spelling of the word Dor. That comes from a word signifying to heap, cluster, or pile up. Thus, it is a concentration of activities or things.

The meaning is Cluster of Hotnesses or Place Near the Heat. I confess, to not seeing an obvious parallel to anything with this. The closest explanation possible could be our position in Christ which constantly purifies us from the judgment of sin. If so, that would logically lead to the next city.

Kartan comes from a root *qarah*, signifying to near, meet, befall, etc. Hence, Place of Closeness. It would signify those brought near through faith in Christ.

The final note of the tribal land said, “three cities.” That, again, “stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire.” This would explain the state of those in Christ. Without Him, everything under the sun is vanity. But in Him, there is the realization of a final and complete purpose for man.

With that, we already defined what the cumulative number of cities, thirteen, defines. It is that which is related to “rebellion, apostasy, defection, corruption, disintegration, revolution, or some kindred idea.”

In themselves, this would be the state of these cities. However, because these are Levitical cities, it is also the number of substitution and atonement. As such, they anticipate the work of Christ and its effect on His people.

As for the completely inexplicable way the verses ended with the reference to “thirteen city,” it is hard to even speculate on the reason. And yet, it would be disappointing to not do so.

Not one translation follows the Hebrew and not one commentary mentions it. One reason for the singular could be a scribal error. That is my least favorite reason for any such thing. It is too obvious to not catch on the first read through.

And so, my speculation would be that it is a way for the Bible to acknowledge all the cities as a singular whole to ensure that the atonement of Christ is still hinted at.

This wasn't needed with the thirteen priestly cities previously mentioned because the priests anticipate Christ, the true High Priest. Their work includes that of atonement. Therefore, the connection would be obvious. But because these Levites have thirteen cities, one might conclude that there was only disorder, corruption, etc.

By identifying them all as a single, even while identifying them in the same verse in the plural, the Bible may be telling us that Christ is still in the details and atonement is being pictured through His substitutionary work. That is total speculation. Maybe someone will come to a more complete explanation than that.

With this speculation on the final verse, it feels as if I have not been complete in presenting to you this passage. But there is enough of what is completely sure that I hope you will accept the guesswork with a good spirit and not stone me. 😊

The consistency of all of the allotments so far has been trustworthy. Christ seen in the main tribal allotments and then the effects of His work in the named cities. That alone shows a wisdom that is deeper than a simple historical record of the cities designated for the Levites.

God is telling us a story through all of these names and locations. It is the story of what He would do in the coming of His Son. With that event behind us today, we can look back and feel a greater certainty in our walk with the Lord because of it.

Maybe we will never need such a boost to our faith, but maybe we will. Life comes at us quickly and often with very difficult twists and trials. In such times, without a good grounding in the word, our faith can falter. How much more secure will we be when we not only know the surface story, but also the underlying story that He has tucked into this marvelous word!

Joshua is a true and literal historical record of events, people, and places of the past. But it is also an expression of God's intent for the world in the giving of His Son. What a treasure to see it unfold week after week. Soon enough, in just a few chapters, we will be done with it. But we can carry with us the knowledge of these things as we continue on through this wonderful word.

Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, concentrate on Him and His goodness, and keep this in your heart at all times. This is the lesson we find when we see Him in all of the details of Scripture. God is essentially saying, "Be attentive to My Son. He is your life. The very purpose of your existence is to glorify Me by being attentive to Him."

Closing Verse: *"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him."* John 5:22, 23

Next Week: Joshua 21:34-45 *Pretty swell stuff we will see...* (The Cities of Merari) (49th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Cities of Gershon

Also to the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites
From the other half-tribe of Manasseh so they did accrue
They gave Golan in Bashan with its common-land
----- (a city of refuge for the slayer)
And Be Eshterah with its common-land: cities two

And from the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its common-land
Daberath with its common-land, and more
Jarmuth with its common-land
And En Gannim with its common-land: cities four

And from the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its common-land
Abdon with its common-land, quite the score
Helkath with its common-land
And Rehob with its common-land: again, cities four

And from the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee
----- with its common-land
(a city of refuge for the slayer it was to be)
Hammoth Dor with its common-land
And Kartan with its common-land: cities three

All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families
----- as any scholar understands
Were thirteen cities with their common-lands

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 21:34-45 (THE CITIES OF MERARI)

One of my frequent recommendations to people, usually in our Thursday Bible studies, is to get a Bible with decent footnotes. I don't mean a study Bible with brief little comments at the bottom. Those are generally worthless.

Instead, footnotes will often give you the meat of what is going on in a translation. Of our verses today, the NKJV provides a footnote for Joshua 21:36 –

Joshua 21:36 So with LXX, Vg. (cf. 1 Chr. 6:78, 79); MT, Bg., Tg. omit vv. 36, 37

The meaning is that the LXX (the Greek Septuagint) and the Vg (Latin Vulgate) are as they have translated. However, the MT (Masoretic Text), the Bg (be'ur Gra), and the Tg (Targums) omit verses 36, 37.

Without even doing a deep study, we can be certain that the Masoretic Text is wrong. The oldest manuscript of theirs is from the 11th century. The be'ur Gra commentary was done by Elijah ben Solomon Zalman in the 18th century, so this also is much later. And the targums are not the greatest source of reliable information because they are based on faulty oral tradition, although they do provide additional support at times.

The Greek Septuagint is a translation from the Hebrew dated around 250BC. The Latin Vulgate is translated from the Hebrew around AD382. Therefore, it's pretty certain on the surface that verses 36-37 belong there. Without them, the obvious statement found in verse 41 concerning there being forty-eight Levitical cities would be incorrect.

Text Verse: *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15*

It is certain that if a copy of a manuscript of Shakespeare's work was found containing spelling errors, transpositions, margin notes, missing words or sentences, etc., anyone who evaluated it would say, “This is a copy of Shakespeare's work.” In fact, it would be ridiculous to say otherwise.

And yet, naysayers of the Bible demand perfection of transmission to be a part of the process of conveying His word. If such perfection does not exist (which it could not because of the nature of man), then to them it somehow cannot be God's word. The thinking is biased and flawed.

It is a trap that too many have fallen into, thus believing that God has somehow preserved His word in an exacting manner that is 100% infallible in one particular version or another. Some people say the LXX is the only infallible translation. Some say the Masoretic Text is inspired and infallible, and some say only the 1611 King Jimmy Version is, etc.

It is an irresponsible way of looking at things. God has preserved His word by giving us an innumerable number of documents by which we can tell what is accurate and what is not. This is true with the two contended verses in Joshua 21 as it is with all other such discrepancies. Cambridge says this concerning verses 36-37–

“This verse and the succeeding have the Masoretic note appended that they are not found in the Masora or true tradition. Kimchi therefore rejects them. But they are found in the LXX. and the rest of the ancient versions, and they are necessary to make up the number of forty-eight cities. Dr. Kennicott, as well as Michaelis, Rosenmuller, and Maurer defended their genuineness. So does Knobel, who complains that Rabbi Jacob Ben Chajim, in his Rabbinical Bible of 1525, has very improperly omitted these towns on the authority of the Masora, and that many editors have foolishly imitated him. They have no doubt been omitted by the mistake of a copyist, who passed on from the אַרְבַּע (four) of ver. 35 to that of ver. 37, omitting all that lay between.”

In other words, what has occurred is a very common scribal error known as a homeoteleuton. There is a repetition of endings in words that confuses the scribe as he looks to a source text and then back to the copy he is making. He looked at the end of verse 35 –

Dimnah with its common-land, *and* Nahalal with its common-land: **four cities.**

He then looked back to continue and his eyes looked to the ending of verse 37 –

Kedemoth with its common-land, and Mephaath with its common-land: **four cities.**

He then proceeded on to verse 38 not realizing what he had done. This is why God has preserved His word in multiple manuscripts and in multiple languages. It is because man is fallible.

If you don't understand this, go back and watch the Exodus 25:10-22 sermon entitled *The Ark of the Covenant and the Seat of Mercy*. God shows us in typology exactly what we need to know.

Do we have a sure word? We sure do. What we will look at today is the word of God and great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Twelve Cities (verses 34-40)

The Levitical cities have been presented from the tribes in this chapter. The tribal designations and the number of cities were named first. From there, a detailed listing of each has been provided. The first son of Levi to be detailed was that of Kohath.

Those designations were divided between the priestly class and the other Kohathites who were Levites. Next came the sons of Gershon. Now, the final group of Levites, those of Merari, are to be given their detailed listing of cities. That begins with...

³⁴ And to the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites,

Rather than an adjective, a verb is used: *u-l'mishp'hoth bene marari hal'viyim ha'notarim* – “And to families sons Merari, the Levites, the remainings.” The meaning is that everything that is remaining is to be designated to the Levites of the youngest son, Merari.

The name Merari comes from *marar*, to be bitter or to be strong. The *i* at the end may be possessive, and so it means either Bitterness or Strong or My Bitterness or My Strength. The cities of his allotment are named, beginning with...

³⁴ (con't) from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its common-land, Kartah with its common-land,

Zebulun means Glorious Dwelling Place. Jokneam means either People Will Be Lamented or Let the People Acquire. Kartah was not listed in the cities of Zebulun as recorded in Joshua 19. This is the only time it is mentioned in Scripture. It comes from *qereth*, a city. That then comes from *qarah*, to meet or befall. Thus it means City or Place of Meeting.

³⁵ Dimnah with its common-land, and Nahalal with its common-land:

“Yay! We get Dimnah. We’re number one! We’re number one!” Well, maybe not. Dimnah is also found only here in Scripture. Scholars agree it is from the word *domen*, dung. Hence, it means Dung Heap.

Nahalal is identical to *nahalal*, found only in Isaiah 7:19. There, it is translated as pastures or watering holes. Young’s says, “commendable things.” That then comes from *nahal* to lead or guide to a watering place or a place of rest. The most known use of that is found in Psalm 23 –

“He leads [*nahal*] me beside the still waters.” Psalm 23:2

Strong’s defines it as Pasture. I define it as Led to Rest.

³⁵ (con’t) **four cities;**

As we have seen, Bullinger says –

“It is emphatically the number of Creation; of man in his relation to the world as created; while six is the number of man in his opposition to and independence of God. It is the number of things that have a beginning, of things that are made, of material things, and matter itself. It is the number of material completeness. Hence it is the world number, and especially the ‘city’ number.” Bullinger

³⁶ **and from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its common-land, Jahaz with its common-land,**

Reuben’s tribal land is east of the Jordan. And more, Zebulun doesn’t even have a border on the Jordan. Thus, the sons of Merari are somewhat divided from one another.

Reuben means See, A Son. Bezer, or Betser, comes from *batsar*, meaning to enclose or make inaccessible, and so it means Fortress or Defense. However, it is identical to the word *betser*, which means precious ore. That is seen only in Job 22 –

“Then you will lay your **gold** in the dust,
And the *gold* of Ophir among the stones of the brooks.

²⁵ Yes, the Almighty will be your **gold**
And your precious silver.” Job 22:24, 25

The idea is that the ore is what people use as a defense or a protection, but the person would put away this protection and trust in the Lord as his gold – his protection – instead.

Jahaz, or Yahats, was seen in Joshua 13. It means Trodden Down. It is where the battle between Israel and Sihon took place as is recorded in Numbers 21:23.

³⁷ Kedemoth with its common-land, and Mephaath with its common-land:

Both cities were also named in Joshua 13. Kedemoth means Ancient Times, Antiquity, or Beginnings. Mephaath means something like Place of Radiance. Abarim notes that it more precisely would be Place of Radiant Theophany.

^{37 (con't)} four cities;

This now makes eight total cities. Added to that are...

³⁸ and from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its common-land (a city of refuge for the slayer),

As always, the order of the Hebrew places the emphasis on the fact that it is a city of refuge by stating that first. Only then is the city named: *u-mimateh gad eth ir miqlat ha'rotseakh et Ramoth ba'gilad v'eth migrasheha* – “And from tribe Gad city refuge the slayer, Ramoth in the Gilead and her common-land.”

Gad is also east of the Jordan. Reuben is furthest south while Gad is on Reuben's northern border, extending as far north as the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Gad means Troop or Fortune. Ramoth comes from *rum*, meaning “high” or “exalted.” Thus, it signifies Heights or Lofty Place. The Gilead means The Perpetual Fountain. Also...

^{38 (con't)} Mahanaim with its common-land,

Mahanaim means Two Camps. It is where the angels met Jacob in Genesis 32:1, giving rise to the name. Eventually, a city was built there. David will flee there after his son Absalom temporarily overthrows him. It is mentioned at various times elsewhere in the Old Testament.

³⁹ Heshbon with its common-land, and Jazer with its common-land:

Heshbon means Intelligence. Jazer, or *yatser*, means Helpful or He Shall Help.

³⁹ (con't) **four cities in all.**

With these final four cities, the designating of the Levitical cities by name is complete...

⁴⁰ **So all the cities for the children of Merari according to their families, the rest of the families of the Levites, were *by* their lot twelve cities.**

The verse more precisely reads: "All the cities to sons Merari, to their families, the remainings from families the Levites. And were their lot cities two ten."

It is a closing statement on the entire granting of cities within the tribal inheritances for Merari and thus for all the sons of Levi. As for Merari, there are twelve cities granted. It is the number of perfection of government or of governmental perfection.

*Four cities and four more, well that makes eight
Add another four and twelve is what you get
Out of these twelve, the typology is great
They tell us that in Christ, our future is set*

*Let us cherish this wonderful word each day
And enjoy everything that our eyes alight upon
Whatever the words before us say
May we consider them before our eyes move on*

*There is treasure to be found in this word
It tells us about our glorious Savior Jesus
And so, let us be attentive to what we have heard
Such wonderful things He has done for us*

II. The Good Word (verses 41-45)

⁴¹ **All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were forty-eight cities with their common-lands.**

This is exactly in accord with what was stated by the Lord in Numbers 35 –

And the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan *across from* Jericho, saying: ²“Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall *also* give the Levites common-land around the cities. ³They shall have the cities to dwell in; and their common-land shall be for their cattle, for their herds, and for all their animals. ⁴The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around. ⁵And you shall measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, on the south side two thousand cubits, on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits. The city *shall be* in the middle. This shall belong to them as common-land for the cities.

⁶“Now among the cities which you will give to the Levites *you shall appoint* six cities of refuge, to which a manslayer may flee. And to these you shall add forty-two cities. ⁷So all the cities you will give to the Levites *shall be* forty-eight; these *you shall give* with their common-land. ⁸And the cities which you will give *shall be* from the possession of the children of Israel; from the larger *tribe* you shall give many, from the smaller you shall give few. Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites, in proportion to the inheritance that each receives.” Numbers 35:1-8

The listing of the cities here in Joshua fulfills this mandate of the Lord through Moses. As the cities of refuge were designated as a part of this allocation, and as they have been specifically named during this allocation, the total number of cities must reflect this when they are considered.

In other words, despite being forty-eight cities, it is six plus forty-two that is highlighted above all else. It is to be remembered that the cities are not necessarily inhabited only by Levites. Nor are the Levites restricted only to these cities.

Rather, these cities are designated as Levitical cities for the sake of ensuring the people of Israel were tended to by the Levites in a manner appropriate to the tribal land in which they dwelt. Dispersing the Levites as has been done will ensure that this is the case.

⁴² **Every one of these cities had its common-land surrounding it;**

The Hebrew is very precise in its presentation: *tihyannah he'arim ha'eleh ir ir u-migrasheha sivivothekha* – “Were the cities, the these, city city, and her common-land around her.” It is a way of referring to each city independently and not as a class of cities collectively. The collective is then next referred to...

⁴² (con't) **thus were all these cities.**

ken l'kal he'arim ha'elleh – “thus to all the cities, the these.” Each city was given its own common-land to surround it, and thus it was for all of the cities of the Levites. There was nothing spoken by the Lord that failed to be done.

Because this allocation to the Levites is the last part of the distribution of the land according to inheritances and according to law, there will obviously be a concluding statement to that fact as well. That is next seen...

⁴³ **So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers,**

This is the culmination of promises that went back approximately 480 years. The book of Joshua began in the first month of the year 2555 Anno Mundi as can be dated from Joshua 4:19. It is now seven or so years later. So it is somewhere around 2562AM. For context, the call to Abram was in the year 2084AM –

“Now the LORD had said to Abram:

‘Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father’s house,

To a land that I will show you.

² I will make you a great nation;

I will bless you

And make your name great;

And you shall be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,

And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’

⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And

Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ Then Abram

took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they

had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and

they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of

Canaan. ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites *were* then in the land.

⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’” And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.’”

-Genesis 12:1-4

This promise has been repeated to Isaac, Jacob, and the people of Israel numerous times since then. Thus, the words are given as a confirmation of each instance of those words since they had originally been spoken to Abram. The promises were made and they have been fulfilled...

⁴³ (con't) **and they took possession of it and dwelt in it.**

As is the case with the cities, the land is also referred to in the feminine in Hebrew: *vayirashuha vayesh'vu bah* – “and they possessed her and dwelt in her.” The same feminine language is used of the land elsewhere. A notable example is in Ezekiel 33 –

“For I will make the land most desolate, her arrogant strength shall cease, and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no one will pass through.”

-Ezekiel 33:28

The intent is that there is to be a mutual blessing between the people and the land, and the land with her people, while the Lord superintends over both. That state of blessing began at this point. With the land and city allocations complete, Israel should live contentedly before the Lord because...

⁴⁴ **The LORD gave them rest all around,**

vayankh Yehovah lahem misaviv – “And rested, Yehovah, to them from around.” It is as if the Lord set them down in the land with no need for care or worry about external pressures. Some see this as contradictory because the land is not fully subdued and there were enemies remaining.

But that is not the point of the statement. The land was divided, the people were allocated their parcels, cities were designated for the Levites, and everything was within Israel's ability to handle.

If any of our parents gave us a piece of property with a house properly secured with gates, doors with locks, weapons of defense, etc., the parents could just as easily say, “We have given you rest in your own home.” It would be illogical to say, “Yes, but there are neighbors who don't like me, the grass will keep growing, there will be bills for water and electricity, and so on.”

Life goes on. Suitable provision has been made, but there is a point where the person has to say, “I will keep the house secure, I will mow the lawn, I will pay the bills, etc.”

This is the state in which Israel is now. They have been rested in the land and now it is their responsibility to provide for themselves by accepting and maintaining their inheritance. The Lord had provided exactly what He promised...

44 (con't) according to all that He had sworn to their fathers.

Again, the words are given to show the faithfulness of the Lord to His spoken word. He has promised, and His word is an oath in and of itself. The written record here was not questioned by the people at the time. Thus, it cannot be rightly questioned by anyone later. This is confirmed in the next words...

44 (con't) And not a man of all their enemies stood against them;

v'lo amad ish biphnehem mi'kal oy'vehem – “And no stood man in their faces from all their enemies.” Again, this does not mean there were not enemies around them. It means that there was no active resistance or engagement against them.

The land and the people were suitably subdued. Therefore, any failure to continue to subdue it would be the fault of Israel. The Lord has done what He promised. As it says...

44 (con't) the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

The singular mixed with the plural is notable: *eth kal oy'vehem natan Yehovah b'yadam* – “all their enemies gave Yehovah into their hand.” It is a group of people with one hand. The enemies had been sufficiently delivered into it, and all they needed to do was act on what they now possessed. With that, the final verse of the chapter is a celebratory note of victory...

45 (fin) Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.

A literal translation is: “Not fell word from all the word, the good, which had spoken Yehovah unto house Israel. The all came.” One can mentally think of the Lord speaking His promises in the past. Since they were spoken, they have floated upon the stream of time in exactly the same way they were first spoken.

Not a single word of prophecy falls out of the line as they continue forward until this point in time, at which they have come rushing into the present and settle as if it was into a house with an open door. The words entered and were considered fulfilled.

This is the faithfulness of the Lord to His spoken word.

*Not a word of the Lord shall ever fail us
We can hold fast that it is faithful and true
It is the word that tells about Jesus
Of all that He has done and will do*

*Not a word will fail of every good thing
Which the Lord has spoken to us
Complete trust in this word to us will bring
A fulfilled hope in the message of Jesus*

*It is the word of God a light for the way
As we travel through this darkened world
Until comes that most marvelous day
When Christ shall descend as the heavens are unfurled*

*The book is written and it will come about
Let us be firm and fixed, never having a doubt*

III. Explaining the Typology

For the third and last time, we have been provided with a listing of the Levitical cities, other than the priestly cities, for the sons of Levi. As with the Levites of Kohath and Gershon, these allotments detail aspects regarding Christ as the Firstborn in His work under the law.

However, the main content of the passage is mostly centered on the naming of the cities. So, this will not only reflect the work of Christ, but also how it applies to His people, meaning their state in Him.

As we saw, the name Merari means either My Bitterness or My Strength. They are two sides of the same coin because bitterness includes the idea of that which is strong. It looks to the work of Christ. It was a work of bitterness but it is accomplished in the strength of the Lord.

The three tribal allotments of Merari are Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad. They speak of the granting of the Glorious Dwelling Place (Zebulun) as Jesus' rightful due based upon the

proof of God's declaration of His Sonship – See a Son (Reuben). That, in turn, reflects the fact that in the resurrection is realized His Fortune (Gad).

Within these allotments, the cities were named. The Levitical cities reflect the state of those within the inheritances, meaning believers in Christ. These started with four in Zebulun, Glorious Dwelling Place. Jokneam means Let the People Acquire. It is the allowance of the inheritance because of the work of Christ.

Kartah means City. It speaks of the city Zion, or the New Jerusalem, where believers are already citizens as noted in the New Testament, such as in Galatians, Hebrews, and Revelation. One example is –

“...for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— ²⁶ but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Galatians 4:25, 26

Dimnah, Dung Heap, has its own special meaning for believers. It is the response to the present Zion, meaning the Jerusalem “which now is.” Paul explains that in Philippians –

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish [*skubalon*, dung], that I may gain Christ.” Philippians 3:7, 8

Finally in Zebulun is Nahalal, Led to Rest. We have been led to rest in Christ, our Glorious Dwelling Place. As it says in Hebrews 4, “For we who have believed do enter that rest.”

Next were the four cities of Reuben, See a Son. The first is Bezer, Defense. In Christ we rest in Him as our Defense, having laid aside our own protection. Jahaz, Trodden Down, looks to the total victory found in Christ concerning anything that would keep us from our own state of sonship –

“And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” Romans 16:20

Kedemoth, Ancient Times, refers to the promise fulfilled in Christ and in which we participate –

“...according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, ²in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, ³but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.” Titus 1:1-3

Mephaath, Place of Radiance, or as Abarim notes Place of Radiant Theophany, surely looks to our faith in Jesus, the manifestation of God in humanity –

“God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16

Lastly, Gad, Fortune, also had four cities. The first was Ramoth in the Gilead, or Heights in the Perpetual Fountain. This refers to the state of believers, even now in the heavenly places, sealed with the Holy Spirit. That is a sanctuary city which speaks of being completely secure and hidden in Christ.

That was followed by Mahanaim, Two Camps. This city speaks of the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles. Taken together with Ramoth in the Gilead, both thoughts are found in Ephesians 2 –

“...and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* (Ramoth) in Christ Jesus, ... For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two (Mahanaim), *thus* making peace, ¹⁶and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸For through Him we both have access by one Spirit (the Gilead) to the Father.” Ephesians 2:6 & 14-18

One might argue that because they are now one, that would defeat the purpose of the name Two Camps. However, Paul never says that Jews are no longer Jews. The term is reserved for them exclusively. Thus, even though there is one church body, there are

two major divisions within it, Jews and Gentiles, despite what replacement theology teaches.

That is followed by Heshbon or Intelligence. It refers to the state of those who are in Christ. Paul contrasts the faith of believers with the intelligence of the world, demonstrating that the wisdom of God is far above what they possess –

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

...

“For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.” 1 Corinthians 1:19 & 25 (NIV)

Lastly is Jazer, or Helpful/He Shall Help. It is an obvious position in Christ –

“The LORD *is* my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

The three divisions of four cities, totaling twelve speaks of the effects of Christ’s work covering the entire earth (four) and forming the perfection of government (twelve) out of His people.

Thus the allocation of the Levitical cities is complete, forming a consistent and marvelous set of pictures of the work of Jesus Christ and the effects of His work as realized in His people.

In total, the sets of Levitical cities were said to equal 48 –

The priests (verse 19), 13 cities;
The non-priestly Kohathites (verse 26), 10 cities;
The Gershonites (verse 33) 13 cities;
The Merarites (verse 40) 12 cities.

Total (verse 41), 48 cities.

As the cities of refuge were specifically and emphatically noted, prior to the naming of the city, it should be restated what the entire picture of these cities tells us.

The obvious immediate division of 48 by 12 is that it signifies the perfection of government while 4 represents the number of material completeness. It is the world number, and especially the “city” number.

Thus, in these cities, one can see a representation of the kingdom of God in the world. However, there is a special focus on man which is represented by the six cities of refuge. It is a marvelous picture of God, working through Christ, and forming a universal government, highlighted by those who come to take refuge in Him.

With that, the final verses had a strong emphasis on the fact that this was the completed work of the Lord – “the Lord gave to Israel,” “The Lord gave them rest,” “the Lord delivered all their enemies.” The typology is evident. Jesus Christ has done everything necessary to bring us to God’s rest.

There is nothing lacking in His work and there is nothing that we can do to add to it. This does not mean that we are to just sit idly by and whittle away our time. The inheritance is secured, but our state within it is up to us, just as it was for Israel.

God has not removed them from the equation, even though they have been faithfully unfaithful to Him. And more, He will bring them to the state of exaltation that He promised them. The same is true with us. But how do we want our eternity to be set?

Rewards and losses are coming at the Bema seat of Christ. So let us endeavor to do the work of spreading His name now while we can.

As for the evaluation of the final words of the chapter, rather than merely think of Israel and the Lord’s fulfillment of His word to them, listen again and think of God’s people, His redeemed, and Jesus’ fulfillment of the word for us –

“Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.”

One can picture the Lord speaking His promises in the past. Since they were spoken, they have floated upon the stream of time in exactly the same way they were first spoken.

Not a single word of prophecy falls out of the line as they continue forward until this point in time, at which they have come rushing into the present and settle as if it was into a house with an open door. The words entered and were considered fulfilled.

This is true for every person who has ever come to Christ. From the first promises of a Redeemer in Genesis 3, all the way through Scripture, every single promise of God is realized in the salvation of each individual who calls out to Him.

And more, there are other promises, future to us now, that God has made. We can be as sure of their coming to pass as we are of those that have been realized already. Be sure to trust Christ today. What He has done, and what God will continue to do through Him, is as certain as the rotation of the earth as each day unfolds; even more so. Let us trust in Him to the glory of God who has spoken forth His word.

Closing Verse: *“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. ²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, ²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”*
-2 Corinthians 1:20-22

Next Week: Joshua 22:1-9 *It’s the best, without any haw or hem...* (So Joshua Blessed Them) (50th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Cities of Gershon, the Levites

And to the families of the children of Merari
The rest of the Levites as was planned
From the tribe of Zebulun
Jokneam with its common-land

Kartah with its common-land
Hold on, there are more
Dimnah with its common-land
And Nahalal with its common-land: cities four

And from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its common-land
Jahaz with its common-land, totaling up the score
Kedemoth with its common-land
And Mephaath with its common-land: once again cities four

And from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its common-land
----- (a city of refuge for the slayer)
Mahanaim with its common-land, a portion not so small
Heshbon with its common-land
And Jazer with its common-land: four cities in all

So all the cities for the children of Merari
According to their families, all the men
The rest of the families of the Levites
Were by their lot twelve cities, yes two and ten

All the cities of the Levites
Within the possession of the children of Israel
Were forty-eight cities with their common-lands
Together, they have a marvelous story to tell

Every one of these cities had its common-land surrounding it
Thus were all these cities, really quite a bit

So the LORD gave to Israel all the land
Not a part or just a bit
All of which He had sworn to give to their fathers
And they took possession of it and dwelt in it

The LORD gave them rest all around
According to all that He had sworn to their fathers; just as planned
And not a man of all their enemies stood against them
The LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand

Not a word failed of any good thing
Which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel
All came to pass
Such a marvelous story to tell

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 22:1-9 (SO JOSHUA BLESSED THEM)

One of the questions I have never been dogmatic about in my response is whether those of Israel saved before the coming of Christ would be raised at the rapture or not. The verses in Scripture are not definitive enough to tell us one way or the other.

However, the passage today appears to typologically provide an answer to that question. By the end of the sermon, you will know the answer as the typology instructs us.

As with several passages we have seen in Joshua, such as the battles of Gibeon and Ai as well as the inheritance of Caleb, there are little issues that need to be uncovered for us to understand exactly what God is doing.

One might say, "Well, this is what the Bible says about that issue." But then someone might come along and say, "Yes, but then what about this issue?" There are seemingly unimportant issues that suddenly need to be addressed. And God covers each of them so carefully in typology.

Text Verse: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17*

This is a good text verse to use in today's sermon because Paul was referring to the Old Testament when he wrote it to Timothy. There are words about being obedient to Moses and the law there, but how do they apply to a believer in Jesus, someone not under the law?

How can it be that a story seemingly about troops returning home from war with all kinds of riches instructs us in doctrine? If you stay awake or don't leave before we're done unpacking the typology today, you will see. The word is the gift that just keeps on giving. It is an endless source of amazing detail for us to consider.

Wonderful things, such as the explanation revealed in today's passage, can be accomplished by a careful study of God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Return With Much Riches (verses 1-9)

¹ Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh,

The names are in the singular, speaking to the people as clans descending from an individual: *az yiqra Yehoshua la'reubeni v'la'gadi v'la'khatsi mateh m'nasheh* – “At that time called Joshua to the Reubenite and to the Gadite, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh.”

This is important to understand because many commentaries assume that those being discharged here had not been home for seven or more years. For example –

“And the time during which these soldiers must in this case have remained separated from their wives and families was a very long one.” Pulpit Commentary

This is incorrect. As was seen early in Joshua, only a portion of the men went to battle while most stayed in their land of inheritance, building, tending to flocks, providing protection, etc.

Without the text saying it, the meaning is that the men rotated into and out of service. While some served, others remained in their land. At set intervals, they would then enter service while the others returned home. Thus, referring to the tribe in the singular means that this arrangement, involving these two-and-a-half tribes will now end. There will no longer be a need for their presence in Canaan.

The land has been subdued sufficiently for all of the tribes to receive their inheritances. The lots have been cast, the borders have been set, the cities have been named, the Levites have received their cities, and now dwelling in the inheritances that have been granted will take place.

As for the opening word, *az*, it signifies “at that time.” Exactly what that means is debated. The last specific detailing of a major new event was recorded at the opening of Chapter 18 –

“Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. ² But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance.” Joshua 18:1, 2

After that, the land was surveyed and apportioned out to the remaining seven tribes, Joshua received his inheritance, the cities of refuge were designated, and then the Levitical cities, including the priestly cities, were detailed. That detail then ended with –

“So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ⁴⁴ The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.” Joshua 21:43-45

Therefore, it might be assumed that what is being detailed came at this point in the chronology of events, following in time directly after the closing words of Joshua 21. However, the events could actually be connected with the statement that closed out the main subduing of the land at the end of Chapter 11 –

“So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.” Joshua 11:23

If this is the case, then all of the detail concerning the division of the land from Chapters 12-21 would be a long insert into the narrative without regard to chronology. Either way, what is stated in these verses is necessary to show that the words of Moses were fully followed.

As for the names, Joshua means The Lord is Salvation. Reuben means See a Son. Gad means Fortune. Manasseh has a dual meaning of To Forget and From a Debt.

² and said to them: “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you,

The words are in the plural, you all. He called the tribe as a whole and speaks to all of the men of the tribe. His words refer to the order given by Moses in Numbers 32.

The men of these tribes came before Moses and asked that their inheritance be granted east of the Jordan, something that got Moses highly miffed at them, thinking they would discourage Israel from entering their inheritance.

After agreeing to the expectation that they would accompany Israel into battle to subdue the land, Moses accepted their request –

“So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. ²⁹ And Moses said to them: ‘If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. ³⁰ But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.’” Numbers 32:28-30

These tribes faithfully fulfilled their obligation to the words of Moses. Moses means He Who Draws Out.

² (con’t) **and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you.**

va’tishmeu b’qoli l’kol asher tsiviti etkhem – “and have hearkened in my voice to all which I commanded you.” This refers to what Joshua said to these men in Chapter 1 –

“And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, ¹³ ‘Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.’ ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, ¹⁵ until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He *gave* you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD’s servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.’” Joshua 1:12-15

Joshua proclaims that these men have fully complied with the commands set before them.

³ **You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day,**

The words “many days” sum up the entire war campaign, at least six or seven years. However, if the narrative follows after the division of the land, it could be somewhat longer. Joshua’s point is that they have been faithful as long as they were needed...

³ (con't) **but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God.**

ush'martem eth mishmereth mitsvath Yehovah elohekhem – “and have hearkened charge – command of Yehovah you God.” Without the Lord directly speaking about this matter in Numbers 32, the men who came before Moses responded to his words, saying

–

“As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do. ³² We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us on this side of the Jordan.” Numbers 32:31, 32

Whether Moses went before the Lord with the matter, or simply set the conditions, he was the representative of the Lord. Either way, their response acknowledges that the conditions were as the Lord had said.

The same is true for the leadership of Joshua as well. Thus, what was spoken by the Lord directly, or through His representatives was heeded as the word of the Lord. Because of their faithful obedience, Joshua continues with...

⁴ **And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them;**

Rather than “as He promised them,” it says, “as He spoke to them.” The verb translated as “rest” is *nuakh*, to settle down or cease. The Greek translation uses the word *katapauó*, the same word used in Hebrews 4 when making a point about the promised rest of God. The noun form, *katapausis*, the state of repose or a place of rest, is also used in that passage.

There, the author of the epistle makes a point about the greater work of Christ that the events in Joshua only anticipated. For now, the men of Israel have been given rest according to the word of the Lord...

⁴ (con't) **now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession,**

Rather than “return,” it more precisely, it says *v'atah penu ulku lakhem l'aholekhem el erets akhuzathem* – “and now turn to you to your tents unto land your possession.” Only now is this truly their possession. Until this point, it has been conditional. With their obligations fulfilled, they can now turn to their possession.

The words “to your tents” are not referring to their military tents which will be packed up and carried home. Rather, this is a poetic way of saying “your homes.” Cities and houses had been built, but the nostalgic use of tents was a reminder of their years living in tents while wandering in the wilderness. Now, the wandering is over and they will turn to the land of their possession...

^{4 (con't)} **which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan.**

asher nathan lakhem Mosheh eved Yehovah b'ever ha'yarden – “which gave to you Moses, servant Yehovah, in side the Jordan.” It speaks of the promised inheritance that came before crossing the Jordan. With the inheritance of Israel granted, they too receive what was promised to them at that time.

The Jordan means The Descender. With the grant complete, Joshua next admonishes them concerning their obligations...

⁵ **But take careful heed to do the commandment**

The verb is imperative: *raq shimru meod laasoth eth ha'mitsvah* – “Only! Watching very to do the commandment.” The *tsivah* is a positive precept, coming from *tsavah*, to command, charge, etc. It is something one is ordered to do as in an obligation. Here, the entire body of commandments cumulatively comprises one commandment. That is then supplemented with...

^{5 (con't)} **and the law**

v'eth ha'torah – “and the law.” The word *torah*, or law, is derived from *arah*, to throw or shoot. One can think of someone aiming to hit a mark. Thus, it speaks of a precept or a statute that one is to aim for. The entire body of the Pentateuch is called The Torah.

This, like the previous word *tsivah*, speaks of the entire body of law. Each law or precept cumulatively comprises one law. Joshua speaks of these as one whole...

^{5 (con't)} **which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you,**

Hence, this body of law is called The Law of Moses. Using the word *tsivah* again, Joshua charges them to remember Moses and be obedient to what he has spoken on behalf of the Lord. As such, the commandment and the law are considered two sides of the same coin. With that, Joshua continues by explaining exactly what that means...

⁵ (con't) **to love the LORD your God,**

Of this, John Gill says, "...of which keeping the commands of God is an evidence." Although it is true that keeping the commands is an evidence of loving Yehovah, that is not what is being said.

These words do not form an evidence. Rather, they are a command. "You are to love Yehovah your God." Obeying the commands is the evidence of obeying these words which are a condensed form of Deuteronomy 6:5 – "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

What does it mean to love Yehovah? In the context of what is being conveyed, which is doing His commandments, it means to obey His commandments.

One cannot say, "I love Yehovah," and yet not obey His commandments. Because He is God, His words reflect who He is. Unlike humans who lie for any reason, thus demonstrating a disconnect between their words and who they are, there is no disconnect between the Lord and His words.

Along with loving Yehovah, they are next reminded...

⁵ (con't) **to walk in all His ways,**

The NKJV leaves off the conjunction, making it seem as if this is explaining the last clause. It isn't. Rather, it is a further command: *v'la'leketh b'kal d'rakav* – "and to walk in all His ways." Because His words reflect who He is, His ways are revealed in His words. Thus, to walk in all His ways is commanded so that His people will be like Him. And more, they are admonished...

⁵ (con't) **to keep His commandments,**

Again, the conjunction is missing: *v'lishmor mitsvotav* – "and to keep His commandments." A part of the way you keep the commandment and the law is to keep the individual commandments. Understanding this, the words of James are more fully understood –

"For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all." James 2:10

One cannot say, “Well, I didn’t commit adultery and so I have kept the commandment” if he has just killed his neighbor. It is a single body comprised of many individual parts. One must do them all...

⁵ (con’t) **to hold fast to Him,**

The necessary conjunction is again missing, and the words are stronger and more personal: *u-l’dav’qah bo* – “and to hold fast in Him.” The Pulpit Commentary remarks, “...as though regarding not so much isolated actions as principles of life.”

To cling in Him is to reside in Him and refuse to let go of that state. This command is unlike the state of believers in Christ. The term “in Christ” signifies the position of the believer, but it is a position that is securely maintained not by the believer but by God in Christ. As for Joshua’s words, they continue with...

⁵ (con’t) **and to serve Him**

This must go beyond the written law itself, although the written law may define what this means in broad terms. In other words, if a king is chosen by the Lord, serving the Lord would include serving the king. When a prophet of the Lord spoke, serving the Lord would include heeding the word of the Lord from that prophet.

Both the offices, king and prophet, are defined in the law of Moses. Thus, serving the Lord includes the people’s actions in relation to those who fill these offices. With that, Joshua says...

⁵ (con’t) **with all your heart and with all your soul.”**

Though speaking to all the people (you all), the words heart and soul are singular: *b’kal l’vavkhem u-b’kal naphsh’khem* – “in all to your heart and in all your soul.” As for these words, they surely do not qualify only the last clause, “to serve Him.” Rather, they are given to qualify each clause. Setting the thought off will give the true sense of what is said –

“Only! Watching very to do the commandment and the law which commanded you Moses, servant Yehovah – to love Yehovah your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to hold fast in Him, and to serve Him – with all your heart and with all your soul.”

The heart refers to the understanding and mental assent of the person. The soul speaks of that which animates and impels a person. To understand the meaning, it could be paraphrased, “in all your attitude and in all your actions.” Everything that comprises the person is to be dedicated to this type of faithful obedience to the Lord. Understanding that, it next says...

⁶ So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

As Joshua blessed Caleb upon the designation of his inheritance in Chapter 14, so he blesses all of the men who have officially received their inheritances east of the Jordan, sending them away after his words of admonishment and encouragement.

Next, as a note to ensure clarity for exactly who is being referred to, Manasseh is clearly specified. What is said here should be taken as a parenthetical insert. Thus, it should read –

So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

(⁷ Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave *a possession* among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward.)

And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, ⁸ and spoke to them, saying, “Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.”

With that understood, the parenthesis begins...

⁷ Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan,

The verb has no object. Thus, the words “a possession” should be italicized: *v'lakhatsi shevet ham'nasheh natan Mosheh ba'bashan* – “And to the half tribe the Manasseh gave Moses in the Bashan.” Because Manasseh’s inheritance was divided, falling on both sides of the Jordan, these words are given. Of note is that in verses 1 and 14, the word for tribe is *mateh*, the genealogical aspect of the tribe. However, the word *shevet*, meaning the political aspect of the tribe, is mentioned seven times in the chapter, including this verse.

All of the uses of *shevet* pertain to this half-tribe of Manasseh. One use of *mateh* (verse 1) refers to this half-tribe of Manasseh and the other (verse 14) pertains to ten tribes west of the Jordan. This is certainly being structured this way to reveal the political nature of what will transpire starting in verse 10.

Verse 1 was given to denote the genealogical heritage (*mateh*) of this half-tribe. From this verse on, it denotes the political (*shevet*) aspect. As for the Bashan, it means The Place of Fertile Soil.

⁷ (con't) **but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave a possession among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward.**

The words are being very precise: *u-l'kheshyo natan Yehoshua im akhekhem m'ever ha'yarden yamah* – “and to his half gave Joshua with their brothers from side the Jordan, westward.” Moses gave the land east of the Jordan; Joshua gave the land west of the Jordan. This now ends the parenthesis and the narrative continues with...

⁷ (con't) **And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them,**

v'gam ki shil'khem Yehoshua el aholekhem v'barakhem – “And also, for sending them, Joshua, unto their tents, and he blessed them.” Because of the way the narrative reads, Ellicott said, “It is noteworthy that of all the tribes of Israel who followed Joshua, and remained with him, this half tribe alone is mentioned as receiving a special blessing.”

One can see from the way I have parenthetically divided it that this is incorrect. The parenthesis is simply to provide clarity of what is occurring concerning the two half-tribes of Manasseh. As such, these words refer to the same blessing as verse 6. Removing the parenthesis shows this –

So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents. ... And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, ⁸ and spoke to them, saying...

With that understood...

⁸ **and spoke to them, saying,**

Rather, it says, “and said to them, saying.” Using “said” indicates participation by the one being addressed. That participation is...

^{8 (con't)} **“Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing.**

More precisely, it reads, “In riches great, return unto your tents, and in livestock much very, in silver, and in gold, and in bronze, and in iron, and in garments much very.” Using the word “in” gives the sense of them almost swimming in these things. They were adorned with them and they were carrying them.

As for the word translated as riches, it is a new word, *nekes*, coming from an unused root meaning to accumulate. Thus, it signifies treasure, riches, or wealth. Of all of this booty, Joshua says...

^{8 (con't)} **Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.”**

Most commentators say that this means those who stayed behind and didn't go to battle. As I have said on several occasions, the troops rotated in and out of the battles, going home on leave, replacing wounded or killed soldiers, etc.

Thus, this is a general statement that whoever is on the other side awaiting the final release of the warriors is to be included in sharing the spoils. This had occurred regularly over the past seven years. Joshua is simply making a general blessing and statement that their time of commitment is over, so they should go back and fraternally unite with those who await them...

⁹ **So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed**

The actions of the warriors are stated first: “And returned, and went, sons Reuben and sons Gad, and half-tribe the Manasseh.” They had been granted their leave and so they immediately took it...

^{9 (con't)} **from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan,**

It more closely reads, “from the sons of Israel, from Shiloh.” Israel means He Strives with God. Shiloh means Tranquility. Canaan means Humbled, Humiliated, or Subdued. The warriors turn from this area...

^{9 (con't)} **to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession,**

The Gilead means The Perpetual Fountain. This land has now been designated as their permanent possession...

^{9 (fin)} **which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

asher nokhazu bah al pi Yehovah b'yad Mosheh – “which had obtained they upon mouth Yehovah in hand Moses.” Until studying this passage, I wasn't settled as to whether these tribal inheritances pictured those of Israel saved prior to Christ's coming or any of Israel who were saved prior to national Israel.

The wording of this passage pretty much clears it up. This pictures those saved apart from the church age. It is not referring to Jews saved during the church age. After study, it seems obvious, but it is never good to be dogmatic without a set reason for it. In this case, the text has cleared it up, especially verses 7 and 9.

These people have obtained their inheritance as granted by Moses and according to the word of the Lord in the hand of Moses. In other words, they anticipated the coming Messiah in faith through their time under the law, thus receiving their inheritance.

With this thought, the verses are ended. The precision of the wording in the passage today has been remarkable, clearly defining what has transpired and will transpire in the future as redemptive history continues to unfold.

*Don't lay up for yourselves treasure on the earth
Where moth and rust destroy
Rather, save up for what is of heavenly worth
And which leads to eternal joy*

*Treasures in heaven! That's where it's at
Not stuff that thieves can break in and steal
Eternal rewards – try shooting for that
Heavenly things! That's the real deal*

*For where your treasure is
That is where your heart will be also
Give up on the earthly stuff, gee whizz
The things of this life have gotta go*

Go for the eternal, that's where it's at

Yes, heavenly rewards – try shooting for that

II. Pictures of Christ

The passage we have looked at is an explanatory note confirming the salvation of those who anticipated the coming of Messiah while living under the law of Moses, prior to the incarnation of Jesus Christ. This will be seen as we continue.

Verse 1 opened with Joshua calling those of the eastern tribes. Joshua, the Lord is Salvation, anticipates Jesus. The three tribes look to the state of those saved by the work of Christ: the Reubenite, See a Son; the Gadite, Fortune; and half the tribe of Manasseh, He Shall Forget/From a Debt. The names explain their state as has been seen numerous times.

Verse 2 was Joshua's words to them noting that the people had kept all the words of Moses, He Who Draws Out, along with all that Joshua had commanded them. They were faithful to the writings of Moses and to the word of the Lord through the mouths of the prophets who came after Moses.

This doesn't mean that they were sinless under the law, nor should this be assumed. Rather, they anticipated Messiah and observed Moses. Jesus, during His ministry, noted that Moses wrote of Him (John 5:39 & 46). Thus, to heed Moses is to believe the word and anticipate the Messiah.

Those who believed received the promise of their inheritance prior to Israel's acceptance of the finished work of Christ. One could argue, "That's illogical, Charlie. Israel's national acceptance of Christ was detailed in Joshua 3 & 4. We're in Joshua 22 now."

Such a thought would be a misunderstanding of the structure of Joshua. Joshua has been a continuous stream of pictures concerning the work of Christ, the ending of the law, the church age, the rapture of the church, and so much more. That has all been detailed throughout Joshua.

Joshua has been carefully detailing redemptive history in categorical segments, not in chronological order. But it has not yet detailed the salvation of those of Israel who have lived under the law. There is an inheritance that awaits those of Israel who were saved by faith in the Messiah outside of the church age. Those saved during the church age, both Jew and Gentile, receive their inheritance at the rapture.

Verse 4 noted that “Lord your God has given rest to your brethren.” This demands an understanding of the purpose of and who the addressees are in the book of Hebrews.

Paul’s letters define what is going on during the church age. Whether Hebrews is written by Paul or not (I believe it is) doesn’t bear on what the intent of Hebrews is conveying. It is written to Hebrew believers.

Its placement in Scripture after Paul’s signed epistles indicates that it is an epistle pertaining to those Hebrews who are coming to faith after the church age. In other words, it is addressed to Israel, under the law, as defined in the 70 7’s of Daniel 9.

Of those 490 years, 483 years have occurred. Seven more years are promised to Israel to bring them out of the law and into the New Covenant. This is explicit. Hebrews explains things to these people that they need to know and hold fast to.

Having said that, this does not mean that information in Hebrews does not pertain to those in the church. Christ is our High Priest, atoning Sacrifice, and so forth. But the subject matter is addressed to the Hebrew people coming out of the law. That is clearly and precisely seen throughout the epistle.

Two key thoughts will substantiate this. The first is what it says of the Old Testament saints and those who are being addressed in Hebrews –

“And all these [Old Testament saints], having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us [those coming out of the law].” Hebrews 11:39, 40

Again, and to make sure you get this, it is the placement of the epistle, after the church-age epistles, that reveals who is being addressed. Even if Paul wrote the epistle, he is a member of the church and will be taken at the rapture. But his words are addressed to those Jews of the end times.

The second key thought is –

“In that He says, ‘A new *covenant*,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.” Hebrews 8:13

The law is still in effect for Israel, although it is obsolete and no longer useful as a means of obtaining a propitious relationship with God. Now that Messiah has come, it can no longer serve the purpose for which it was given, meaning to anticipate the Messiah.

The words “ready to vanish away” show us this. Israel, after the coming of Messiah, cannot be saved by faith in the coming Messiah because He has already come. This is the point of the words.

With that understood, there has to be a provision for those who were saved under the time of the law who believed in the coming Messiah (before His incarnation) or the Messiah that has come (after the rapture). The latter is what those final seven years of law are for, until national Israel believes and is saved.

With national Israel saved and having received their inheritance and rest, it still needs to be revealed what will happen to those who were of faith under the law before Christ’s coming. That is explained here. Joshua releases them to the land of their possession “which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan,” meaning before national Israel’s salvation.

With that, verse 5 reminded them to observe Moses by keeping the commands of the Lord, loving Him, etc. This seems like a note of reinserting the law, but that is to misunderstand both the words of Jesus and the purpose of Hebrews as well.

Moses only anticipated Jesus. To properly observe Moses is to come to Christ and be obedient to Him. That was clearly and unambiguously seen in the sermon where Moses said this –

“And the LORD said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. ¹⁹ And it shall be *that* whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require *it* of him.’” Deuteronomy 18:17-19

To be obedient to Moses, a person under the law must be obedient to Christ Jesus who replaces Moses. This is what I referred to a moment ago without citing the verse –

“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?” John 5:46, 47

With that understood, verse 6 said that Joshua (anticipating Jesus) sent them away to their tents. In other words, he is sending them to their inheritance. However, it was at this time that the parenthetical thought carefully defined Manasseh as being two half-tribes.

The half-tribe east of the Jordan is being referred to. They were given by Moses (He Who Draws Out) a possession in the Bashan, the Place of Fertile Soil. This is a reference to those saved prior to the return of Christ at Israel's national salvation. While still under the law (Moses) they believed the word of Messiah (in The Place of Fertile Soil) and were saved.

As elsewhere, including quite a few times in Joshua, Manasseh is singled out as a tribe, using that name to explain that God in Christ is the one who forgets man's sin because Jesus paid their debt (To Forget/From a Debt).

The use of both *mateh* (22:1) and *shevet* (22:7) shows us that this pertains to both the genealogical (individual) and political (national) nature of those of Israel who are saved. This was clearly seen in the two statements made by Joshua –

“And to the half tribe the Manasseh gave Moses in the Bashan...”

“...and to his half gave Joshua with their brothers from side the Jordan, westward.”

As I said, Moses gave the land east of the Jordan; Joshua gave the land west of the Jordan. This does not mean they were saved by adherence to Moses, but that they received their inheritance while under Moses. It is Joshua (anticipating Jesus) who actually bestows the inheritance upon both as recorded in the book of Joshua.

With that thought, the parenthesis ended. It was a necessary insert to clarify what was going on. If translations had recorded this parenthesis earlier, the typology would have been much more evident.

Verse 8 then expanded on the blessing that began in verse 6 noting all the riches the men had obtained. As was seen, the word *nekes* comes from an unused root meaning to accumulate. Thus, it signifies treasure, riches, or wealth. What they accumulated is only a foreshadowing of the true, heavenly riches that are coming for those in Christ. Jesus, speaking to Israel under the law said to the people –

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

-Matthew 16:19-21

This is what is foreshadowed in the great treasure laid up by the half-tribe of Manasseh here in Joshua.

Verse 9 noted that the three eastern tribes departed. They have the sonship, they have the fortune, and their sins are forgotten because of Christ having paid their debt. Their departure was said to be from Shiloh, Tranquility.

They had received their rest in the land of Canaan, Humbled, and were going to the Gilead, the Perpetual Fountain, eternity in Christ, in the land of their possession.

The key idea of this passage is found in verse 4. “And now, the Lord your God has given rest to your brethren.” It cannot be that this passage in Joshua stands as the promised rest of God. That is clearly seen in the words of Hebrews 4 which builds upon the words of Psalm 95.

To understand *that* rest, you may need to go back and watch the Joshua 1:10-18 passage where that is fully explained in the second section of the sermon. In short, remember that in verse 4, I noted that the Greek translation uses the word *katapauó*, the same word used in Hebrews 4 about the promised rest of God. The noun form, *katapausis*, the state of repose or a place of rest, is also used in that passage. Here is what a part of that passage says –

“For if Joshua had given them rest [*katapauó*], then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest [*sabbatismos*] for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest [*katapausis*] has himself also ceased [*katapauó*] from his works as God *did* from His. ¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest [*katapausis*], lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.” Hebrews 4:8-11

Joshua’s statement to these tribes only anticipates what Jesus actually provides to His people. David understood this and spoke of another day, knowing that Joshua did not provide the promised rest of God. However, Christ Jesus did.

But the Jews under the law who were saved through faith in Messiah must wait for their inheritance which will be given only when national Israel receives their grant. That is made clear in today's passage.

The church, both Jew and Gentile, will receive the fulfillment of their inheritance at the rapture. All others will receive theirs after the tribulation when the nation comes to Jesus. That will be evident when we read our closing verse today.

As for the question concerning whether Old Testament saints would also be raptured, my answer in the future will be, "The typology of Joshua points to "No."

The rapture is reserved for those of the church since the coming of Christ. Nothing is lost if this is incorrect, but the typology surely leans in that direction. Other verses in the Old Testament seem to point to that as well, but it is the typology here that pretty much sets it for me.

As for you, if you want to be a part of what the Lord is doing during the church age, including the rapture of the church, you need to be saved by the Lord first. It's such a simple thing, but it is the necessary requirement God has set forth for you. Let me tell you how you can appropriate what He offers through Jesus...

Closing Verse: *"And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Every one who is found written in the book.*

*² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

*³ Those who are wise shall shine
Like the brightness of the firmament,
And those who turn many to righteousness
Like the stars forever and ever."*

...

"But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days." Daniel 12:1-3 & 13

Next Week: Joshua 22:10-20 All will be ok despite the odds, yes, when the story is done... (The Lord God of Gods, Part I) (51st Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

So Joshua Blessed Them

Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the
-----tribe of Manasseh

And said to them what they could now do

“You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD

-----commanded

And have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you

You have not left your brethren these many days

Up to this day and so to you I applaud

But have kept the charge

Of the commandment of the LORD your God

And now the LORD your God has given

Rest to your brethren, as He promised them

Now therefore, return and go to your tents

And to the land of your possession, that precious gem

Which Moses the servant of the LORD

Gave you on the other side of the Jordan, according to his word

But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law

Which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you

To love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep

-----His commandments

To hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and

-----with all your soul, being faithful and true

So Joshua blessed them and sent them away

And they went to their tents on that very day

Now to half the tribe of Manasseh

Moses had given a possession in Bashan as you may have heard

But to the other half of it Joshua gave a possession

Among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward

And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents
He blessed them, and spoke to them, saying
“Return with much riches to your tents
With very much livestock, so he was conveying

“With silver, with gold
With bronze, with iron too
And with very much clothing
Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren
-----so you shall do”

So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe
-----of Manasseh returned
And departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh
Which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead
To the land of their possession they did go

Which they had obtained according to the word
Of the LORD by the hand of Moses just as they heard

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 22:10-20 (THE LORD GOD OF GODS, PART I)

There is a whole lot going on concerning the structure of Joshua 22. Starting with verse 10, there is a chiasm that will continue through the last verse of the chapter. As a reminder, a chiasm is a literary device that begins with a thought, proceeds through a series of thoughts, it then normally will have an anchor or pivot verse on which the chiasm hinges, and then it will give the same basic thoughts as it has just stated in reverse order.

Chiasms are not limited to the words alone though. They can repeat numbers, directions of travel, thoughts, grammatical structures, and more. Anything that is repeatable within the text can be a part of a chiasm. As for the one in this passage, we can go over it together –

Joshua 22:10-34 - The LORD, God of gods.
A great misunderstanding. (11/22/07)

a 22:10 Impressive Altar
----b 22:12 Preparation for war against tribes across Jordan
-----c 22:13 Phinehas sent
-----d 22:16-18 Turn away from following the LORD; He will be angry with us
-----e 22:18 Discussion of rebellion
-----f 22:19 The land is defiled by an unauthorized altar
-----g 22:20 Wrath on Israel because of Achan's trespass
-----x 22:22 – The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods
-----g 22:23 “If because of trespass, let God require it of us”
-----f 22:26-28 The land is not defiled; it is not an altar for sacrifice
-----e 22:29 Denial of rebellion against the LORD
-----d 22:31 The LORD is among us; we are delivered from His hand
-----c 22:32 Phinehas returns
----b 22:33 Cancellation of war preparation against tribes across Jordan
a 22:34 – Altar called “Witness”

As you can see, the thought develops to an anchor verse which is the highlight of the passage. This is not unusual. Rather, it is quite often the case. The entire flood of Noah, from Genesis 6 through Genesis 9, forms a chiasm that anchors on the words, “And God remembered Noah.”

The Bible is literally filled with chiasms. Entire websites have been developed to record them as they are found.

Text Verse: “For I know that the LORD is great,
And our Lord is above all gods.” Psalm 135:5

It’s a great feeling to find a chiasm, see if anyone else has discovered it, and then to be confident you are the first person to ever have known it existed. As Joshua was recorded almost 3500 years ago, that’s a long time for it to wait to be revealed.

As I said, there is a lot going on in Joshua. Another interesting pattern is found in Joshua 22. This deals with the naming of the tribes. The tribe of Manasseh, for example, is mentioned ten times in the chapter.

Five times, it is referred to with an article – the Manasseh. Why would that be? All three tribes east of the Jordan – Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh – are mentioned repeatedly in the chapter. However, three times only Reuben and Gad are mentioned.

Also, as we saw last week, two different words for “tribe” are used in the chapter. The word *mateh* is used once in verse 1 when referring to the genealogical half-tribe of Manasseh. It is used once again when referring to the tribes west of the Jordan in verse 14. Every other use is the word *shevet* which speaks of the political aspect.

Here is the breakdown of those things relating to the tribes west of the Jordan. Of note is that when the article is used before Manasseh, a separation is being highlighted. When it is not used, an inclusiveness is indicated. The difference is subtle, but it is evident –

1 to the Reubenite, to the Gadite, and to half tribe (*mateh*) Manasseh

7 and to half tribe (*shevet*) **the** Manasseh

9 sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and half tribe (*shevet*) **the** Manasseh

10 sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and half tribe (*shevet*) **the** Manasseh

11 sons Reuben, sons Gad, and half tribe (*shevet*) **the** Manasseh

13 unto sons Reuben, and unto sons Gad, and unto half tribe (*shevet*) Manasseh

15 unto sons Reuben, and unto sons Gad, and unto half tribe (*shevet*) Manasseh

21 sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and half tribe (*shevet*) **the** Manasseh

25 sons Reuben and sons Gad

30 sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and sons of Manasseh

31 unto sons Reuben, and unto sons Gad, and unto sons of Manasseh

32 from sons Reuben and from sons Gad
33 sons Reuben and sons Gad

As you read the Bible, make mental notes of patterns. Eventually, things will start to jump out at you that will teach you about what is being conveyed. Pay attention and enjoy this precious word. After all, it is God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Great, Impressive Altar (verses 10-13)

In the previous passage, Joshua dismissed the tribes who were settled east of the Jordan. Upon their dismissal, the passage ended with these words –

“So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.”

-Joshua 22:9

The events that are to take place here occur after that...

¹⁰ And when they came to the region of the Jordan which *is* in the land of Canaan,

More precisely, it reads: *vayavou el g'liloth ha'yarden asher b'erets k'naan* – “and went unto circles the Jordan which in land Canaan.” The men of these tribes departed from Joshua and came to the areas of the Jordan that are situated prior to crossing of the Jordan.

The word *g'liloth* signifies an area comprised within borders and thus a circuit. It comes from *galal*, to roll away. It is the same root word as Gilgal and Galilee, both of which signify Liberty, as if a burden is rolled off of someone. In this case, it is a feminine plural construct meaning circuits or regions, or more literally circles. We could define it as “Liberties.”

The Jordan means the Descender. Canaan signifies Humbled, Humiliated, or Subdued. Typology is being developed within the literal, historical story. Once in this location...

¹⁰ (con't) **the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan—a great, impressive altar.**

This is where the chiasm of this passage begins, referring to the impressive altar. The preposition means upon, above, or over: *vayivnu bene reuben u-bene gad va'khatsi shevet ham'nasheh al ha'yarden mizbeakh gadol l'mareh* – “and built sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and half-tribe the Manasseh upon the Jordan altar, whopping to sight.”

The word for tribe, *shevet*, speaks of the political aspect of the tribe rather than *mateh*, the genealogical aspect. The matter being addressed is a matter of the religious/political aspect of tribal matters. The genealogy of the people is less important in this matter than how the people are conducting themselves.

The battles to subdue Canaan have been completed. Thus, what they are doing is not unlike what Moses did after defeating Amalek –

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write this *for* a memorial in the book and recount *it* in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.’ ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-IS-My-Banner; ¹⁶ for he said, ‘Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD *will have war* with Amalek from generation to generation.’” Exodus 17:14-16

Moses built an altar as a testimony and a witness to what had happened and what was anticipated into the future. As for the names, Reuben means See a Son. Gad means Fortune. Manasseh means both To Forget and From a Debt.

An altar is a place where man meets with God. In this case, it specifically says they have built it upon (above, over) the Jordan. Most translations say near or by the Jordan. In fact, only Smith’s Literal Translation properly rendered the preposition. Not only is it upon the Jordan, but it is massive. As it says, “whopping to sight.”

The words of the previous clause “which *is* in the land of Canaan” signify that the altar itself is built in Canaan proper. However, some scholars disagree with that based on the words of the next verse...

¹¹ **Now the children of Israel heard *someone* say,**

Though the intent is unchanged, it more literally, it reads, “And heard, sons Israel to say.” Word came back to the other tribes of Israel west of the Jordan what had been built.

11 (con’t) “Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar

It is not “an altar,” but “the altar”: *hineh banu bene reuben u-bene gad va’khatsi shevet ham’nasheh eth ha’mizbeakh* – “Behold, have built sons Reuben, and sons Gad, and half-tribe the Manasseh the altar.”

The reason this is important is because it appears obvious to the other tribes that this specific altar is intended to replace the altar of the Lord. That will be seen more clearly in verse 22:28. With that now understood, the next wording is very precise but is also very argued over...

11 (con’t) on the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan—on the children of Israel’s side.”

The same preposition, *el* (in, into, toward) is used three times in this clause: *el mul erets k’naan el g’liloth ha’yarden el ever bene Yisrael* – “into front land Canaan, into circles the Jordan, into side sons Israel.” Some scholars demand that the words signify “over against,” and thus on the other side of the Jordan, but the wording does not seem to support this conclusion.

The same phrase, *el mul*, was seen in Joshua 8:33 where it said, “His half toward front [*el mul*] Mount Gerizim and his half toward front [*el mul*] Mount Ebal.” There, the meaning was that the people were standing in front of each mountain facing the ark.

Thus, the use here indicates the altar is in front of the land of Canaan as well. It is within its borders. This is more evidently supported by the thought expressed in verse 25. The purpose of building the altar is to validate a right that has already been granted.

Despite the scholarly disagreement, the use of the preposition *al* (above, on, over) in verse 10 tells us that regardless of which side of the Jordan it is actually on, it is to be taken as if it is resting above the Jordan. Considering that the Jordan is symbolic of Christ Jesus, this is the important thought to be considered. With that, it next says...

¹² And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them.

The chiasm continues here with the preparation for war. It says: *vayishmeru bene Yisrael vayiqahlu kal adat bene Yisrael Shiloh la'aloth alehem la'tsavah* – “And heard sons Israel, and assembled all congregation sons Israel, Shiloh, to arise against them to the war.”

There was to be one place of worship and for bringing sacrifices and offerings to the Lord. That was currently located in Shiloh, or Tranquility. This is explicitly stated in the law –

“You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever *is* right in his own eyes— ⁹for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁰But *when* you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, ¹¹then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD. ¹²And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who *is* within your gates, since he has no portion nor inheritance with you. ¹³Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; ¹⁴but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.” Deuteronomy 12:8-14

As this is perceived to be a violation of that law, Israel has met at Shiloh, the place authorized for such offerings, and it is from here that the gathering determined to go against the tribes east of the Jordan. However, before they actually send out the armies, they determine to first send a delegation to determine the situation...

¹³ Then the children of Israel sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead,

This is the first time the article has been omitted from before the name of Manasseh since the first verse of the chapter: *vayishlekhu bene Yisrael el bene Reuven v'el bene*

gad v'el khatsi shevet m'nasheh el erets ha'gil'ad eth pin'khas ben el'azar ha'kohen –
“And sent sons Israel unto sons Reuben and unto sons Gad and unto half-tribe
Manasseh, unto land the Gilead, Phinehas son Eleazer the priest.”

The omission of the article is because the other half-tribe of Manasseh is among the delegation being sent. That will be seen in the next verse. Hence, there is a sense of inclusiveness rather than division.

With the naming of Phinehas, another step in the unfolding chiasm is given. The name *pin'khas*, or Phinehas, means Mouth of Brass, and thus, Mouth of Judgment because brass signifies judgment. Eleazer means Whom God Helps.

This is the first mention of Phinehas in Joshua. As the son of the high priest, he is sent on behalf of the congregation. Even if Eleazar had other sons, Phinehas had proven himself zealous for the Lord in Numbers 25 when he ran a spear through the Israeli man and the Midianite woman who were in bed together. Because of his deed, the account said –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹¹ ‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. ¹² Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; ¹³ and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.’” Numbers 25:10-13

The Gilead means the Perpetual Fountain. Along with Phineas, others accompanied him...

*What is this treachery that you have done?
What is this that you have committed against the Lord?
This is not acceptable, not from anyone
You have rebelled against His word*

*What is it that we can do to make things right?
How shall we deal with what's been done?
Your transgressions are exposed in the light
Beside our God, there is to be none*

Just wait! You have misunderstood what we have done

*Our actions were accomplished with pure intent
We have put our trust in the Holy One
Let us explain what our actions have meant*

II. Do Not Rebel Against the Lord (verses 14-20)

¹⁴ and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel;

va'asarah n'siyim imo nasi ekhad nasi ekhad l'beith av l'kol matoth Yisrael – “and ten leaders with him, leader one, leader one, to house father to all tribes Israel.” The *nasiy'* signifies one who is lifted up. He is a leader and this would be the main leader in the tribe of each of the father's houses.

These would be the leaders of the nine tribes and the half-tribe residing in Canaan.

Ten “signifies *the perfection of Divine order* ... It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.” Bullinger

Phinehas cannot be considered an eleventh. Rather, it is ten plus one. He is not representing Levi but rather the spiritual leadership among the tribes. Also, the word for tribe is *mateh*, referring to the genealogical aspect of the tribes.

As seen in the last sermon, all of the uses of *shevet* pertain to the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh. One use of *mateh* (verse 1) also refers to the eastern half-tribe of Manasseh and the other, which is seen here, pertains to the ten tribes west of the Jordan.

This structure reveals the political nature of what is transpiring, but it also reveals that it is still a family matter concerning the tribes of Israel. This current use of *mateh* is referring to the family structure of the western tribes, and is further defined, saying...

^{14 (con't)} and each one was the head of the house of his father among the divisions of Israel.

A literal reading is, “and man head their fathers they to thousands *of* Israel.” This would be the highest official of the tribe who presided over all lesser divisions within the tribe as proposed by Jethro in Exodus 18 and to which Moses agreed to. Of these men...

¹⁵ Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying,

The article before Manasseh is once again not used here. This is because Manasseh west of the Jordan is a part of the delegation. All of the twelve tribes are represented along with Phinehas the priest. Despite this, the political rather than the genealogical aspect of the half-tribe (*shevet*) of Manasseh is indicated.

Understanding these nuances, the dialogue between the sides begins with the words...

16 “Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD:

It is an amazing declaration: *koh am’ru kol adat Yehovah* – “Thus says whole congregation Yehovah.” They don’t say, “the whole congregation of Israel.” They are speaking to a part of Israel. But they now claim they are the entirety of the congregation of the Lord. This is based on the assumption that these being addressed have cut themselves off from the Lord through a treacherous act. As it says...

16 (con’t) ‘What treachery is this that you have committed against the God of Israel,

mah ha’maal ha’zeh asher mealtem b’elohe Yisrael – “What the transgressing, the this, which you have transgressed in God Israel.” The word *maal* signifies to transgress, act treacherously or unfaithfully, etc. It was first used in Leviticus. It could be considered a priestly word where one acts in a manner that violates the stipulations of a covenant.

It was used in Numbers 5 concerning a woman who defiled herself by being unfaithful to her husband. This is what is being ascribed to these two-and-one-half tribes now. They have supposedly spurned their God by building an unapproved altar which has caused them...

16 (con’t) to turn away this day from following the LORD,

This is a portion of the chiasm where they have turned away from the Lord: *la’shuv ha’yom me’akhare Yehovah* – “to turn back the day from after Yehovah.” The idea between the previous clause and this one is that these people have transgressed in (against) the God of Israel by turning back from following after the Lord. It is a very strong accusation of apostasy...

16 (con’t) in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the LORD?

bivnotkhem la'khem mizbeakh limradkhem ha'yom b'Yehovah – “in your building to you altar to rebel you, the day, in Yehovah.” Here the word *marad* is used. It signifies the act of rebelling. The last time it was used was in Numbers 14, the chapter where the people rebelled against the Lord and were thus sentenced to perishing in the wilderness –

“If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’⁹ Only do not rebel [*marad*] against the LORD, nor fear the people of the land, for they *are* our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us. Do not fear them.” Numbers 14:8, 9

If the Lord was upset enough at the congregation to bring forty years of wilderness wandering upon the people until all the adults had perished, how could these people now think to escape His wrath? But more, another terrible incident is mentioned as a reminder...

¹⁷ *Is the iniquity of Peor not enough for us,*

The words read, “The little to us iniquity Peor?” It is as if the sins of the past were still hanging heavily upon the people and this would only make it worse. From what is said, one can assume Phinehas is speaking because he reminded them of the incident of Peor. The account began with these words –

“Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab.² They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.³ So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.” Numbers 25:1-3

Despite 24,000 people who worshiped Baal being killed, Phinehas knew the stain remained upon them...

¹⁷ (con't) *from which we are not cleansed till this day,*

The words here are rather amazing coming from the son of the high priest: *asher lo hitaharnu mimenu ad ha'yom ha'zeh* – “which no purifying from until the day the this.” It is as if Phinehas fully comprehended the words of Hebrews 10 that would be written after the coming of Christ –

“For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually

year by year, make those who approach perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” -Hebrews 10:1-4

Despite Israel having the annual Day of Atonement, there was no purification from what occurred, only a reminder of the guilt the nation bore. It is a most incredible statement to have been uttered at this early stage of the Law of Moses.

And not only had the sacrifices not purified them, the wrath that had been poured out on the people was only stayed because of the actions of Phinehas...

¹⁷ (con't) **although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,**

It is not “a plague.” Rather: *vayhi ha'negeph ba'adat Yehovah* – “and was the plague in congregation Yehovah.” What occurred wasn't arbitrary or happenstance. Rather, it was a targeted outpouring of the wrath of the Lord against the congregation.

Most of the same people that were alive at the time of the plague were still alive. The event wasn't long ago and more turning from the Lord would again kindle His wrath.

And the idea of building an altar isn't for the purpose of a single incidence of rebellion. Rather, an altar is something that is returned to again and again. Peor was a single offense. Imagine what continuous rebellion could result in.

¹⁸ **but that you must turn away this day from following the LORD?**

These words follow logically after the first clause of the previous verse with the other clauses being parenthetical. Also, in the words, the verb is imperfect and there is an emphasis concerning the addressee –

The little to us iniquity Peor? ... And *YOU* are turning away this day from after Yehovah.

The statement smacks of total incredulity. “How could anyone forget what happened there? And yet, you have forgotten and you are set to make things infinitely worse for us...”

18 (con't) And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD, that tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel.

This continues the chiasm with the discussion of rebellion: “And it is you rebelling the day in Yehovah and tomorrow unto all congregation Israel He will be angered.” It is not just that these men will be held responsible for the transgression, but the entire congregation will be affected.

The obvious meaning, without it having been said, is that war is brewing to stop the impending judgment of the Lord. With that understood, an offer of appeasement is made...

19 Nevertheless, if the land of your possession is unclean, then cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD,

Ellicott says, “This suggests that they might have built the altar in it [meaning the land] to sanctify it. But it would hardly be intelligible unless the altar was, as we supposed, on the eastern side.” But that doesn’t logically follow. The assumption is that the Lord sanctifies the land.

If the Lord dwells in Canaan, as is clearly the case because His tabernacle is there, then building an altar elsewhere would be pointless. The altar was certainly on the west side of the Jordan. But more importantly, the text reads that it was built above (upon, over) the Jordan. The Jordan itself is the focus of its location.

It wouldn’t make much sense to build an altar that wasn’t central to all of the people west of Jordan for their use if the purpose of the altar was to sanctify the land. But this altar isn’t centrally located at all.

It is the thought of the land being unclean that the delegation proposes. As this is so, instead of worrying about another altar, the tribes are invited to cross over to...

19 (con't) where the LORD’s tabernacle stands, and take possession among us;

asher shakan sham mishkan Yehovah v’heakhzu b’tokenu – “where abides there tabernacle Yehovah and take possession in our midst.” The *mishkan*, or tabernacle, was mentioned many, many times in Exodus and Numbers. The last time it was mentioned was in Numbers 31:47 and it will only be mentioned here and in Joshua 22:19 & 29.

The *mishkan* is the actual dwelling place of the Lord. That word is derived from *shakan*, also used in the verse, which signifies “to dwell.” That *mishkan* is surrounded by the *ohel*, or tent. The entire edifice, including its surroundings, is known as the *miqdash*, or sanctuary. It is the tabernacle itself that Phineas refers to, the place where the Lord dwells.

He appeals to the two-and-one-half tribes to return to Canaan, where the tabernacle resides, and thus where Yehovah resides, and take possession there.

19 (con’t) but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God.

More precisely, it reads: “and not in Yehovah rebel, and with us not rebel, in your building to you altar from besides altar Yehovah our God.” If the people feel that the land in which they dwell is defiled, for whatever reason, then they should determine to not live there.

Building another altar won’t solve the matter and it is considered an act of rebellion against both the Lord and against the people of Israel. As this is so, then it could only lead to a state of war between the two. That is assured because another example from recent history is next introduced...

20 Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel?

Like the previous incident of Peor, this occurred just a few years before, not long after the people crossed the Jordan into Canaan. And Achan’s crime didn’t just bring punishment upon himself. Rather, the battle of Ai was lost and soldiers died because of it—

“So the LORD said to Joshua: “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put *it* among their own stuff. ¹² Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you.”

-Joshua 7:10-12

In this, the matter had to be resolved before the Lord's presence would be with them again. As such...

^{20 (fin)} **And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.”**

Once the perpetrator was identified, Achan, his family, and all he possessed were devoted to destruction. The point is that if these tribes do not turn from their act of rebellion, Israel will be forced to not only destroy them, but their families and all they possessed. Until that happened, the delegation believed that the Lord would not be with them.

As for the names, Achan means Serpent of Trouble. Zerah, coming from *zarakh*, signifies Rising of Light.

Concerning this passage, we have more to learn before we can discover why it is included in Joshua. We are being presented with typology concerning other things. And so, we have to get through the passage before that can be fully fleshed out and explained.

As for the historical context of what is being seen, these events actually occurred. As has been seen, quite a few of the historical sites in Joshua are known. The location of this altar is debated, but there is at least one known possibility for where it is.

The detail provided concerning the location and those who were involved in building it verifies its authenticity. If the story wasn't true, there would be little value to it.

As for the moral nature of what is being said, there are several points worth considering. First, at the time of Joshua, it is evident that Israel was under sound leadership and Joshua was determined to have the people under him comply with the law.

Oddly, however, Joshua is not mentioned at all in the Hebrew text of this chapter. His name is included in the last verse of the Greek text. Either way, the lack of prominence of his name in the passage is notable.

Another point from a moral perspective is that if you are going to do something that affects others, it is always good to tell them what you are up to.

Next week, we will see the reason for the actions taken by the tribes east of the Jordan, but no explanation would have been needed if they had told the western tribes what

they were doing in advance. To finish today, we can turn to the comments of Matthew Henry who says this –

“At first sight it seemed a design to set up an altar against the altar at Shiloh. God is jealous for his own institutions; we should be so too, and afraid of every thing that looks like, or leads to idolatry. Corruptions in religion are best dealt with at first. But their prudence in following up this zealous resolution is no less commendable. Many an unhappy strife would be prevented, or soon made up, by inquiries into the matter of the offence. The remembrance of great sins committed formerly, should engage us to stand on our guard against the beginnings of sin; for the way of sin is down-hill.”

He is right. Later in Israel’s history, they will not guard against such things nearly so carefully. That will eventually lead to ever-increasing sin and rebellion against the Lord. Eventually, there was no remedy and the punishments promised in the law came upon them.

Churches today are following the same unholy path. We are disregarding the warnings set forth in Scripture and ever-increasing wickedness is being introduced right into what should be the sacred meeting place of the saints. For those who practice such things, it cannot go well.

Let us be on guard and stand firm in our faith, grounded in the word, and acting faithfully to follow in the steps of the Lord who purchased us from the power of sin and the devil with His own precious blood.

Closing Verse: *“They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor,
And ate sacrifices made to the dead.*

*²⁹ Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds,
And the plague broke out among them.*

*³⁰ Then Phinehas stood up and intervened,
And the plague was stopped.*

*³¹ And that was accounted to him for righteousness
To all generations forevermore.” Psalm 106:28-31*

Next Week: Joshua 22:21-29 *Despite the odds, this sermon we will get through...* (The Lord God of gods, Part II) (52nd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord God of Gods, Part I

And when they came to the region of the Jordan
Which is in the land of Canaan, on that date
The children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe
-----of Manasseh
Built an altar there by the Jordan—an altar impressive and great

Now the children of Israel heard someone say
“Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and
-----of Manasseh half the tribe
Have built an altar on the frontier of the land of Canaan
In the region of the Jordan—on the children of Israel’s side”

And when the children of Israel heard of it
The whole congregation without haw or hem
Of the children of Israel
Gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them

Then the children of Israel sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest
To the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half
-----the tribe of Manasseh with words to tell
Into the land of Gilead
And with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house
-----of every tribe of Israel

And each one was the head of the house as well
Of his father among the divisions of Israel

Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad
-----and to half the tribe of Manasseh
To the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying
“Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD:
These words they were then conveying

'What treachery is this that you have committed
Against the God of Israel
To turn away this day from following the LORD
What is the meaning, please open your mouth and tell

'In that you have built for yourselves an altar
That you might rebel this day against the LORD in this way?
Is the iniquity of Peor not enough for us
From which we are not cleansed till this day?

'Although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD
But that you must turn away this day from following the LORD
-----as well?
And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD
That tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation
-----of Israel

'Nevertheless, if the land of your possession is unclean
Then cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD
Where the LORD's tabernacle stands
And take possession among us according to our word

'But do not rebel against the LORD
Nor rebel against us; this action is so odd
By building yourselves an altar besides
The altar of the LORD our God

'Did not Achan the son of Zerah
Commit a trespass in the accursed thing in his obliquity
And wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel?
And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity.'"

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise

Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 22:21-29 (THE LORD GOD OF GODS, PART II)

Our passage today will anticipate Christ. If it didn't, it would be out of line with any other passage we have looked at from Joshua. We'll see hints of this as we go along, but when we get to the end of the chapter, we will see what the overall typology is telling us.

However, there are also lessons concerning our own lives. The verses here speak to us about the importance of communication, reconciliation, and unity within Israel. Since we are a part of the commonwealth of Israel, the same should be true for the body of Christ.

As we saw in the last passage, when the western tribes of Israel heard about the altar, they assumed that the eastern tribes were rebelling against God by setting up a false altar. They gathered an army to prepare for war against their fellow Israelites.

But before rushing into battle, they sent a delegation led by Phinehas the priest, to investigate. After lodging their complaint against the eastern tribes, here we will see how those tribes explain building the altar.

Text Verse: *"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God." James 1:19, 20*

The tribes that gathered at Shiloh in preparation for war were restrained, allowing things to play out with the delegation. The eastern tribes were slow to speak, allowing the delegation to state its complaint before responding. In the passage today, the western tribes will be swift to hear.

Nothing is recorded concerning them speaking while those from east of the Jordan are allowed to finish with their response.

We can learn from this. I know I can. I find it hard to keep from interrupting when I disagree with someone. If you don't already know this, ask any member of my family or anyone I do mission work with each week. I'm not the patient "listen and be silent" sort. Hat's off to you if you are.

As for this passage in Joshua, the entire episode between the tribes could have been avoided if the western tribes had simply communicated their intentions. At the same

time, they probably never imagined that the actions they were taking would get the other tribes in such a huff, so the blame can only go so far. Sending the delegation was the right thing to do.

As you read the Bible, think about things like this. There is an endless stream of lessons we can derive from just thinking about the circumstances of whatever passage we read. Above all, however, think about how the passage is pointing to Jesus.

God selected these words for more than just a quick life application about keeping quiet while others talk. He selected them because they are relevant to the greater plan of redemption laid out in the Bible. This is certain.

Such great things as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Border Between Us and You (verses 21-25)

In the Joshua 22:10-20 sermon, Phinehas and ten rulers from each tribe of Israel that settled in Canaan came to the eastern tribes and questioned them concerning the altar they had built. They reminded those tribes east of the Jordan about the matter of Peor, the trespass of Achan, and the tragedy those events brought upon Israel. Now, those of the eastern tribes will respond concerning their actions...

21 Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh answered

If you remember, the structure of the passage was provided concerning the use of the word *shevet* or *mateh* being used to translate the word “tribe.” Also, we saw a list of times the definite article was used before mentioning the half-tribe of Manasseh.

In this case, the word is *shevet*, the political aspect of the tribe. Also, there is an article before Manasseh –half tribe the Manasseh. Thus, there is a sense of separation being conveyed by these people in their response to the accusations...

21 (con’t) and said to the heads of the divisions of Israel:

Rather than said, it reads, spoke: *vaydaberu eth rashe alpe Yisrael* – “and spoke to heads thousands Israel.” Their words are a statement without any participation from their

audience. It will be a declaration of innocence. Further, their words are especially highlighted in Scripture because they are a key part of the special literary device that is found in this passage...

22 “The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods,

The words form the center of the chiasm. They are not complicated and yet they are widely translated: *El Elohim Yehovah El Elohim Yehovah*. A few examples –

The God of gods -- Jehovah, the God of gods – Jehovah (YLT)
The Lord the most mighty God, the Lord the most mighty God (DR)
The Mighty One, God, Jehovah, the Mighty One, God, Jehovah (ASV)
The LORD is the greatest God! (CEV)
God, God, the LORD, God, God, the LORD (JPS Tanakh)

El means God, coming from *ayil*, a ram. That comes from *ul*, the body, but by implication “to be strong.” Thus, it signifies might or strength. Elohim is a majestic plural of El that refers to God while indicating a fulness within Him. It can also be a plural, gods, when referring to other gods. The Tetragrammaton, YHWH (יהוה), is the divine name – Yehovah.

As it is two standard nouns followed by a proper noun, and as it is probably referring only to the true God, not other gods in relation to Him, I think the sense is – God! *Even* God – Yehovah! The repetition is given as a strong emphatic proclamation.

The first use of each word helps explain the magnificence of the title. El was first seen in Genesis 14:18 –

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God [e/] Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said:
‘Blessed be Abram of God [e/] Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth;
²⁰ And blessed be God [e/] Most High,
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’” Genesis 14:18-20

He is the God of strength and power who can deliver one from all enemies because He possesses all power and authority in heaven and on earth. It is a claim made by Jesus in Matthew 28:18, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” To have all authority is to possess what that authority extends over.

Next, Elohim, was first seen in the first sentence of the Bible –

“In the beginning God [*elohim*] created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

He is the Creator God who is before all things and by whom all things exist and thus also subsist. These are qualities ascribed to Jesus by the apostles –

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1

“And *he* is before all, and all things subsist together by him.” Colossians 1:17 (Darby)

The divine name of God, YHVH (יהוה), or Yehovah, was first seen in Genesis 2 –

“This *is* the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD [YHVH] God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD [YHVH] God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground; ⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. ⁷ And the LORD [YHVH] God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Genesis 2:4-7

Among countless other aspects indicated by this name, He is the personal God who interacts with His creation, who shaped man in His image, and who possesses the breath of life within Himself. Numerous verses of the New Testament convey to us that this is Jesus. John sums it up nicely –

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— ² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us.” 1 John 1:1, 2

It is to this majestic God that the eastern tribes appeal, saying...

²² (con't) **He knows, and let Israel itself know—**

The highly emphatic nature of the words continues here: *hu yodea v'Yisrael hu yeda* – “HE knows, and Israel – HE shall know.” They are making the strongest defense utterable concerning the matter at hand. The Lord is already aware of their intentions concerning the matter, and Israel will realize (the verb is imperfect) it as well.

From there, they call for proper discernment on the matter at hand because an action is required by their accusers...

22 (con't) if *it is* in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD,

They take the words of their accusers and restate them, thus highlighting the gravity of the matter: *im b'mered v'im b'maal b'Yehovah* – “if in rebellion and if in transgression in Yehovah.”

These words form the main clause of the conditional statement. In them, their accusers had used the verb forms of the words rebel and transgress several times in their address. Those of the eastern tribes now use the noun form, stating that if they are found to be in the state of rebellion or transgression, they should not be delivered.

Having come with the highly emphatic and solemn pronouncement of the titles and name of God, nothing could be more convicting or acquitting. Either there is absolute guilt or there is absolute innocence in what they have done.

22 (con't) do not save us this day.

al toshienu ha'yom ha'zeh – “not do save us the day, the this.” The words are parenthetical to elicit the highest degree of consideration by their accusers. And more, they continue with the challenge to exercise discernment, saying...

23 If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD,

More precisely, “to build to us altar to turn from after Yehovah.” It is a part of the conditional statement. If we have built this altar for a purpose that will mean departing from following after the Lord, we should not be saved. Also...

23 (con't) or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings,

It says, “and if to ascend on it burnt-offering and present-offering,” These words define how they could turn from following the Lord.

The offerings were to be made by the priests at the sanctuary currently located in Shiloh. This is said in direct response to the accusation against them in verse 16, “in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the Lord?”

The *olah*, or burnt offerings, are those that are wholly burnt up to the Lord. The *minkhah*, or present-offerings, are normally bloodless and voluntary. They are gifts presented, such as grain offerings. Also...

²³ (con't) **or if to offer peace offerings on it,**

More precisely, “and if to make on it sacrifices-peace.” The *shelamim* or peace offerings are a sacrifice for fellowship between two parties where both partake of the sacrifice. As such, some is given to the priest as the Lord’s portion and some is returned to the offeror as his portion.

If this is not the Lord’s altar for offerings, then it is, by default, an acknowledgment of other gods and that these various sacrifices and offerings are being offered to them for appeasement, petitioning, and fellowship. This could not be allowed to stand. Further, the men of the eastern tribes acknowledge that if this was their intent...

²³ (con't) **let the LORD Himself require *an account*.**

The words are emphatic: *Yehovah hu yebaqesh* – “Yehovah – HE will seek.” The meaning is that the Lord Himself would intervene and require an accounting for their apostasy. They know this, and so it would be the epitome of stupidity to do what they have been accused of.

When laid out as the thought is presented, the sense is clear –

Protasis: If *it is* in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD:

Emphatic parenthesis: (do not save us this day!)

Protasis continued: ...if we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it...

Apodosis: ...let the LORD Himself require *an account*.

On the other hand...

²⁴ But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying,

Rather, “And if not, from anxiety from word we have done this, saying.” In other words, if the Lord doesn’t find anything wrong in their intentions, then there must be another reason that they have built the altar. The very thing that brought them to build the altar is just the opposite of what they have been accused of.

In this, a new word, *deagah*, is introduced. It is a noun signifying the state of anxiety. As for what would cause this state of anxiety, they explain that with their next words...

²⁴ (con’t) ‘In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, “What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel?”

Literally: “Tomorrow may speak your sons to our sons saying, ‘What to you and to Yehovah, God of Israel?’” The meaning is that at some point in the indefinite future, maybe even tomorrow itself, the ten tribes in Canaan will say to the eastern tribes, “What relationship exists between you and the Lord, the God of Israel?”

It is as if the eastern tribes are not really a part of those who have fellowship with the Lord. As such, they are outsiders and do not deserve the benefits of partaking in the covenant promises. Their thoughts are not without validity. This is seen in their continued explanation...

²⁵ For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us, *you* children of Reuben and children of Gad.

It is of note that the half-tribe of Manasseh is excluded from their words. Like much of the discourse so far, the wording is very precise. It reads, “And border gave Yehovah between us and between you, sons Reuben and sons Gad – the Jordan.”

The state of anxiety is that at some point in time, those in Canaan will say, “If you were really a part of us, you would be living on this side of the Jordan. Therefore, the Lord Himself has divided us, separating you from us. Therefore...”

²⁵ (con’t) *You have no part in the LORD.*”

ein lakhem kheleq b’Yehovah – “Naught to you portion in Yehovah.” The border that exists between the tribes is evidence that those tribes were purposefully separated from the Lord.

This then is the purpose for having built the altar on the west side of the Jordan. If the Jordan was supposedly a border that excluded them from a portion in the Lord, then why is their altar built on the western side, above the Jordan? The claim was made within Canaan proper and the altar testifies to it.

Without that, the claim would stand...

²⁵ (con't) **So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing the LORD.'**

v'hishbitu benekhem eth banenu l'bilti yero eth Yehovah – “And caused your sons our sons to cease fearing Yehovah.” The idea being expressed is that of fellowshipping, worshiping, and all other interactions – both internal and external – in relation to the Lord.

The division of the land is noted explicitly in the books of Moses. However, those in Canaan could make the argument that the worship of the Lord is reserved for them alone. In Numbers 34, it says –

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²‘Command the children of Israel, and say to them: “When you come into the land of Canaan, this *is* the land that shall fall to you as an inheritance—the land of Canaan to its boundaries. ... This shall be your land with its surrounding boundaries.’” Numbers 34:1, 2 & 12

Within those verses the borders were carefully defined. After that, it then said –

“Then Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying: ‘This *is* the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe. ¹⁴ For the tribe of the children of Reuben according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad according to the house of their fathers, have received *their inheritance*; and the half-tribe of Manasseh has received its inheritance. ¹⁵ The two tribes and the half-tribe have received their inheritance on this side of the Jordan, *across from* Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.’” Numbers 34:13-15

Therefore, using, or rather, misusing the words of Moses, the western tribes could unjustly say that the eastern tribes were excluded from the inheritance of the Lord...

*How could we turn away
From following the Lord Jesus?*

*It is He who our sin debt did pay
Such a marvelous thing He has done for us*

*And how could another turn us back
And tell us we have no part in Him?
That would be the worst kind of attack
Such a thought is dark and grim*

*He is our God, and to Him, we shall cling
Forever and ever it shall be so
Jesus Christ our Lord and King
No other god shall we ever know*

II. You Have No Part in the Lord (verses 26-29)

²⁶ Therefore we said, ‘Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar,

The word translated as “now” has less to do with time as it does to suggest something. We may say, “Now, look here.” We aren’t saying, “Look here at this time.” Rather, it is an interjection, “Hey, look here.” That is the sense of what is being said.

The wording, as before, continues to be very detailed, “And we say, ‘Make, pray, to us to build *the* altar.’” By using the definite article, it is then set in contrast to verse 23 –

“to build to us altar to turn from after Yehovah.”

“to us to build the altar.”

They are not building “an altar” for ritual purposes to turn from following the Lord. Rather, they have a particular purpose for it that excludes such a notion. Thus, they are building “the altar...”

²⁶ (con’t) not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice,

lo l’olah v’lo l’zavakh – “not to burnt-offering and not to sacrifice.” The whole burnt offering would be for appeasement and the sacrifice would be for atonement, fellowship, etc. The altar is not intended for such things as this. Rather, they explain, saying...

²⁷ but *that it may be* a witness

It is emphatic: *ki ed hu* – “for witness IT.” This is why it is called “the altar.” It has a specific purpose that has nothing to do with “an altar” that would replace *the* altar of the Lord. Rather, it is to be a witness...

27 (con’t) between you and us and our generations after us,

It is much more precise: “between us, and between you, and between our generations after us.” The altar stands between each principal entity as a witness...

27 (con’t) that we may perform the service of the LORD before Him

la’avod eth avodath Yehovah l’phanav – “to serve service Yehovah to His face.” The meaning is that they fully intend to serve the Lord at the location where the tabernacle is located, not where this altar is located. The altar stood only as a witness to this fact. As for serving before the Lord at the tabernacle, that was to be...

27 (con’t) with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings;

Instead, it reads: “in our burnt offerings, and in our sacrifices, and in our peace offerings.” Rather than the previous verse where the purpose of the altar was explained, this is a listing of the things that the people offer on the altar.

It is in the presentation of these things that they would perform the service of the Lord. To ensure that they would never be deprived of this right, they built the altar so...

27 (con’t) that your descendants may not say to our descendants in time to come, “You have no part in the LORD.”

This now fully explains the state of anxiety that prompted them to build the altar in the first place. At some future point (lit: tomorrow), they may be kept from their portion in the Lord. They had considered this as a possibility, they had pondered how they could ensure this would never be the case, and thus they built the altar as a witness to keep it from ever being considered...

28 Therefore we said that it will be, when they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come,

Rather than “or,” it says “and.” In other words, they are assuming that this is something that will happen quickly. They will be considered as being excluded from the portion of

the Lord and it will become the customary way of dealing with them: “And we say, and it will become, for they say unto us, and unto our generations tomorrow...”

28 (con't) that we may say, 'Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made,

The words leave out any definite articles: “And we said, ‘See, replica altar Yehovah which made our fathers.’” There is one altar of the Lord and this is a replica of it. As it is on the western side of the Jordan, it was built to witness to those within Canaan that those east of the Jordan worshiped the Lord just as they did.

As Yehovah’s altar could not have been replicated in such an exacting manner if they hadn’t seen it, then this was clear evidence that they had always been followers of the Lord, they were entitled to fellowship at the Lord’s altar, and they were to participate in full communion with those of Israel west of the Jordan.

And to ensure that its purpose was perfectly understood, they once again repeat the same sentiment already stated in various ways...

28 (con't) though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between you and us.'

It is an exacting repetition of the words of verses 26 and 27. The words are singular and there is an emphatic pronouncement: “not to burnt offering and not to sacrifice; for witness IT between us and between you.”

Being a repetition, the entire thought provides its own extra emphasis. They are innocent of the charges against them and they adamantly repudiate them while also explaining what the purpose of the altar is. With that, they continue their protestations, saying...

29 Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD,

The words are a denial of rebellion and are a direct part of the chiasm: *khalilah lanu mimenu limrod Yehovah* – “Profane thing to us from rebelling in Yehovah.” The idea itself is utterly repugnant to them. It would be something that was defiling in and of itself and it would be a mark of rebellion against the Lord. That is then further explained with the words...

^{29 (con't)} **and turn from following the LORD this day,**

The logical progression of rebellion is that one will first turn away in thought and then in reality. Their consciences are clear because their thoughts were pure in regard to this matter. They are adamant that their intention was not...

^{29 (con't)} **to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices,**

Again, the words are singular, offering and sacrifice. It is a description of the purpose of the altar, not a list of the things that will be offered on it. Thus, it is an acknowledgment that there is one valid altar on which those things can be accomplished, their replica is not that altar. That is expressly stated with their next words...

^{29 (fin)} **besides the altar of the LORD our God which is before His tabernacle."**

milbad mizbakh Yehovah elohenu asher liphne mishkano – "beside altar Yehovah our God which to face His tabernacle." The meaning of their words is clear. There is one altar to the Lord. No other is acceptable and they acknowledge this.

Their replica was solely for the purpose of proving, and thus maintaining, their rights if they were ever questioned by those who lived on the western side of the Jordan.

Remembering that the altar was a typological representation of Jesus, as were all of the sacrifices and offerings made upon it, the symbolism is clear. These tribes have acknowledged that there is one way, and one way alone, to be right with God and that is through faith in Jesus Christ.

He is the true Altar, He is the ultimate fulfillment of the burnt offering, the gifts presented, the sacrifices, and everything associated with each of these things. God is showing us in real historical events what He expects of us.

There were innumerable events that happened within the history of Israel that were just as important to the general population as what we are seeing in Joshua 22. But God only chose events that would explain to us what He wants us to see in regard to Jesus.

We cannot build our own path back to God. We cannot obtain any other suitable sacrifice for atonement. No other offering except Christ, or one done in Christ, can be considered a pleasing aroma to God. There is no fellowship with God except as it is connected with faith in Jesus.

These things are to be taken as axiomatic because this is how the Bible has revealed them to us. To God, everything concerning our relationship with Him is nothing but Jesus and it is Jesus plus nothing. Everything that happens between God and us occurs only because of Jesus.

We have to remember this. The eastern tribes of Israel only had the law, but that law, in its entirety, points to Jesus. In acknowledging the precepts of the law, they were implicitly but expressly anticipating Jesus. This is why God has placed this account into His word.

There are only five verses left in the account and we will finish them up next week. One never knows though, there may be five more sermons before we finish things up. You'll just have to wait and see 😊. Until then, remember these words about Jesus.

He and He alone is to be considered our Altar of Meeting before God. Any other representation of Him is to be for our identification with Him. For example, a cross is an identification with the Lord, a reminder of what He has done. It should never be considered as a source of power or of idolatry.

The same is true with a building where the church meets. That is not the church. It is simply a place to gather and remind us that we *are* the church. Unfortunately, we get these things out of whack and what should serve a lesser purpose begins to take our attention away, coopting what should be our greater focus.

So, let us fix our eyes on Jesus as we continue down life's path. If we do that, things sure will go better for us. And let us be ever grateful to God for His goodness to us in sending Jesus to direct that path all our days. Yes, let us thank God for Jesus.

Closing Verse: *"Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!' ²⁹ And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan." 1 Kings 12:28-30*

Next Week: Joshua 22:30-34 *He is the one that every true believer applauds, as sure as can be...* (The Lord God of Gods, Part III) (53rd Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord God of Gods, Part II

Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe
-----of Manasseh

Answered and said to the heads of the divisions of Israel

“The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods

He knows, and let Israel itself know as we now tell

“If it is in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD

Do not save us this day

If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following

-----the LORD

Or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, acting

-----in that way

“Or if to offer peace offerings on it

Let the LORD Himself require an account

But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying

Please let us now our thoughts recount

‘In time to come your descendants may speak

To our descendants, saying

“What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel?”

If such they are relaying

“For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us

You children of Reuben and children of Gad

You have no part in the LORD

So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing

-----the LORD. That would be really bad

“Therefore we said, ‘Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar

Not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice

But that it may be a witness between you and us

And our generations after us, this was our advice

“That we may perform the service of the LORD before Him
With our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our
-----peace offerings too
That your descendants may not say to our descendants
-----in time to come
‘You have no part in the LORD, beat it now... shoo!’

“Therefore we said that it will be
When they say this to us or to our generations in time to come
That we may say, ‘Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD
Which our fathers made; stop acting dumb’

“Though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices is it
But it is a witness between you and us, so we admit

“Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD
And turn from following the LORD this day
To build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings
-----or for sacrifices
Besides the altar of the LORD our God which is before
-----His tabernacle. No way!

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 22:30-34 (THE LORD GOD OF GODS, PART III)

One of the most common (and nauseating) accusations that Christians will sling out at other Christians is, “You can’t be a Christian because...” Then, they toss out their own pet peeve as proof that the other person cannot be saved.

“You don’t read the King Jimmy Bible, you can’t be saved.” Show me that in John 3:16. Yet, such accusations are as common as rice in a Thai restaurant.

Did you know that according to the Church of Christ if you aren’t baptized, you’re not saved? Yeah. Really. Some even go further and say if your baptism wasn’t in the Church of Christ, you can’t be saved. Hmmm.

So we have just read the final section of Joshua 22. We’ll evaluate the verses and then look to see why they have been placed here. But based on what I just said, you may have an idea that they give us typology regarding salvation.

The tribes east of the Jordan really built an impressive altar. They had a reason for doing so as well. God chose what they did to reveal other things to us. As has been the case with the rest of Joshua, the detail all points to something else. It is a fascinating journey we have been on and that continues here.

Text Verse: *“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered.
2 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no deceit.” Psalm 32:1, 2*

David wrote these words about a thousand years before the coming of Christ. He was a man under law, and yet he spoke of things that occurred apart from the law. He was able to rightly see things about God, His nature, and His attributes that many people in the church today still can’t understand.

And this is even after Paul took these words of David and gave a detailed explanation about what God is doing with them. What does it mean when David says, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity?”

That will be revealed in our passage today. It is an exceptionally interesting look into what occurred with people like David. It is also a necessary inclusion in the pages of the

Bible. Without it, there would be a void in how we might perceive a certain group of people who have lived in a particular dispensation of time.

Get ready, great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Yehovah Is the God (verses 30-34)

In Part I of this three-part series, Phinehas and ten rulers from each tribe of Israel that settled in Canaan came to the eastern tribes and questioned them concerning the altar they had built. They reminded those tribes east of the Jordan about the matter of Peor and the trespass of Achan and the tragedy those events brought upon Israel.

In Part II, a response was given from the eastern tribes, proclaiming their innocence in any sort of transgression. Rather than an altar for offering and sacrifice, they had built the altar to stand as a witness between them and the western tribes that they, too, had a right to the Lord God of Israel.

Rather than the Jordan being a dividing border between the two groups, the altar standing above it acknowledged their right to participation in all covenant blessings of Israel. With that remembered, the final verses of the chapter begin with...

³⁰ Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation, the heads of the divisions of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them.

There is no “when” in the Hebrew. Rather, the flow of thought is, “And ... heard the words ... and it was good in their eyes.” In the naming of Manasseh, no definite article is used. It says, “and sons Manasseh.”

If you recall, when the article has been used, a note of separation has been highlighted. When not used, the thought is inclusiveness. Here, they accept their actions and thus also the people who took the action.

In this verse, one can feel the sense of relief that must have permeated the delegation since they first heard of the matter. With each step closer to the meeting with the eastern tribes, there was probably a sense of increasing tension.

Then, as the western tribes presented their case, there was probably heightened anxiety and maybe even anger. However, as the eastern tribes began to speak, any such emotions would have dissipated.

The defense began with an exaltation of the name of the Lord, continued with a rhetorical note acknowledging the Lord's right to judge them if they were in the wrong, then explained the reason for what they had done, and ended with an adamant protestation that they would never rebel against the Lord. Their words were accepted, and they were found pleasing in the eyes of the delegation...

³¹ Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh,

Phinehas speaks on behalf of the delegation, addressing those from each of the tribes. Again, there is no article before Manasseh. We get the sense inclusivity and fellowship because of this. As for his address to them, he says...

^{31 (con't)} "This day we perceive that the LORD is among us,

ha'yom yadanu ki b'tokenu Yehovah – "The day we know for in our midst Yehovah." In verse 20, the delegation mentioned the trespass of Achan. Because of what he did, the Lord told Joshua –

"Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put *it* among their own stuff. ¹² Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you." Joshua 7:11, 12

The Lord said he would not be with Israel anymore unless they remedied the situation. This is what the western tribes feared would be the case with the assumed transgression of the eastern tribes. Now, in knowing the purpose of the altar, they knew that the Lord had not abandoned them. Rather, He remained in their midst...

^{31 (con't)} because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD.

asher lo m'altam b'Yehovah ha'maal ha'zeh – “that not transgressed in Yehovah the transgression, the this.” It again points back to the transgression of Achan. When Chapter 7 opened, it used the same words as those here –

“But the children of Israel committed [v: *maal*] a trespass [n: *maal*] regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the LORD burned against the children of Israel.” Joshua 7:1

Side by side, this is clearly evident –

7:1 – And transgressed [v: *maal*] sons of Israel a transgression [n: *maal*].

22:31 – Not transgressed [v: *maal*] in Yehovah the transgression [n: *maal*].

These internal clues show us how seriously the western tribes considered the matter. The Lord said He would no longer be with Israel until they resolved the matter of Achan's transgression. But more, that single transgression of Achan was considered by the Lord as an act committed by Israel as a whole.

If it was done with perverse intent, how much more would this be a reason for the Lord's removal of Himself from them! What was perceived as a matter equal to or greater than that of Achan is now considered resolved because of the words of defense spoken by the eastern tribes. Therefore, Phinehas continues...

^{31 (con't)} **Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.”**

There is no single equivalent word to fully express the word that opens the statement: *az hitsaltam eth bene Yisrael miyad Yehovah* – “Consequently have delivered sons Israel from hand Yehovah.” The word *az* is a demonstrative adverb signifying “then,” “now,” or “at that time.”

In this case, though, it is not strictly temporal, but the result of a logical sequence: This, this, therefore this. The fear was that Israel was again subject to *kherem* or being devoted to destruction unless they acted against the perceived transgression.

However, the consequence of their actions and the words of their defense have delivered Israel from such a state. With the matter thus happily resolved, it next says...

³² And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned from the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them.

The name of the half-tribe of Manasseh is notably missing from the words. Of this, John Lange says, “In Joshua 22:32 the children of Reuben and Gad alone are named, and so in Joshua 22:34, merely for brevity’s sake.”

I would disagree with such an idea. There is no such thing as “for brevity’s sake” in Scripture. When something is said, it is for a reason. When something is left unsaid, the same is true. This is more certain because the matter before us was conducted in the Gilead, half of which belonged to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

So unusual is this omission that the Greek text includes Manasseh in their translation –

“So Phinees the priest and the princes departed from the children of Ruben, and from the children of Gad, and from the half tribe of Manasse out of Galaad into the land of Chanaan to the children of Israel; and reported the words to them.”

It is certainly implied that Manasseh is included in the words, but the exclusion of the name should tell us that we are being explained things in typology as well as from a literal, historical perspective.

Manasseh has been named ten times in this chapter. Five times a definite article has preceded the name and five times it has been omitted. The name is now noticeably missing from the final two mentions of the eastern tribes which occur after the matter has been resolved. This begs us to consider what is being said.

³³ So the thing pleased the children of Israel,

vayitav ha’davar b’ene bene Yisrael – “And pleasing the word in eyes, sons Israel.” It is the same thought just presented in verse 30. What was pleasing in the eyes of the delegation is now pleasing in the eyes of the people.

The word “word” signifies a matter or issue. In this case, the matter that was reported to them consists of what was spoken in verses 21-29. Because it was an acceptable, even noble, response, it elicited a response from them...

³³ (con’t) and the children of Israel blessed God;

vaybarakhu Elohim bene Yisrael – “And blessed Elohim sons Israel.” In using the word Elohim, it is referring to the power of God. The word is ultimately derived from *ul*, strength or might.

Being plural, it gives the sense of Powers or Forces which probably refers to the many aspects of God’s workings within creation. Such an idea is what was conveyed by Jesus to the Sanhedrin during His trial –

“And the high priest arose and said to Him, ‘Do You answer nothing? What *is it* these men testify against You?’ ⁶³ But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’

⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, ‘*It is as* you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.’” Matthew 26:62-64

In the use of Elohim in this verse, it is surely referring back to the statement made by the eastern tribes when they first responded to the charges brought against them –

El Elohim Yehovah El Elohim Yehovah

He is the Powers of Israel, displaying Himself on their behalf. Because of this, the people blessed Him...

³³ (con’t) **they spoke no more of going against them in battle,**

The words are unusual. Rather than “spoke,” it says: *v’lo ameru la’aloth alehem la’tsavah* – “and no said to arise upon them to the war.” As a general rule of thumb, when the word *davar*, or spoke, is used, it gives the sense of something that is considered without any sense of participation. When *amar*, said, is used it usually involves participating in an action.

What this is probably referring to is what was said in their initial words to the eastern tribes –

“Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke [*davar*] with them, saying, ¹⁶ ‘Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD: “What treachery *is* this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from

following the LORD, in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the LORD?"" Joshua 22:15, 16

The western tribes said they were “the whole congregation of the Lord.” That implied that the eastern tribes were not a part of the congregation of the Lord. The western tribes were on His side; the eastern tribes were not. Thus, their actions were in participation with the Lord.

Now, they are saying that together, they and the Lord, were not going to arise upon those of the eastern tribes...

³³ (con’t) **to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.**

The attention is on the land rather than the people: *la’shakheth eth ha’arets asher bene Reuven u’bene Gad yoshvim bah* – “to destroy the land where sons Reuben and sons Gad dwelt in her.” This would go back to what they said to the eastern tribes as well –

“Nevertheless, if the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD, where the LORD’s tabernacle stands, and take possession among us; but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God.” Joshua 22:19

If the land was unclean, then the land was to be destroyed. The little nuances are carefully presented again and again within the passage to explain what was on the minds of the people, why things occurred, and why they turned out as they did.

³⁴ **The children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar, *Witness*,**

The words are almost universally mistranslated. Here are several general options:

And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar *Ed*. KJV
And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar *Witness*. NASB
And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad proclaim concerning the altar. YLT
And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad gave a name to the altar. Dar
And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad will call to the altar. SLT

The Hebrew reads: *va’yiqreu bene Reuven u’bene Gad la’mizbeakh* – “And called sons Reuben and sons Gad to the altar.” That doesn’t seem to make sense. Therefore, various changes are made to try to make sense of what is being conveyed.

The KJV inserts the word Ed, the Hebrew word for Witness (nothing to do with Ed Sullivan, BTW). They did this to anticipate the thought of the next clause. In order to do this, they consider the first word of the next clause as an untranslatable sign of a quotation for direct discourse.

The NASB did the same thing, but gave the English translation of *ed*.

Young's takes the "to the" and assumes it means it is referring to a proclamation that will be explained in the next clause.

Darby takes the words "And called" (meaning "And proclaimed") as meaning "And gave." That would be like us saying, "And they called his name Esau," which is what Genesis 25:25, using the same word, says in the English translation – "And the first came out red. *He was* like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau."

That literally says, "And called name Esau." The problem is that it ignores the "to the" before "altar." If it said, "And called to the Esau," such a comparison could be made, but it doesn't.

Smith's Literal Translation is the closest, saying "will call to the altar." The verb is imperfect and so he decided to make it a future action, indicating an ongoing thing. There is no need for that. Again and again *vayiqreu* is translated as "and called." This gets the sense across as intended. With that understood, it next says...

³⁴ (fin) **"For *it is* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God."**

The words are emphatic. And again, not a single translation gives a literal rendering of these words: *ki ed hu benotenu ki Yehovah ha' Elohim* – "For Witness IT, between us. For Yehovah the God." Rather than Yehovah is God, it says He is THE God.

Taken with the first clause, the whole thought reads: "And called sons Reuben and sons Gad to the altar. For Witness, IT, between us. For Yehovah the God." What is that telling us?

The "between us" part is referring to the eastern tribes and the western tribes. The altar itself stands as a witness between the tribes.

As for the article before God, “the God,” it is an emphatic statement that Yehovah is the one true God. As was explained in Deuteronomy 14, the definite article is expressive. It is used when referring to the one true God in relation to man.

But more especially, it is in relation to those who are in a right relationship with Him, or it is used to contrast those who are not in a right relationship with Him. In this case, the use of the article tells us that both the eastern and western tribes are in a right relationship with Him.

Still, the passage itself must be evaluated in how it points to Jesus to be fully understood.

*To him who does not work
But who believes on Him who does the justifying
There is a heavenly perk
So the word of God is testifying*

*His faith is accounted for righteousness
This is the blessedness of man
And this is the secret of his success
That is set forth in God’s redemptive plan*

*Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven
And those whose sins are covered
They have gone from death to livin’
No more will fault in them be discovered*

II. An Explanation of the Typology

The first thing to remember is what the two sets of tribes picture. All the tribes have received an inheritance. One set of tribes received theirs on the eastern side of the Jordan while the other received theirs on the west side.

The Jordan, the Descender picturing Jesus in His incarnation, is the dividing line between the two. In the first portion of Chapter 22 was an explanatory note confirming the salvation of those who anticipated the coming of Messiah while living under the law of Moses prior to the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Moses was mentioned five times in relation to them, and it explicitly stated that it was he who gave the inheritance to the tribes (verses 22:4, 7, and 9). However, verse 4 said of the tribes west of the Jordan, “And now, the Lord your God has given rest to your brethren.”

Those east received their inheritance through Moses. But with the coming of Christ, the law is obsolete, annulled, and set aside. No person can receive their inheritance apart from Christ since His advent. Even though there are seven more years of law yet ahead for Israel, those years will not bring anyone to salvation through law observance.

Rather, they are intended to, finally, drive Israel to the understanding of their need for Christ. That is what will occur with national Israel someday, and it is what Chapters 3 and 4 of Joshua dealt with.

Pertaining to the salvation of national Israel, what is a deduction someone might incorrectly make about those who were under the law prior to the coming of Jesus? “Well, if national Israel had to come to Jesus even while under the law (meaning the seven years of tribulation), then those who came before Jesus’ incarnation must not be saved at all.”

“How could they be saved and have received an inheritance without Jesus having come?” Obviously, this is just a proposed speculation that should not realistically be considered. However, this is exactly what several other sets of typologies we have seen in Joshua were conveying.

Remember when the king of Ai was hanged on a tree? That was a picture of the law dying in Christ when He was hung on a tree. And yet, the same picture was seen again when the five kings in Joshua 10 were hung on five trees.

Those five kings pictured the five books of Moses. Wasn’t it obvious that the entire law died in Christ? Yes, but the second picture was given to avoid any future arguments, such as, “Well, Jesus fulfilled Genesis through Numbers, but Deuteronomy is still in effect.”

As nutty as that sounds, God is covering every base so that we can know exactly what the redemptive narrative entails. Other such obvious (my sermon editor told me not to use the word obvious) speculations were resolved elsewhere in Joshua as well. Chapter 22 is no different. “Of course those who believed before the coming of Jesus are saved!” “Well, yes... maybe, but...”

This is the purpose of the account given in Joshua 22:10-34. God is meticulously covering every base so that we don't have doubts about such things. The effects of the work of the Messiah, Jesus, goes both forward and backward for Israel.

But the effects also go forward for the church, meaning Jew and Gentile, during this dispensation. The rapture, for example, is something limited to those of the church, but it applies to all within the church regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, etc. These things have been seen in numerous passages in Joshua.

To ensure that we know what is going on with the Old Testament saints concerning their relationship to Christ Jesus, we have been given these verses today.

The eastern tribes came to the "circles of the Jordan," which was still within the land of Canaan, meaning the inheritance of the Humbled granted to national Israel by the Lord. There they built this great and impressive altar, a replica of the altar of the Lord. The circles, *g'liloth*, signify Liberties.

Despite living under the law, their altar is a testimony to the liberties they possess. And more, it was built not "by" the Jordan, but "upon (over, above)" the Jordan. The picture of Christ is plain. Their altar is a testimony to their salvation in Christ, despite having lived under Moses.

Moses gave them their inheritance, but ultimately, the Lord gave the law to and through Moses. The salvation of these people under the law, resulting in the inheritance granted to them, came by faith, not by works of the law. Hebrews 11 is a perfect testimony to this.

The chapter speaks of the faith of the saints from Abel all the way throughout the time of the law. It finishes with these words –

"And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." Hebrews 11:39, 40

Hebrews is written specifically to the Hebrew people, but it is given as a contrast between Moses, meaning the law, and what Christ offers. It is a warning that to choose the law when the knowledge of Christ has been understood is a self-condemning act.

Thus, it is especially an epistle directed to the end times Jews of the tribulation period, even if what it details pertains to all people in various ways.

The reaction of the western tribes and the words of the delegation confirm this. The idea of the eastern tribes going to war against them from Shiloh (Tranquility) gives the sense. "We have the inheritance because we accepted Jesus and were granted our rest. You, however, were under the law."

If they were under the law, then how could they participate in the inheritance? Going to war against them indicates that they are not on the same side. However, before war was declared, a delegation was sent to discern the meaning of their actions.

Phinehas (Mouth of Judgment) son of Eleazar (Whom God Helps) was sent. A judgment will be made concerning their actions as God helps them come to an understanding.

The two- and one-half tribes are mentioned by name, but there is no article before Manasseh because the other half-tribe of Manasseh is a part of the delegation. Despite the disagreement, a sense of inclusiveness is anticipated through the dialogue.

Further, the meeting is in the land of the Gilead, the Perpetual Fountain. The eastern tribes supposedly have the Spirit, but the erection of the altar seems to indicate otherwise. The matter must be resolved.

Along with Phinehas, there are leaders from each of the ten tribes. Ten "signifies *the perfection of Divine order*. ... It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete." Bullinger

The ten leaders have all they need in Christ, the fulfillment of the law, summed up by the Ten Commandments. These ten leaders are representing those Ten Commandments for the sake of the narrative. Phinehas represents the sacrificial part of the law of atonement and propitiation before those Ten Commandments.

The statement of verse 16, "Thus says the whole congregation of the Lord," indicates that they feel they are the only true congregation and the others have excluded themselves by their actions. Those under the law have trusted in self, the law, or some other god, but they have not trusted in the Lord.

Their actions were deemed as transgression, seen in the use of the verb and noun *maal*. Like Achan who had broken the law of coveting, these people had likewise transgressed and not followed the Lord.

Their action was deemed an act of rebellion, *marad*, just as those who refused to believe the Lord in Numbers 14 had rebelled, *marad*, against the Lord.

Even more, the sin of Peor – that of the adultery of bowing down to false gods – was brought to remembrance. By building the altar, the eastern tribes were accused of similar sin, highlighted by the use of an emphatic YOU. With that, the offer was, “Nevertheless, if the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD.”

Think of Jesus in the typology. “You are of the law. You need to come to our side of Jesus’ incarnation and you can then share in the inheritance. That is where the Lord’s tabernacle (picturing Jesus) is and take possession there.”

Everything they say smacks of the words of the book of Hebrews. For example, Jesus is what the tabernacle only prefigured as revealed in Hebrews.

“We have Jesus. You just have types and shadows. You are not of the congregation of the Lord. Building an altar is rebellion.” Despite the accusations, the response of the western tribes refutes their words. They emphatically appeal to El Elohim Yehovah as their witness.

They then said, “HE knows, and Israel – HE shall know.” Israel will realize what the Lord already knows. Their altar is not of rebellion or treachery. It is not for offerings or sacrifices – all of which are fulfilled in Jesus. If it was for these things, then “Yehovah – HE will seek.”

The Lord knew their intentions and their state before Him. However, those of Israel who see the division between the two, the Jordan (the Descender, meaning Christ in His incarnation), might say, “You aren’t of us, the Lord has set Jesus as a division between us!”

In verse 25 at the time this was said, Reuben and Gad were mentioned without Manasseh for the first time. Because half of Manasseh was west of the Jordan, it could not be said that Manasseh had no inheritance within Canaan.

As an example, people say there are ten lost tribes of Israel. Totally incorrect. After the exile of the ten tribes by Assyria, people from many of those tribes are noted both in the Old and New Testaments. If there is a single person from a tribe, the tribe continues.

That is evidenced by the words of Jesus, Paul, and others in the New Testament when they refer to the twelve tribes of Israel, even in the present tense. Hence, Manasseh is not mentioned because Manasseh has a portion west of the Jordan. However, Reuben and Gad are singled out as having, “Naught to you portion in Yehovah.”

But they did have a portion, even if it came through Moses. That is the point of the passage. The eastern tribes do have a stake in the Lord, and that is why they determined to build “the altar.” The article is expressive and indicates that there is a set intention for a particular altar.

It wasn’t for offering or sacrifice, but it served as a witness – “for witness IT.” The altar upon (above, over) the Jordan is an emphatic witness for them “to serve service Yehovah to His face,” meaning on the true altar. That is where they would offer their burnt offerings, sacrifices, and peace offerings.

As the altar of the Lord is a typological anticipation of Jesus, then their offerings are also to Jesus. The altar is witness to that fact. As such, there could be no claiming against them, “You have no part in the Lord.” The construction of the replica of the altar is evidence of this.

The altar then is one of faith. “We are of the Lord and this is witness to it. If it was of works, it would be used as an altar is typically used. But this altar was not. It was a witness and nothing more.”

Verse 30 that opened us today showed that Phinehas and the rulers (ten of them) heard this response and were pleased. They now get it. Those who were under the law, but who anticipated Jesus are truly of Israel.

The priest, representative of the sacrificial system and the ten rulers, representative of the Ten Commandments and thus the entire law, are satisfied through their act of faith, not in their adherence to the law.

Hence, they acknowledge that “in our midst Yehovah.” Faith in anticipation of the coming Messiah saves just as does faith in the Messiah who has come. They also

acknowledged that these men had “not transgressed in Yehovah the transgression.” In other words, they are blameless before the law because of their deed of faith.

With this acknowledgment, the people were delivered from the hand of the Lord and Phinehas (Mouth of Judgment) son of Eleazar (Whom God Helps) and the ten rulers returned from the sons of Reuben (See a Son) and the sons of Gad (Fortune) from the Gilead (the Perpetual Fountain) to Canaan (the land of the Humbled).

The judgment has been rendered, the Lord has intervened, the status of these men is no longer in question, they have the Spirit and all is well. Again as before, there was no need to mention the half-tribe of Manasseh because Manasseh was already represented among the tribes.

This would explain why the word for tribe, *mateh*, was used in the first verse of the chapter and *shevet* was used in all other instances. The genealogical aspect of the tribe was secure. The political aspect of the eastern half-tribe is what was in question. That is no longer the case. The words are telling a story if we just pay heed.

Verse 33 then noted that the word was pleasing in the eyes of the sons of Israel. There can be no future questioning. Because of the faith of these people, the sacrificial system that anticipated Christ was acceptable for them and the ten commandments testify to this for them.

Therefore, they blessed Elohim because of it. Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Power is praised by Israel because He has saved all of Israel who have come to Him through faith.

Any supposed enmity between the two – meaning before His coming or after His coming – is ended and the war is averted which would have destroyed “the land where sons Reuben and sons Gad dwelt in her.”

That land is the land of the Torah, the inheritance that came through the law of Moses. As long as it was by faith in Messiah, Israel could receive the inheritance. How can we know this? Because of the final verse of the chapter –

“And called sons Reuben and sons Gad to the altar. For Witness, IT, between us.
For Yehovah the God.”

What is that telling us?

The altar was not for works of any kind, but it was an altar of faith built above (over, on) the Jordan. Those who were before the coming of Christ called to the altar in faith. It didn't matter if they were under law, the law comes from the Lord, it anticipated the coming of the Lord, and the people of faith under the law called out to the Lord.

As for the word replica used in this passage, it is the Hebrew word *tavnit*. It is the same word used in modern Hebrew Bibles to describe the pattern noted in Hebrews 8 –

“For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; ⁵ who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See *that* you make all things according to the pattern [Heb: *b'tavnitho* (literally, in His form)] shown you on the mountain.”

-Hebrews 8: 4, 5

The things of the tabernacle, including the altar, were only typological representations of Jesus. He is the Altar. The replica of the altar built by these tribes was an anticipation of Christ to come.

As this is so, and as that altar in Israel was the altar of Yehovah, it is a logical and necessary deduction from this passage that Jesus is Yehovah incarnate. He is *ha'elohim*, “the God” who stands in relation to man.

This is what the passage before us is about. David was a man under law. However, our text verse today showed us that despite being under law, he was not imputed sin according to the law. But by the very nature of law, sin is imputed.

Therefore, he – by default – was a man of faith in something greater than the law. When he sinned by taking Bathsheba, God's prophet spoke to him in 2 Samuel 12:13, saying, “The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.” The Lord's mercy was bestowed upon David apart from the law.

David thus deduced that if this occurred, then God's other divine attributes were also to be realized in our relationship with Him only apart from the law. The law then must have had another purpose than to bring man into a right relationship with God.

Although David didn't have a full comprehension of the work of the Messiah, he did understand the blessedness of man who received God's righteousness apart from the law. It is this faith in God's people who were under the law that is revealed in Joshua 22.

To close, I would ask you to consider your own trek towards the inheritance. How do you think it will come about? If you suppose it is through something you have done or need to do, then you have failed the test.

However, if you will simply have faith that God has done the work and all you need to do is accept that, you will be saved. God cannot deal with you unless you first remove yourself from the equation concerning effort. Christ has done that. Now, just believe. This is what pleases God.

Closing Verse: *“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: ⁷ ‘Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; ⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.’” Romans 4:5-8*

Next Week: Joshua 23:1-16 *The Faithfulness of the Lord has been unveiled... (Not One Word Has Failed)* (54th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Lord God of Gods, Part III

Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation
The heads of the divisions of Israel who were with him as well
Heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad
And the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them: pretty swell

Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said
To the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children
-----of Manasseh this word
“This day we perceive that the LORD is among us
Because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD

“Now you have delivered the children of Israel
Out of the hand of the LORD; things are looking swell”

And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned

From the children of Reuben and the children of Gad
From the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan
To the children of Israel, and brought back word to them
-----that things weren't so bad

So the thing pleased the children of Israel
And the children of Israel blessed God in a manner heartfelt
They spoke no more of going against them in battle
To destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt

The children of Reuben and the children of Gad
Called the altar, *Witness*
"For it is a witness between us that the LORD is God
So it is; so we confess

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 23:1-16 (NOT ONE WORD HAS FAILED)

Joshua is nearing the end of his leadership. Before his death, he takes time to remind Israel of the Lord's faithfulness to them according to His word. This serves as a warning to the people as well.

In his words, Joshua will remind Israel of the Lord's covenant faithfulness. Based on that, he will call for the people's obedience to the Lord. Their obedience will ensure their continued presence in the land.

He will warn against idolatry and clearly explain what failing to heed his warnings will result in. The reason he can do this is because nearly everything that is said in this chapter is quoted directly or indirectly from the Law of Moses.

In the law are found the blessings and the curses that will come upon the people based on how they conduct themselves before the Lord. Concerning the details of the curses, Henry Hart Milman in his *History of the Jews* says –

The sublimity of the denunciations of the Hebrew lawgiver contained in these passages “surpasses anything in the oratory or the poetry of the whole world. Nature is exhausted in furnishing terrific images; nothing, excepting the real horrors of the Jewish history—the miseries of their sieges, the cruelty, the contempt, the oppressions, the persecutions, which, for ages, this scattered and despised and detested nation have endured—can approach the tremendous maledictions which warned them against the violation of their Law.”

Milman wrote that in 1843. Could he have imagined that the plight of the Jews would someday end? It will, even if it is yet future.

Text Verse: *“Sing, O daughter of Zion!
Shout, O Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
¹⁵ The LORD has taken away your judgments,
He has cast out your enemy.
The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
You shall see disaster no more.” Zephaniah 3:14, 15*

One might think that with the return of Israel the people to their homeland that the “tremendous maledictions” Milman wrote about might be behind them. But this is not the case. There is a dividing line that must be crossed before that day of blessing a restoration comes. Zephaniah, as well as much of the Old Testament, assures us that someday, it will come about.

That dividing line is faith in Jesus Christ. The book of Joshua has stood as an amazing witness concerning the coming of Jesus and of Israel’s finally coming to Him. But it has shown countless other pictures as well.

While we are living in the time of many of those pictures, and while we anticipate the fulfillment of others, Israel is still bound to the Law of Moses and the blessings and curses detailed there. As they are not right with God at this time, only the latter can currently be expected for them.

And yet, they are prospering now. They are a leader in the world in many ways. But this is a time of preparation for the troubles that lie ahead. If not for the military, scientific, and political achievements that they have, they would not survive the tribulation period. And even with them, they will barely come through it.

Were it not for the covenant faithfulness of the Lord, and of His careful watch over them, they – and indeed the whole world – would not survive what lies ahead. Jesus said as much in Matthew 24:22 –

“And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”

Joshua is repeating Moses and Moses recorded the word of the Lord. The warning comes from God who does not lie. Israel’s history has proven this. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Hold Fast to the Lord Your God (verses 1-10)

¹ Now it came to pass, a long time after the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about,

The words are more a paraphrase than a translation: “And it was from days many, after which had given rest Yehovah to Israel from all their enemies from around.” The wording is based on the words of Joshua 21:43-45 –

“So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ⁴⁴ The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.”

From that time until the time now being highlighted it has been “from days many.” If this is Joshua’s final year, and he died at 110, then this is about six to seven years after those words were recorded. Further, it is thirteen to fourteen years after the conquest of Canaan. It is at this time...

¹ (con’t) **that Joshua was old, advanced in age.**

vihoshua zaqen ba ba’yamim – “And Joshua old, entered in the days.” It is the same expression stated in Joshua 13:1, which said, “Now Joshua was old, advanced in years.” At that time, he would have been around one hundred and three or four years old. Time has moved on and Joshua has not gotten any younger. He can obviously sense that time is drawing to a close for him...

² **And Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers,**

The words are in the singular, referring to Israel as a single man: *vayiqra Yehoshua l’kal Yisrael lizqenav u-l’shoptav u-l’shoterav* – “And called Joshua to all Israel: to his elders, and to his heads, and to his judges, and to his officers.”

Some say the word elders refers to all of these men which is then explained by “heads, judges, and officers.” However, the word “to” before each category and the word “and” before each subsequent category does not agree with that.

Rather, it is four categories. The elders would be the seventy leaders eventually known as the Sanhedrin. The heads are the chief men of the families. The judges are those who interpreted the law and made decisions based on their analyses.

The word used to describe the officers, *shoter*, comes from a word indicating to write. Thus, they would be scribes or by implication official superintendents or magistrates. It is to these that Joshua called...

² (con't) **and said to them: "I am old, advanced in age.**

There is a repetitive stress in the words: *vayomer alehem ani zaqanti bati ba'yamim* – "And said to them I, I am old, I have entered in the days." Because of how he presents his words, it was intended that those who hear him would reflect more carefully on what he was about to say. Therefore, he now begins to explain the formal reason for having called them...

³ **You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you,**

Rather than "because of you," it speaks of the action of the Lord: "And you have seen all which has done Yehovah your God to all the nations, the these, from your face." The meaning is that right in front of them, right before their eyes, they have witnessed everything the Lord has done. With that, he next says...

³ (con't) **for the LORD your God is He who has fought for you.**

It is a letter-for-letter repeat of what Moses says in Deuteronomy 3:22. The words are emphatic and the verb is more personal, being prefixed by an article: *ki Yehovah elohekhem hu ha'nilkham la'khem* – "for Yehovah your God, He, the fighting to you."

As Moses said these things, and as Joshua repeats them now, the Lord alone should receive the praise and glory for what has transpired. Israel beheld prophecy fulfilled as uttered by Moses.

As for the words, they are second person, plural. They are directed to the entire congregation who served under Joshua, but he was himself under the Lord.

Though Israel was, in fact, in the battles, it was the Lord who was the unseen Force behind the victories. But it is also true that He stood against them when they failed to obediently follow Him. This was seen just after the battle of Jericho in the incident of Achan and their defeat in the battle of Ai.

As long as Israel was properly aligned with the Lord, the Lord was with Joshua, and thus with Israel. After this was spoken by Moses in Deuteronomy 3, it was repeated again by Moses later in Deuteronomy –

“Then He inaugurated Joshua the son of Nun, and said, ‘Be strong and of good courage; for you shall bring the children of Israel into the land of which I swore to them, and I will be with you.’” Deuteronomy 31:23

Israel and the Lord, and what happened between them, have been completely interconnected. The Lord’s plan is set, and it has thus far come to pass. That plan has included all of the obedience Israel displayed, leading to victory, but it has also included all of Israel’s disobedience, leading to defeat.

The connection between the two is based on the covenant which exists between them. They are inseparable because the word and promises of the Lord reflect who He is. Even when Israel violated their side of the covenant, that in no way negated the Lord’s faithfulness to it.

Joshua lets them know that this will continue throughout their history. That means even to this day. For those who fail to understand this, they become enmeshed in a world of irresponsible theology. They claim the rights to the covenant promises of God even at the exclusion of Israel – the very group to whom the covenant promises were made.

Until those covenant promises are fulfilled, and Israel enters the New Covenant in Christ, the Lord will continue to work in and through this otherwise disobedient nation. In the end, His plans and purposes for them as a collective whole will be realized. As for the words of Joshua, they continue, saying...

⁴ See, I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes,

Rather: *reu hipalti lakhem eth ha’goyim ha’nisharim ha’eleh b’nakhlah l’shivtekhem* – “See, I have caused to fall to you the nations, the remainers, the these, in inheritance to your tribes.” The words “caused to fall” signify the falling of the lot. Joshua is taking no credit by saying this. The state of the lot, by definition, is caused apart from his direction.

His hand is the principal cause of the action; the lot itself is the instrumental cause; and the determination of the lot, meaning what it defines, is the final cause - the end purpose of it. The decision rendered is ultimately of the Lord.

The lots had fallen and each inheritance was set. Any remaining peoples within the inheritances were to be removed by each tribe according to the word of the Lord. This was to be...

⁴ (con't) **from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward.**

The YLT makes the second clause parenthetical and that seems to be the best way of presenting this: *min ha'yarden v'kal ha'goyim asher hikrati v'ha'yam ha'gadol mebo ha'shemesh* – “from the Jordan (and all the nation which I have cut off) and the sea, the great, from entrance the sun.”

In other words, the words “and all the nations which I have cut off,” are to be taken with “the nations, the remainers” of the previous verse. Joshua had done his part to cut off the nations. Israel now had to complete the task by destroying any unconquered people that remained, clearing out the entire land of Canaan, from east to west. With that, Joshua continues with words that reflect what Moses instructed them...

⁵ **And the LORD your God will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight.**

Rather, it reads: “And Yehovah your God, He will thrust them from before your face and dispossess them.” Here, using the word *hadaph*, to thrust or push, and the same word, *yarash*, to possess/dispossess, he speaks the same thought as Moses in Deuteronomy 6–

“And you shall do *what is* right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess [*yarash*] the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, ¹⁹ to cast out [*hadaph*] all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken.” Deuteronomy 6:18, 19

The same general thought, again using the same word, *yarash*, or possess, is seen in the next clause...

⁵ (con't) **So you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you.**

Rather: *v'rishtem eth artsam ka'asher diber Yehovah elohekhem la'khem* – “And possess their land according to which spoke Yehovah your God to you.” As you can see, the word *yarash* signifies to both dispossess and to possess. One can also say disinherit and inherit. One moves out, the other moves in. Both circumstances are to be permanent.

The Lord said this would be the case. Because of this, if Israel fails to possess it, it will be solely because of a lack of action on their part based on a lack of faith in, and adherence to, His word. To avoid such a state, Joshua next says...

⁶Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses,

Rather than courageous, it is referring to the state of steadfastness: *va'khazaqtem meod lishmor v'laasoth eth kal ha'katuv b'sepher torath Mosheh* – “And be strong, very, to keep and to do all the written in Book Law Moses.” The word *khazaq*, for example, was used in Exodus when Pharaoh hardened his heart. He made it strong against the Lord's miracles.

In this case, Joshua is repeating the words of Moses that were spoken to him, speaking to the leaders who will continue after he is gone –

“Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong [*khazaq*] and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. ⁸ And the LORD, He *is* the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.’”

-Deuteronomy 31:7, 8

The words Moses spoke to Joshua are recorded in the Book of the Law along with other such words that Moses recorded. The reason for them being very strong in this is...

⁶(con't) lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

l'bilti sur mimenu yamin u-s'mol – “lest turning aside from it right and left.” The subject is the book which contains the Torah or law. The word *torah* comes from *arah*, a word that indicates casting or shooting, like an arrow. Hence, it carries with it the sense of direction, pointing something out, etc.

To turn aside (Heb: *sur*) to the right or left would be to depart from the direction of the law contained within the book. One can get the sense of this from what is said of Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18:6 –

“For he held fast to the LORD; he did not depart [*sur*: turn aside] from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses.”

In obeying Moses, Hezekiah obeyed the law as the Lord gave through Moses. Therefore, in keeping Moses’ commandments, he did not depart (turn aside) from following after the Lord.

This is the sense of Joshua’s words now. All of this is summed up in what was said to Joshua by the Lord in Joshua 1 –

“No man shall *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.” Joshua 1:5-7

This is what Joshua has faithfully done. The mantle is now being passed to the leaders of Israel in anticipation that they too will act faithfully in this manner. His admonitions are to be a safety against what he continues to warn about...

⁷ and lest you go among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not make mention of the name of their gods,

It is very precise: *l’bilti bo ba’goyim ha’eleh ha’nisharim ha’eleh itkhem u-b’shem elohehem lo tazkiru* – “Lest go in the nations, the these, the remainings, the these, among you, and in name their gods no shall remember.”

There are still people in the land that were under the ban. The law of Moses mandated extermination. It also mandated that they never invoke the name of their gods. This goes back to Exodus 23:13 where the Lord said the same thing to the people –

“And in all that I have said to you, be circumspect and make no mention of [remember] the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth.”

In these instances, the word gods is plural but the word name is singular. It is as if the names of the various gods are all lumped together as one. There is the name of the Lord, and there is the name of any other god that is not the Lord.

7 (con't) nor cause *anyone* to swear *by them*; you shall not serve them nor bow down to them,

v'lo tashbiu v'lo taavdum v'lo tishtakhavu la'khem – “And no swear, and no you shall serve them, and no bow down to them.” In remembering the name of their gods, they will then be tempted to interact with them, swearing by them in oaths and agreements, serving them through sacrifices and offerings, and worshiping them through the act of prostration. Such is absolutely forbidden...

8 but you shall hold fast to the LORD your God,

ki im b'Yehovah elohekhem tidbaqu – “For lo! In Yehovah your God you shall cling.” In contrast to having any affiliation with other gods, Israel is to hold fast in the Lord alone.

8 (con't) as you have done to this day.

Joshua acknowledges that they have been doing this up until this point and the Lord has been with them. This is referring to the end of their wilderness wanderings when they crossed over the Jordan. Before that, the record of their travels was marked with disobedience.

However, under the leadership of Joshua, apart from the transgression of Achan, they have stayed the course and held fast to the Lord. They are to continue this without diverting from it at any future point. This is the same basic thought seen in Deuteronomy 10 and elsewhere –

“You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.” Deuteronomy 10:20

In his words, Joshua next notes that their past adherence to the Lord has realized positive results...

9 For the LORD has driven out from before you great and strong nations;

Some translations make these words future. Others state them as what has already taken place. Either way, as in verse 5, the word *yarash* is used: “And dispossessed Yehovah from your face nations great and mighty.” Despite the fact that Israel entered into battle, Joshua is careful to assign the credit for their victories as having come from the Lord.

The words here call to remembrance the great battle of Joshua 11 –

“So they went out, they and all their armies with them, *as* many people *as* the sand that *is* on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. ⁵And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel. ... And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who defeated them and chased them to Greater Sidon, to the Brook Misrephoth, and to the Valley of Mizpah eastward; they attacked them until they left none of them remaining. ⁹So Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him: he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.”

-Joshua 11:4, 5 & 8, 9

Joshua continues with his words of admonishment and encouragement, saying...

⁹ (con't) **but *as for you*, no one has been able to stand against you to this day.**

The words are emphatic: *v'atem lo amad ish biphnekhem ad ha'yom ha'zeh* – “And you – no stand man in your face to the day, the this.” The people had gone against the enemy, and not one of them was able to stand up to Israel. The words of this verse were also something stated again and again in Deuteronomy, such as –

“For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do— to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him— ²³ then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess greater and mightier nations than yourselves.” Deuteronomy 11:22, 23

Next, Joshua makes a superlative promise to the people...

¹⁰ **One man of you shall chase a thousand,**

ish ekhad mi'kem yirdaph aleph – “Man one from you shall chase thousand.” This has not been stated in these terms before, although two similar verses have been recorded.

First, the Lord promised that when Israel was obedient to the covenant, they would have great success in battle –

“Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.” Leviticus 26:8

However, in the Song of Moses, it was promised exactly the opposite of what Joshua now says to the people –

“How could one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock had sold them,
And the LORD had surrendered them?” Deuteronomy 32:30

Moses prophesied that in their turning from the Lord, this great calamity would fall upon them. To encourage the people to remain steadfast, Joshua turns that on its head and tells them that if they remain faithful, they will be the nation where one will chase a thousand...

^{10 (con't)} **for the LORD your God is He who fights for you,**

It is the exact same phrase just stated in verse 23:3, “for Yehovah your God, He, the fighting to you.” It is the Lord who would guarantee the victory. His presence would ensure it is so...

^{10 (con't)} **as He promised you.**

ka'asher diber lakhem – “According to which spoke to you.” These words explain the second clause, not the first. The Lord declared that he would fight for them and Joshua once again confirms this. This was found in Deuteronomy 3 –

“And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass. ²²You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.’” Deuteronomy 3:21, 22

*With blessing I shall bless you
And you shall be blessed by Me
When you are careful to observe and do*

You shall be blessed by Me abundantly

*Follow the path that will lead you to Me
And do not turn to the left nor right
Be persistent in following it diligently
Keep Me in the center of your sight*

*Oh Israel, the blessing is waiting for you
If you will just heed the word that I have spoken
Follow the path that leads to life anew
And I will heal the hearts, desolate and broken*

II. Until You Perish (verses 11-16)

¹¹ Therefore take careful heed to yourselves,

v'nishmartem meod l'naphshotekhem – “And be watchful, very, to your souls.” The words are letter for letter the same as Deuteronomy 4:15. There it referred to refraining from idolatry. Here, it is commanding them to hold fast to the Lord...

¹¹ (con't) that you love the LORD your God.

l'ahavah eth Yehovah elohekhem – “to love Yehovah your God.” These words are repeated ten times in Deuteronomy. They are generally associated with keeping the Lord's commandments, walking in His ways, etc. To love the Lord is to do these things.

One cannot say, “I love Yehovah,” and yet not obey His commandments. Because He is God, His words are a reflection of who He is. As His commands include serving Him as well as refraining from serving other gods, to love Him includes being obedient to Him. Joshua, understanding this, next says...

¹² Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain among you—

Joshua speaks very carefully and emphatically to the leaders: *ki im shov tashuvu udbaqtem b'yeter ha'goyim ha'eleh ha'nisharim ha'eleh itkhem* – “For lo! Turning you turn and cling in remnant the nations, the these, the remaining, the these, among you.”

If they purpose to cling to the remnant of these nations, it is a clear demonstration that they are not loving the Lord. Instead, they would be disobeying the unambiguous commands of the Lord...

¹² and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you,

It is a bit of a mouthful: *v'hithkhatantem bahem uvatem bahem v'hem bakhem* – “and make marriages in them and go in them and they in you.” The use of the prefix b, or in, speaks of intimacy. In this case, the physical intimacy of the marriage.

The repetition of the prefix provides emphasis. Instead of being *b'Yehovah*, in Yehovah, there is a foreign intimacy that is highlighted. This was explicitly forbidden in Deuteronomy 7 –

“and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.” Deuteronomy 7:2, 3

This would demonstrate a complete failure of the people to love the Lord. The reason is because such marriages will lead to the apostasy of the people, therefore...

¹³ know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you.

Again, Joshua speaks emphatically: *yadoa tedu ki lo yosiph Yehovah elohekhem l'horish eth ha'goyim ha'eleh mi'liphnekhem* – “Knowing, you shall know, for no adding Yehovah your God to dispossess the nations, the these, from your face.”

Through their actions, they will prove that they love the nations among them more than they love the Lord. Therefore, Joshua lets them know that the Lord will give them what they want. Therefore...

^{13 (con't)} But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Rather, it says: “And they shall be to you to snare, and to trap, and to scourge in your sides, and to thorns in your eyes until you perish from upon the land, the good, the this, which gave to you Yehovah your God.”

For reference, the word *shotet*, or scourge, is found only here in Scripture. It comes from *shot*, a scourge. Also, the word translated as thorn, *tsanin*, is found for the second and last time in Scripture. It is derived from *tsen*, a thorn.

As for Joshua’s words, they follow upon what was spoken by the Lord to Moses in Numbers 35:55, 56 –

“But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain *shall be* irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell. ⁵⁶ Moreover it shall be *that* I will do to you as I thought to do to them.”

Without going into great detail, the meaning is clear. The people will be led astray by the bad examples of the people they commune with. They will be lured in, trapped, and afflicted because of their interactions with them. Eventually, there will be no remedy except that they perish from the land either through death or exile.

With this having been said, Joshua reminds them again of the goodness of the Lord toward them...

¹⁴ **“Behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth.**

More literally: “And behold, I walk the day in way all the earth.” Joshua is on a journey and he knows it is ending. His walk is almost complete. And so, before he is gone, he wants to again remind them of the goodness of the Lord...

^{14 (con’t)} **And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you.**

Again, more literally: “And know in all your hearts and in all your souls, for no has fallen word one from all the words, the good, which spoke Yehovah your God upon you.” The words are similar to those which closed out Chapter 21 –

“So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. ⁴⁴ The LORD gave them rest

all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass.” Joshua 21:43-45

The Lord spoke His promises in the past. Since then, they have been carried upon the stream of time just as when He spoke them out. As time passed, the words remained faithful, being fulfilled at times or continuing to wait for their fulfillment at whatever time they are destined to come about.

But not a single one of them has fallen without either being fulfilled or awaiting their fulfillment. The Lord has constantly been faithful to His spoken word. Until this point...

¹⁴ (con't) **All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed.**

And again: “The all came to you; no has fallen from it word one.” Because of the word of the Lord, the people were brought into Canaan. Because of the word, they were victorious in battle. Because of the word, they received their inheritances. Because of the word, they have received rest on all sides.

Such blessings have come because of the word of the Lord. This then, when rightly considered, is a promise for future blessing or a promise of future cursing. The same Lord who promised the good for obedience, and who has fulfilled His word, has also spoken forth curses for disobedience.

Israel cannot claim the blessing in the future unless they remain obedient. Instead, they must expect the Lord to be consistent to His word alone...

¹⁵ **Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the LORD your God promised you,**

More literally: “And it shall be according to which have come upon you all the word, the good, which spoke Yehovah your God upon you.” Joshua is preparing for a conclusion based on the reality that currently exists.

The word of the Lord was spoken forth. It was a good word, and it came to pass just as He had spoken upon His people. As this is certain and undeniable because His audience is the object of the word, therefore...

¹⁵ (con't) **so the LORD will bring upon you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.**

Again: "So will bring Yehovah upon you all the word the evil until He destroys you from upon the ground, the good, the this, which have to you Yehovah your God." As certain as the good had come upon the people in the land, because of the Source of the word, it was just as certain that all the evil in that same word would come upon them if they turned aside.

This evil being referred to is found throughout the Torah from the time of the cutting of the covenant at Sinai. However, the main brunt of the words are found in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.

Israel had to know and understand that the same Lord who spoke forth the blessing, and who was faithful to fulfill His word, had also spoken forth the curses and would be faithful to fulfill them as well. Joshua was reminding them of just what Moses had already told them. With that, he provides one last warning...

¹⁶ **When you have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them,**

To be precise: "In your crossing over covenant Yehovah your God, which commanded you, and have walked and served gods other and have bowed down to them..."

To pass over the covenant means to transgress. It is as if one has removed himself from the covenant. The way this has come about is explained as walking astray and going to serve other gods, bowing down to them and worshiping them. By doing this, they have crossed over the covenant.

This doesn't mean they are no longer under it. The covenant stands, even if they have removed themselves from it. The Lord will remain faithful to it despite their actions. As such, the response is His in relation to their actions. Thus...

¹⁶ (fin) **then the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land which He has given you."**

The words read: "and has burned nostril Yehovah in you, and you have perished quickly from upon the land, the good, which gave to you."

One can get the sense of the Lord standing among Israel, watching them as they go marrying foreign women, whoring after their gods, ignoring Him after all He had done for them. The word that He had spoken was meticulously fulfilled for their good, and it was for naught.

As He sees their harlotries, He fumes smoke from His nostrils and His anger is aroused. In this state, and with their failure to repent and turn to Him, He begins to meticulously destroy them. Were it not for His covenant faithfulness to not utterly wipe them out, there would be no hope at all.

In considering the typology seen in Joshua, this passage is given to show us that in Christ, God had fulfilled every messianic promise to Israel. He failed in nothing of what was set before Him. And yet, they rejected Him and, once again, they were destroyed as a people and scattered among the nations.

They did, in fact, transgress the covenant of the Lord God. And so, within a short time, they perished quickly from the good land He had given them.

But with the Lord is both justice and righteousness. He has given and will continue to give Israel what it deserves, but He will remain faithful to His word that says they will never be destroyed as a people. They will enter the New Covenant someday, but for the time of the law, Joshua warns them that they are bound to it.

As this truth continues, then they can only expect more trouble ahead. Not until they come to Christ Jesus will this change. This is the warning coming forth from Joshua. Joshua and Israel have been used almost innumerable times in this book to detail what lies ahead in prophetic history.

But until Israel accepts what those types and pictures point to, they remain bound to the Old Covenant. The Lord is faithful to His word. The fact that He is faithful to Israel is because of this. It is the word that binds them to Him and He to them.

As Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the word, there can never be a true state of peace among them until they, as a nation, call on Him. Time is passing quickly and the church will be taken to her reward someday. After that, Israel has a lot to go through. Much of it will be bad until they once again receive the good. And how good it will be!

Closing Verse: *"In that day you shall not be shamed for any of your deeds
In which you transgress against Me;*

*For then I will take away from your midst
Those who rejoice in your pride,
And you shall no longer be haughty
In My holy mountain.*

*¹² I will leave in your midst
A meek and humble people,
And they shall trust in the name of the LORD.” Zephaniah 3:11, 12*

Next Week: Joshua 24:1-5 *It is a truth to which we applaud, as well as for all He has done... (For He Is a Holy God, Part I) (55th Joshua Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Not One Word Has Failed

Now it came to pass, a long time after
The Lord had given rest to Israel, back on that page
From all their enemies round about
That Joshua was old, advanced in age

And Joshua called for all Israel
For their elders, for their heads, all these he did engage
For their judges, and for their officers, and said to them:
“I am old, advanced in age

“You have seen all that the Lord your God
Has done to all these nations because of you
For the Lord your God
Is He who has fought for you, it’s true

“See, I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain
To be an inheritance for your tribes according to this word
From the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off
As far as the Great Sea westward

“And the Lord your God will expel them
From before you and drive them out of your sight, so He will do

So you shall possess their land
As the Lord your God promised you

“Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do
All that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses
-----through and through
Lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left
And lest you go among these nations, these who remain
----- among you

“You shall not make mention of the name of their gods
Nor cause anyone to swear by them; you shall not act that way
You shall not serve them nor bow down to them
But you shall hold fast to the Lord your God
-----as you have done to this day

“For the Lord has driven out from before you
Great and strong nations; He said it would be this way
But as for you, no one has been able to stand
Against you to this day

“One man of you shall chase a thousand
For the Lord your God is He who fights for you
-----as He promised you
Therefore take careful heed to yourselves
That you love the Lord your God, so you shall do

“Or else, if indeed you do go back
And cling to the remnant of these nations—these that remain
-----among you as told not to do
And make marriages with them
And go in to them and they to you

“Know for certain that the Lord your God
Will no longer drive out these nations from before you
-----so to you I apprise
But they shall be snares and traps to you
And scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes

“Until you perish from this good land; this word is true
Which the Lord your God has given you.

“Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth
And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls too
That not one thing has failed of all the good things
Which the Lord your God spoke concerning you

“All have come to pass for you; His word has prevailed
And not one word of them has failed

“Therefore it shall come to pass
That as all the good things have come upon you this way
Which the Lord your God promised you
So the Lord will bring upon you all harmful things that day

“Until He has destroyed you from this good land
Which the Lord your God has given you
When you have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God
Which He commanded you, doing what you should not do

“And have gone and served other gods, and bowed down to them
Then the anger of the Lord will burn against you on that day
And you shall perish quickly from the good land
Which He has given you, so to you I say”

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 24:1-5 (FOR HE IS A HOLY GOD, PART I)

One of the folks in the online church, Trent, who used to play in a rather famous Christian band that won a Grammy Award and other nominations, sent me a note tying music theory into some of the regions of Asia that are mentioned in the Bible.

He noted that the Catholic Church played a big part in naming the seven scales. They are based on the names of various Roman regions where the sounds originated. They are the Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Locrian.

The Lydian, for example, is from the district of Lydia in a Roman province in Asia. It is in this district that Thyatira is located. This is where Lydia, who is noted in Acts 16, was from. Thyatira is also one of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation. Looking at the names of the seven scales, you can also see that the Phrygian comes from Phrygia which is also mentioned in Acts.

Trent wanted to explain these things to me a little more clearly, and so he did a short video on YouTube playing variations in the styles and saying things like, “You can hear the difference in this – da da da, and this – da da da.” Actually, I couldn’t hear the difference at all. I’m as tone-deaf as a dead fish.

I found that out when a music teacher had to let me go from the Sarasota Boys Choir after testing me. “Is this higher or lower?” “Is this sharper or flatter?” I had no idea. Hence, off the choir I went.

The funny thing is, I can hear that there are differences, but I have no comprehension of what they are.

To get this, imagine someone who is color blind. He knows there is a difference in the colors he is being shown, but he has no idea what it is. He sees the shades, but it means nothing to him. That is me with music.

Text Verse: *“But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.” Acts 7:6*

They make special glasses now that can help a colorblind person see colors. Go to YouTube and type in a search for “Colorblind person sees color for the first time.” The

reaction you see will be like mine when I can distinguish sound differences for the first time.

These people literally break down weeping. Now imagine what it will be like for all of us when we see, for the VERY FIRST TIME, life without the taint of sin. Imagine that. I cannot wait.

Trent's video made me think about this and it comes to my mind often. The music he plays is so natural to him that he gets all excited as he says things like, "Ok, now listen to this..." And yet, I cannot perceive it at all. Imagine eating Thai peppers and then ice cream and not being able to tell the difference. Trent gets it; I don't.

The point of this is that as we have been going through Joshua, there are things that make seemingly no sense at all. You read the words and keep going while maybe thinking, "I have no idea what this is saying to me. And yet, there is a symphony playing in the background."

There is so much going on, and yet we miss the nuances. This is the great thing about going through the Bible verse by verse and even word by word. We are forcing ourselves to hear the differences in the sounds being played.

We are tasting that the Lord is so very good in so many new ways. And we are seeing innumerable colors emanating from what seems to be an otherwise colorless passage recorded with black letters on white pages.

Stephen mentioned the four hundred years of bondage and oppression that Israel faced. He cited this from Genesis 15. In Galatians, Paul says that the law came four hundred and thirty years after the promise to Abraham. How can that be if Israel was in Egypt for four hundred years? Spoiler alert: they weren't.

To understand what is being conveyed by the Lord to Israel, we will need to review many such things as we go through Joshua 24. We'll get through the first five verses today, the Lord willing. As for the seven scales of music, Trent almost seemed let down that there is no Lycaonian mode.

The province of Lycaonia is known as Wolf-land. It is where our term Lycan, or werewolf, is derived from. We have no werewolf scale for music. Well, except for howls and screams from people who have to listen to me when I sing.

Really wonderful treasures are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Before the God (verses 1 & 2)

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem

va'yeesoph Yehoshua eth kal shivte Yisrael shekemah – “And gathered Joshua all tribes Israel Shechem-ward.” Rather than Shiloh where the tabernacle was located, Joshua has gathered them together at Shechem for a particular purpose.

Shechem is identical to *shekem*, shoulder. Thus, it literally means Shoulder. However, that comes from *shakam* signifying to incline, as inclining the shoulder to a burden. Hence, it is normally translated as to rise or start early. Abarim defines Shechem as “[Having a Sense of] Responsibility.”

Shechem is where the Lord first spoke to Abram after coming into the land of promise and uttered His promise to him –

“Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.” Genesis 12:7, 8

It is where Jacob was said to have finally and safely returned from his journey to Padan Aram –

“Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. ¹⁹ And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money. ²⁰ Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.” Genesis 33:18-20

It is the location where Jacob stayed at the time his daughter Dinah was defiled. Because of that, Simeon and Levi killed all the males of the city. In this same location, it said this in Genesis 35 –

“And Jacob said to his household and to all who *were* with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that *are* among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. ³ Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.’ ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which *were* in their hands, and the earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.” Genesis 35:2-4

It is the location where Joseph’s bones were taken and buried. That was first commanded to Israel in Genesis 50 –

“And Joseph said to his brethren, ‘I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.’ ²⁵ Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.’” Genesis 50:24, 25

The fulfillment of that will be seen towards the end of Joshua 24. Also, Shechem is the area where Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim are located. Thus, it is the location where Moses commanded these words to be carried out –

“Keep all the commandments which I command you today. ² And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. ³ You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, ‘a land flowing with milk and honey,’ just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you. ⁴ Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, *that* on Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime. ⁵ And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron *tool* on them. ⁶ You shall build with whole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. ⁷ You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and rejoice before the LORD your God. ⁸ And you shall write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law.” Deuteronomy 27:1-8

The altar was built, and the ceremony was conducted as recorded in Joshua 8. In fact, as nutty as this may sound, the events in Joshua 24 may coincide with the building of the altar in Joshua 8. In Joshua 8, it said, “Now Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal.”

The word translated as “Now” in that verse is *az*, a demonstrative adverb that generally signifies “at that time” or “thereupon.” It can refer to a point in the future when a prophecy or a statement of fact is given, such as “At that time, the Lord will do such and such.”

Further, the word translated as “built” is *yivneh*. It is an imperfect verb that carries the sense of ongoing or even the future. The same form is used in 2 Samuel 7, saying –

“He **shall build** a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” 2 Samuel 7:13

Though it appears while reading Joshua that the events are chronological, including in Joshua 8, as I explained at that time that was highly unlikely. As has been seen again and again, the individual passages of Joshua are categorical and expressive, not necessarily chronological.

If this is the same event as in Joshua 8, then the gathering includes the entire congregation of Israel, including all the women and children. It would also mean that the last verses of Joshua 24 concerning the death of Joshua are again categorical, not chronological.

If this is a correct analysis, then I would take the events of Joshua 8:30-35 as occurring between Joshua 24:24 and 24:25. This is speculation and is a logical way to resolve the chronology of the events in Joshua. Regardless, each of these notable events of Israel’s history has a bearing on what is stated in Joshua 24.

As for this gathering, as noted, it could be a regular gathering on one of the appointed feast days, or it could be that it is a special gathering. Either way, it is an all-inclusive gathering of the tribes.

And yet, if it is not in conjunction with the events of Joshua 8, it may be that the next words define what “all the tribes of Israel” mean. Like in Joshua 23:2, rather than all the people of the nation, it may mean all the representatives of the tribes...

^{1 (con’t)} **and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers;**

Rather than “their,” the words are in the singular, referring to Israel as a single man: *vayiqra l’ziqne Yisrael u-l’rashav u-l’shoptav u-l’shot’rav* – “and called to elders Israel, and to his heads, and to his judges, and to his officers.”

The four categories include the elders who are the seventy leaders eventually known as the Sanhedrin. The heads are the chief men of the families. The judges are those who interpreted the law and made decisions based on their analyses. The word used to describe the officers, *shoter*, comes from a word indicating to write. Thus, they would be scribes or official superintendents or magistrates. With their calling, it next says...

^{1 (con’t)} **and they presented themselves before God.**

Of the 38 translations I checked for this verse, not a single one accurately includes the article before “God.” Rather, it says: *vayiyatsevu liphne ha’elohim* – “and stationed themselves before the God.”

As always, the definite article is expressive. It is used when referring to the one true God in relation to man. But more especially, it is in relation to those who are in a right relationship with Him, or it is used to contrast those who are not in a right relationship with Him.

Israel is the nation of the Lord. They have presented themselves before the true God to be instructed by Joshua. This is the same thought that is used in Job 1 & 2, using the same word –

“And it was the day, and came the sons *of* the God to station themselves upon Yehovah.” Job 1:6 (CG)

The meaning is that those who worshiped the Lord came to offer upon His altar as was noted in the previous verse of Job. The view that the “sons of God” refers to angels is incorrect. It is referring to those humans who worshiped the Lord, having retained the knowledge of Him in the form handed down from Noah.

To ensure the Lord would continue to be revealed properly among the people of the world, Israel was selected as a nation, a covenant was made with them, and His tabernacle and later His temple was placed among them. As such, the leaders of this nation have been called together for this purpose.

Understanding this, the narrative continues, explaining who “the God” is. However, the words are those of the Lord having been conveyed to Joshua. As this is so, the text is claiming divine inspiration in what is next said...

² And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel:

koh amar Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “Thus says Yehovah, God of Israel.” The words explain the meaning of *ha’elohim*, the God, just mentioned. Yehovah is the God of Israel. As noted above, He is God, the God, to those who stand in a proper relationship with Him.

However, the appropriate worship of Him was naturally dying out once again. People are prone to quickly apostatize from a proper understanding of who God is, and so to maintain proper revelation of who He is, He called Israel as His people. That is clearly elucidated in the coming words, beginning with...

^{2 (con’t)} ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times;

The word “including” is not in the text: *b’ever ha’nakhar yashvu avotekhem me’olam terakh avi Avraham va’avi nakhor* – “in side the river dwelt your fathers from antiquity: Terah father Abraham and father Nahor.”

The meaning of Terah is a best guess, but it appears to come from two words, *tur*, which gives the sense of a broad sweeping motion, and *ravakh* which is to be wide, spacious, unconfined, and so on. Thus, it could signify Wanderer.

Abraham is defined by most as Father of a Multitude or Father of Many Nations.

Nahor comes from *nakhar*, a snorting. Thus, it means Snorting or Breathing Hard.

The meaning of this clause is that before Israel was called, even before Abraham was called, Terah and Abraham and Nahor dwelt on the other side of the Euphrates River.

Because the word “including” is not in the text, the plural is surely inclusive of Abraham. Terah, along with Abraham and Nahor lived in that area and there is no reason to assume that the next words do not apply to them...

^{2 (con’t)} and they served other gods.

va'yaavdu elohim akherim – “And served gods other.” Although it is unpalatable to tie Abraham in with serving other gods, hence the probable reason for the inclusion of the word “including” in the previous clause, this is what the text says.

In Jewish tradition it is asserted that while living in Ur, Abraham was persecuted for his disgust of idolatry. Because of this, he was called from there by God. As usual, such traditions are not to be considered as reliable. Rather, this is what explains the most curious words of Abraham that are universally mistranslated –

“And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father’s house...”
-Genesis 20:13

The verb is plural. Therefore, the translation “God” is incorrect. It reads: *v’hi ka’asher hithu oti elohim mibeith avi* – “And it was according to which caused to wander me gods from house my father.”

In other words, he is saying that it wasn’t the Lord God who caused him to wander from his father’s house. Rather, the false gods that were served in Ur is what caused him to wander from his father’s house. That is seen in Genesis 11 –

“And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram’s wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. ³² So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.” Genesis 11:31, 32

Whether it was Terah or Abraham that realized the idolatry of Ur was inappropriate, or whether the Lord specifically revealed Himself to one of them, the decision was made to leave there.

Based on the next words, it seems likely that it was Abraham and that it was because of the purposeful intervention of the Lord. Matthew Poole agrees with this and says –

“...both Abraham and Nahor were no less idolaters than the rest of mankind. This is said to prevent their [Israel’s] vain boasting in their worthy ancestors, and to assure them that whatsoever good was in or had been done by their progenitors, was wholly born God’s free grace, and not for their own merit or righteousness, as the Jews were very apt to conceit.”

This is likely. Whatever way the original calling came about, and whoever it was to, God was the One who acted first, superintending over the events. With this contemplated, the word of the Lord through Joshua continues...

*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law
Having become a curse for us
Just imagine what Israel saw
As they crucified Jesus*

*There was this sinless Lamb of God
And yet, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"
Should we weep and mourn, or stand and applaud?
Over the things God has done for you and me*

*Because of what He has done for us
The blessing of Abraham might come
Upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus
Wonderful news is to be learned therefrom*

*That we might the promise receive
The gift of the Spirit through faith in those who believe*

II. In His Midst (verses 3-5)

³Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River,

va'eqakh eth avikhem eth Avraham me'ever ha'nakhar – "And took your father, Abraham, from side the river." The obvious meaning is "from the other side of the Euphrates" in the land of Ur. The gods caused Abraham to wander, but the Lord took him and purposefully led him.

The Lord God, the true God, called Abraham away from the false gods in order to establish him. Abraham is the **material** cause; Abraham's faith is the **formal** cause; getting Abraham away from the false gods was the **efficient** cause; and a relationship with the true God for him and his generations was to be the **final** cause.

The words of this clause begin a list of events from Israel's history. Each is a mark of grace in itself, but there are five which confirms the meaning of the number, grace. Cambridge mistakenly lists them as –

- (i) The Call of Abraham;
- (ii) The Deliverance from Egypt;
- (iii) The Defeat of the Amorites on the east of the Jordan, and the frustration of the machinations of Balaam;
- (iv) The Passage of the Jordan and Capture of Jericho;
- (v) The Victories over all the nations of Canaan.

These need to be amended to fit what the narrative reflects –

- (i) The Move and Call of Abraham and the Establishment of the Line of Promise;
- (ii) The Move to and Deliverance from Egypt;
- (iii) The Move into the Land of the Amorites on the East of the Jordan and their Defeat;
- (iv) The Move through the Jordan and the Subduing of the Land of Canaan;
- (v) The Planting of Israel in the Land of Promise.

The great point of what is to be noted in verses 3-13 is the one that is left unstated. There is nothing about the giving of the law in the Lord's words.

The point is that Abraham was an idolater in the land of idolatry. These false gods were leading the people astray. Eventually, there would be no understanding left of the true God, Yehovah. Therefore, the Lord acted to bring about proper worship of Himself and to restore the world to Himself through that proper worship.

As this is so, it becomes obvious that the law is not the final step in the process. Rather, it is an instructive tool leading to the final step.

The Jews think they are the point of all of the steps taken along the redemptive path. From there, the covenant made with them at Sinai sealed that. As such, they see themselves as the ultimate focus of favor from the Lord and the law as the final mark of that favor.

But if Abraham's call was one of grace, and if the events in his life led to a declaration of righteousness apart from the law, then the law cannot annul what happened before its inception. Paul explains that in Galatians 3 –

Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, *does He do it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?— ⁶ just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” ⁷ Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of

Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying*, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” ⁹ So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” ¹¹ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” ¹² Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.”

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”), ¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

¹⁵ Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ. ¹⁷ And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Galatians 3:5-18

The call of Abraham cannot be separated from the life of Abraham. Though the declaration of righteousness and the promise are not mentioned by the Lord through Joshua at this time, they explain the reason for the call.

The Lord is working through a plan where the entire world will, once again, worship Him in the proper manner. Understanding this, the words of the Lord through Joshua next say...

³ (con’t) **led him throughout all the land of Canaan,**

va’olekh oto b’kal erets k’naan – “And walked him in all land Canaan.” That is seen in the words of Genesis 13 –

“And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: ‘Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. ¹⁶ And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a

man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered. ¹⁷ Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” Genesis 13:14-17

The Lord directed Abraham to walk throughout the land, and so he did as instructed. This great survey of the land was to give him confidence in the word of the Lord. Even if he was a sojourner, the land would be established as the possession of his seed.

This would be for the continued revelation of the Lord concerning Himself. To bring this about, it next says...

³ (con't) **and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.**

The written Hebrew texts says: *va'erev eth zaro va'eten lo eth yitskhaq* – “and multiplied his seed and gave to him Isaac.” These words are included under the major category of the call of Abraham and the establishment of the line of promise.

Though the multiplication of Abraham's seed is mentioned, which would have included sons through Hagar and Keturah, those children are excluded from the text because they are irrelevant to what is being presented. Isaac means Laughter. He is the son of promise and the continuation of the line of promise. Next...

⁴ **To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau.**

va'eten l'yitskhaq eth yaaqov v'eth esav – “And gave to Isaac Jacob and Esau.” Isaac was a son of promise. But the words here clearly indicate that both Jacob and Esau were given to Isaac. Thus, even if a son is not of promise, he is still a granting from the Lord. That is reflected in the words of Psalm 127 –

“Behold, children *are* a heritage from the LORD,
The fruit of the womb *is* a reward.” Psalm 127:3

It is a rather sobering thought when we consider how children in the womb are treated today.

Jacob literally means Heel Catcher, but that has several independent meanings such as Supplanter, One Who Trips Up, One Closely Following, etc. Each is tied into the thought of grabbing the heel of another.

Esau comes from *asah*, to do or make. He was born hairy and thus looked like a fully formed man. His name is Made. As for these two...

⁴ (con't) **To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess,**

It's maddening how the NKJV diverts incorrectly from the KJV. The KJV, despite not being a great translation, got these words exactly and then the NKJV completely messes them up. At times, it is more like the UKJV (Unimproved): *va'eten l'esav eth har seir la'reshet oto* – "And gave to Esau Mount Seir, to possess it."

It seems like a superfluous statement to make when Esau, like Ishmael, is not a son of promise. However, the promise of the land of Canaan was given to Jacob. Therefore, it would provide a reason for how the land would remain the possession of Jacob and his offspring.

That was explained in Genesis 36, just as was the removal of Ishmael in Genesis 21 and the other sons of Abraham in Genesis 25. But nothing of those things is mentioned here. Thus, we can assume that we should look for typology. *Har Seir*, or Mount Seir means Hairy Mount.

As has been seen many times, a mountain (*har*) is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. Hair signifies an awareness of something, most especially an awareness of sin. Next, it says...

⁴ (con't) **but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.**

These words begin the second section of the Lord's discourse, "The Move to and Deliverance from Egypt." *v'yaaqov u-banav yaredu mitsrayim* – "And Jacob and his sons went down Egypt." Egypt means Double Distress. The movement of Jacob and his family to Egypt was something spoken to Abraham many years earlier, including the reason it would come about –

"Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror *and* great darkness fell upon him. ¹³ Then He said to Abram: 'Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. ¹⁴ And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be

buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete.” Genesis 15:12-16

The movement of Jacob and his family to Egypt occurred in the year 2299 Anno Mundi. It was 215 years after the initial promise of the land that was made to Abraham in Genesis 12. That occurred in the year 2084AM.

From that point, it would be another 215 years before Israel would be brought out of Egypt in the year 2514AM. One might then say that the Lord’s words to Abraham in Genesis 15 are not true. If they would be afflicted 400 years and yet they were only in Egypt for 215 years, then there is an error.

But this is incorrect. It says, “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that* is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.” Isaac was born in the year 2109AM.

He would have been weaned between two and four years old. That would be 2011-2013AM. As they departed from Egypt in 2514AM, and as Ishmael began afflicting Abraham’s descendants at the weaning of Isaac in a land that was not yet theirs, it is 400 years from Ishmael’s afflicting Isaac to the exodus from Egypt.

Also, one might argue that the words “the fourth generation” are wrong because the people were in Egypt for more than four generations. Again, this would be incorrect. Only the line of Levi, out of all of those who went to Egypt, has the specific years of their lives recorded.

This is based on the naming of Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, in Exodus and Numbers. Those two mentions are –

“Now Amram took for himself Jochebed, his father’s sister, as wife; and she bore him Aaron and Moses. And the years of the life of Amram *were* one hundred and thirty-seven.” Exodus 6:20

“The name of Amram’s wife *was* Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam.”
-Numbers 26:59

Jochebed is noted as Amram’s wife and also “his father’s sister,” but she is also called “the daughter of Levi who was born to Levi in Egypt.”

In Genesis 6:16, it said that Levi lived to the age of 137. The only other son of Jacob whose age at death was recorded was Joseph, because it was necessary to know. After Levi, of his three sons, only the age of Kohath is given at his death, 133.

And then, for all the sons of Kohath, only the age of Amram is given at his death, 137. As the Israelites dwelt in Egypt for 215 years, these ages were recorded to show the reliability of God's promise to Abraham, and thus the reliability of the word of God itself. This is evidenced by the words, "and to Amram she [Jochebed] bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam."

Jochebed is Levi's natural daughter, and Kohath is Levi's natural son. Amram was Levi's grandson who married his aunt, Levi's daughter. It was to that union that Aaron, Moses, and Miriam, Levi's great-grandchildren, were born.

The specific record of this line was given to establish a direct line from Abraham to Moses and Aaron through Isaac and Jacob. That is clearly evident when compared with the other sets of genealogies already given in the Bible.

But more, the special record of the years of these people's lives, along with the special note of Jochebed as being both the daughter of Levi and sister of Kohath, is given to show that the Lord's words are both true and fulfilled.

Jacob went to Egypt with his family which included his son Levi and Levi's three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. In Egypt, Kohath had a son named Amram, and Amram had a son named Moses.

Thus, Moses is the fourth generation from Jacob who went to Egypt (Jacob: Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses). And the sons of Aaron and Moses are the fourth generation from Kohath, Levi's son, who also went to Egypt. As it is this generation that entered Canaan, the prophecy concerning the fourth generation was exactly fulfilled.

As for the events leading up to the Exodus, they are referred to next in this second event in the Lord's acts of grace towards the covenant people...

⁵ Also I sent Moses and Aaron,

This has to be considered a calling of grace. Moses had fled to Midian and would have spent the rest of his life there. Once he received his calling, he attempted to get the Lord to send someone else. This was especially based on these words –

“O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I *am* slow of speech and slow of tongue.” Exodus 4:10

The Lord responded with –

“So the LORD said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the LORD? ¹² Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.’” Exodus 4:11, 12

However, Moses again asked the Lord to send someone else, kindling the Lord’s anger against him. Because of this, the Lord appointed Aaron to be Moses’ mouthpiece. From there, with these two as the Lord’s instruments to work out His plans, it next says...

^{5 (con’t)} **and I plagued Egypt,**

va’egoph eth mitsrayim – “And I struck Egypt.” Without needing to go into any detail, the Lord sums up the ten plagues upon Egypt, combining them into one thought, that of striking them. This was...

^{5 (con’t)} **according to what I did among them.**

It is complicated to figure out what the subject is: *ka’asher asiti b’qirbo* – “According to which I did in his midst.” The name Egypt is a feminine noun, so it can’t be referring to that.

Without anything else to go on except wrong commentaries, I would conclude that it is referring to Pharaoh who is taken synonymously with Egypt. The same word is used in Exodus 3, where this is the case –

“But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. ²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst [*b’qirbo* – “in his midst”]; and after that he will let you go.”

-Exodus 3:19, 20

This makes sense. It has a precedent, even if the nearest antecedent is not masculine, and it resolves the noticeable gender discord. In fact, because the Lord is speaking through Joshua about the Exodus account, and because that has been recorded and maintained among Israel, I would say it is the resolution to the matter. With that, the Lord next says...

^{5 (fin)} **Afterward I brought you out.**

v'akhar hotseti etkhem – “And after brought out you (pl.).” The words are to all those gathered before the Lord, some of whom had actually dwelt in Egypt but were young enough to escape the sentence upon those who were destined to die in the wilderness.

As for the words themselves, they will be repeated and more fully explained in the next section. Despite that, they are complete enough to end the first section of the discourse to the people.

With just five short verses, we have been able to review a few portions of hundreds of years of Israel’s history. The Lord is making a point by telling Israel these things. In each thought, there is the note that grace has been given.

Israel has no right to boast because it is the Lord who has accomplished these things. But more, the law that they have been given, though great and noble, is not a means to an end. It is merely a steppingstone to bring them where they need to be.

They should be able to see this from the things He has conveyed to them, but to this day, they cannot see it, nor can many in the church. A promise was given to Abraham and his seed. The introduction of the law cannot void that promise.

Paul couldn’t see this until the Lord personally intervened, and then it changed his life. Since then, what occurred in his life, and how that is relevant to our relationship with God has been recorded in the New Testament. We don’t need a personal appearance from the Lord to get it. We just need to read and think about what we have read.

Hold fast to the grace of God in Christ. He has done all the work. We just need to accept that truth and believe. In our believing, He is pleased enough with us to seal us with His Spirit, adopt us as His children, and call us His sons and daughters. Don’t over complicate the simplicity of that.

We may or may not be able to perceive all the wonderful sounds, tastes, and sights that are right there in the Bible, but we can at least get the basics right. God has made the gospel simple enough that anyone can get it. So hear the word, believe in your heart, and confess with your mouth. In this, you will do well.

Closing Verse: *“So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers.” Acts 7:15*

Next Week: Joshua 24:6-15 *To the Lord, we shall applaud, this we shall do...* (For He is a Holy God, Part II) (56th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him, and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

For He Is a Holy God, Part I

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel
To Shechem and called for the elders of Israel
For their heads, for their judges, and for their officers
And they presented themselves before God
-----to see what he would tell

And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the
-----LORD God of Israel:
'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the
-----father of Nahor
Dwelt on the other side of the [Euphrates] River in old times
And they served other gods, such was the score

Then I took your father Abraham
From the other side of the River, on a new track
Led him throughout all the land of Canaan
And multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac

To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau
To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess
But Jacob and his children went down to Egypt
The place of their distress

Also I sent Moses and Aaron
And I plagued Egypt, without a doubt
According to what I did among them
Afterward I brought you out

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 24:6-15 (FOR HE IS A HOLY GOD, PART II)

These first two sermons from Joshua 24 have been mostly recounting what has taken place. Joshua has done this as a method of teaching the people a particular truth: that the Lord has been faithful to the people, and He brought them into their promised homeland, Canaan.

The Lord, through Joshua, has selected details that are relevant to this coming about in his recounting. As noted last week, the giving of the law was notably missing from those details.

Israel's inability to go into Canaan prior to the wilderness wanderings was not because of disobeying the law. It was because the people did not have faith in the Lord. In rejecting His word, He rejected them. This is not at all unlike the speech Stephen gave to the people in Acts 7.

Though the main subject of the speech in Acts 7 deals with the people's rejection of the Lord rather than the Lord's faithfulness, the final verses of the passage today are centered on the people remaining faithful to the Lord.

The people were unfaithful to the word of the Lord in Numbers, and the people were unfaithful to the Word, who is the Lord, in Acts. After both, a time of punishment came upon them...

Text Verse: *"Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets:*

'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?

⁴³ You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch,

And the star of your god Remphan,

Images which you made to worship;

And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'" Acts 7:42, 43

In 1979, Bob Dylan released his album *Slow Train Coming*. He had met the Lord Jesus and put his thoughts into music. One of the songs he wrote was "Gotta Serve Somebody." He made a point that man is destined to serve somebody. One of the verses says –

“Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord
But you’re gonna have to serve somebody.”

In the passage today, Joshua will set a choice before the people. They can serve the Lord or return to the gods of their fathers. In Acts 7, Stephen made a direct connection between Israel’s time in the wilderness and what would come upon them again for rejecting Jesus.

With their rejection of Him, their temple was destroyed and they were removed to the furthest parts of the planet, serving every god imaginable except the Lord who had come to dwell among them. For most of Israel, that continues to this day. That will change, and someday they will be brought into the New Covenant.

Faithfulness to the Lord is what all people should be focused on. Our continued trip through Joshua is filled with wonderful details of this truth. It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Into the Land of the Amorite (verses 6-10)

⁶ ‘Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt,

Rather, it reads, “And I brought out your fathers from Egypt.” The words continue with the great acts of the Lord on behalf of Israel. Specifically, they detail the continued deliverance from Egypt that was noted in verse 24:5 with the general words, “Afterward I brought you out.”

The general statement was made, and now the process is being described. Although these elders were probably there at the time of being brought out, they had to be nineteen years old or younger; all others had died in the wilderness. That was seen in Numbers –

“‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: ²⁹ The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above. ³⁰ Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. ³¹ But your little ones, whom you said would be victims,

I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.”

-Numbers 14:28-31

By mentioning the fathers, the Lord is indirectly reminding the people of their faithlessness even in the midst of His faithfulness...

^{6 (con't)} **and you came to the sea;**

v'tavou ha'yamah – “and you came the seaward.” The word *bo* signifies to come or go or to come in or go in. In this case, it is not “in” the sea. They came seaward...

^{6 (con't)} **and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.**

The words are abrupt, having no preposition before Red Sea: *v'yirdphu mitsrayim akhare avotekhem b'rekhev u'v'pharashim yam suph* – “and pursued Egypt after your fathers in chariot and in horsemen: Red Sea.” The account in Exodus says –

“And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. ⁹ So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.” Exodus 14:8, 9

⁷ **So they cried out to the LORD;**

va'yitsaqu el Yehovah – “And they cried unto Yehovah.” This is recorded in Exodus 14, leaving out much of the detail, but simply focusing on what is most pertinent to the current narrative –

“And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.” Exodus 14:10

There was a need, the people cried out in their need...

^{7 (con't)} **and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians,**

More precisely, “and He put darkness between you and between the Egyptians.” Here is a word found nowhere else in Scripture, *maaphel*. It comes from the adjective *aphel* which is also only found once in Scripture –

“Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light?
Is it not very dark [*aphel*], with no brightness in it?” Amos 5:20

Thus, it would be an opaque gloomy darkness. This event was recorded in Exodus 14 as well –

“And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.”

-Exodus 14:19, 20

With this opaque gloomy darkness, the Egyptians would be unable to see the disaster that lay ahead of them...

^{7 (con't)} **brought the sea upon them, and covered them.**

Not a single translation that I read correctly translates these words. The two that got it partially right are:

“and He sets thick darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brings the sea over him, and covers them” LSV

“and he will put darkness between you and between Egypt, and he will bring the sea upon him, and will cover him;” SLT

Rather, it is singular: *va'yave alav eth ha'yam vay'kasehu* – “And brought upon him the sea and covered him.” The word Egyptians is plural and the two pronouns are singular. As in verse 24:5, where the pronoun was also singular, it is referring to Pharaoh who represents the nation.

Ultimately, the battle was the Lord against Pharaoh and Pharaoh didn't measure up. This was recorded in Exodus 14 as well –

“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.”

-Exodus 14:27, 28

With the victory recorded, the Lord sums up the matter...

^{7 (con't)} **And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt.**

From the first three signs Moses presented to the elders of Israel, through the many plagues upon the land, even to the total destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, the people were firsthand witnesses. They didn't read about it in a scroll or hear about it from their fathers, but they were there and saw with their own eyes.

Of note is the changing from the third person to the first person in this verse –

“And they cried out to Yehovah. And He put darkness between you and between the Egyptians, and brought [3rd p.] upon him the sea, and He covered him. And saw your eyes what I did in Egypt.”

The words were in the first person from verse 3 through verse 6. They suddenly change to the third person and then return to the first person. The reason seems to be that both are speaking of God in Christ.

The darkness was attributed to the Angel of God, a type of Christ, going between the camps. The covering of the Egyptians was said to be done by Moses' hand, but that is explained by Exodus 14:16, which says –

“But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea.”

The rod, typical of the leveraged power of God in Christ as was seen in the Exodus sermons, was the action that destroyed the Egyptians. One can think of Jesus' work on the cross and see the reason for the change from the first to the third person.

However, and despite the marvelous work of the Lord, and without stating the obvious reason for it, the Lord next says...

7 (con't) Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time.

va'teshvu va'midbar yamim rabim – “and dwelt in the wilderness days many.” This was inclusive of traveling to Sinai, being at the mountain during the time of receiving the law and constructing the sanctuary, departing for Egypt, spying out the land, rejecting the Lord by refusing to enter Canaan, and being sentenced to die in the wilderness until the adult generation had perished. The period of “many days” was forty years. That said, the Lord continues...

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites,

Amorite is singular. The Lord brought Israel the people into the land of the nation of the Amorite, meaning Renown. This begins the third section of the discourse, which is The Move into the Land of the Amorites on the East of the Jordan, and their Defeat.

The Lord is preparing to bring Israel into Canaan, but there were foes to face prior to entry into the land. The specifics of this are recorded in Numbers 21:21-31, but are summed up in the words, “Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites” (Numbers 21:31). It is the nation of the Amorite...

8 (con't) who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan,

ha'yoshev b'ever ha'yarden – “The dweller in side the Jordan.” This foe was east of the Jordan and had to be dealt with prior to Israel’s entry into the land...

8 (con't) and they fought with you.

This was inclusive of several battles, but two of them are especially highlighted. The first was with Sihon king of the Amorites, the main verses of which say –

“Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, ²² ‘Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into fields or vineyards; we will not drink water from wells. We will go by the King’s Highway until we have passed through your territory.’ ²³ But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together and went out against Israel in the wilderness, and he came to Jahaz and fought against Israel. ²⁴ Then Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon *was* fortified.” Numbers 21:21-24

The second was with Og, king of Bashan, also in Numbers 21 –

“Then Moses sent to spy out Jazer; and they took its villages and drove out the Amorites who *were* there.

³³ And they turned and went up by the way to Bashan. So Og king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. ³⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into your hand, with all his people and his land; and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.’ ³⁵ So they defeated him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left him; and they took possession of his land.”

-Numbers 21:32-35

The Amorite refused Israel’s request to allow them to pass through their land and came out against them in battle...

^{8 (con’t)} **But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you.**

As is so often the case, the Lord notes that despite Israel having waged the war, it was He who gave the victory. Without the Lord, they could not prevail, but with His presence among them, they could not lose.

⁹ **Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose to make war against Israel,**

The word *lakham*, to fight, battle, or war against another is used. However, no battle took place against Moab. This is not a contradiction. Rather, it says that Balak arose to make war against Israel. It doesn’t say he made war against Israel.

Knowing that Israel had defeated Sihon and Og, he knew they were a force to be reckoned with. And so, in order to wage war, he determined to have the battle essentially won before he even entered into it. Therefore, he arose to make war...

^{9 (con’t)} **and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you.**

The substance of this is addressed at the opening of Numbers 22 and it explains how he planned to defeat Israel –

“Now Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

³ And Moab was exceedingly afraid of the people because they *were* many, and

Moab was sick with dread because of the children of Israel. ⁴ So Moab said to the elders of Midian, “Now this company will lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field.” And Balak the son of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. ⁵ Then he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which *is* near the River in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying: “Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! ⁶ Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they *are* too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless *is* blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.” Numbers 22:2-6

Despite his cunning plan, he misunderstood the relationship of the Lord to Israel...

¹⁰ But I would not listen to Balaam;

The narrative in Numbers 22 specifically says again and again that Balaam spoke to the Lord, meaning Yehovah. He was familiar with the worship of the Lord just as Job was. However, his understanding of the Lord was certainly incorrect.

Further, his understanding of the relationship of the Lord with Israel was not known until the Lord revealed it to him...

¹⁰ (con't) therefore he continued to bless you.

v'barekh barokh etkhem – “And blessing he blessed you.” This is recorded in Numbers 23 and 24. The first two times Balaam sought to curse Israel in accord with the request of Balak, the Lord instead sent a word of blessing. Finally, Balaam gave up and prophesied his own word of blessing over Israel without the Lord’s direction.

¹⁰ (con't) So I delivered you out of his hand.

v'atsil etkhem mi'yado – “And I delivered you from his hand.” This is probably directly referring to Balak who had arisen to go to war with Israel, but it is inclusive of the means of his strategy, meaning the employment of Balaam. With the events complete, the last verse of Numbers 24 said, “So Balaam rose and departed and returned to his place; Balak also went his way.”

Though Israel would meet Balaam again in Numbers 31 and kill him with the sword, the narrative here is focused on the threat of being cursed by the Lord through the

machinations of Balaam. Israel was delivered from this possibility. With that, the narrative turns to the great moment hoped for since the time of Abraham...

*Your eyes saw what I did in Egypt
And the great deeds I accomplished there
The power of Pharaoh was stripped
To Me, what god would you compare?*

*I led you through the wilderness
Even to the land of the Amorite
But of his power who would confess?
When I destroyed him from your sight*

*I brought you to the Jordan by My hand
And I brought you through it as well
I placed you in the most beautiful land
And it is there that you now dwell*

*Speak of the deeds of Lord all your days
Be sure to honor Him and sing out His praise*

II. We Will Serve the Lord (verses 11-15)

¹¹ Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you—*also* the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Although a large number of versions follow this general translation, it misses the point. First, the word translated as “men” is the plural of *baal*. It signifies a lord, master, husband, etc. It refers to one who has supreme authority over those under him.

Jericho, as the first point of battle, is being used as a summary of the inhabitants of the land for the subsequent battles –

“And you passed through the Jordan and came to Jericho, and fought against the lords [*baale*] of Jericho: The Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite” (CG).

It is as if Jericho is the main location of Canaan because it was first engaged in battle. The “lords of Jericho,” then speak of the leaders of all the ethnic groups within Canaan.

These same people groups, although mentioned in a different order, were referred to by Moses in Deuteronomy 7 –

“When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. ⁵ But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.” Deuteronomy 7:1-5

The contents of this verse convey the fourth major section of the discourse, The Move through the Jordan and the Subduing of the Land of Canaan. Israel defeated those who came against them. Israel engaged these foes...

11 (con’t) But I delivered them into your hand.

Though speaking to Israel in the plural, He notes their united nature in what transpired: *va’eten otham b’yedkhem* – “And gave them [pl.] into your hand [sg.]” Israel was given the victory because of the Lord’s granting of it to them.

With that, and despite still speaking about the subduing of the land, I would take the next verse as the final section of the discourse which is The Planting of Israel in the Land of Promise...

12 I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you,

va’eshlakh lipnekhem eth ha’tsirah vat’garesh otham mip’nekhem – “And I sent before your faces the hornet, and it drove out them from before your faces.” This is the last of three times that the hornet is mentioned in the Bible.

It is derived from *tsara*, to be struck with leprosy. Thus it is an afflicter, like leprosy. The Lord sent this afflicter, the hornet, before Israel in order to defeat the enemy, driving them out. Due to the article, “the hornet,” the language is to be taken metaphorically.

Similar terminology is used concerning bees in Deuteronomy 1:44 and Psalm 118:12. There, bees are equated with one’s enemies, not literal insects.

Then, Joshua says that this is fulfilled in the case of the Amorites in the next clause. However, Moses, speaking of the same battle, showed that it was, in fact, Israel who defeated them –

“And at that time we took the land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who *were* on this side of the Jordan, from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon...” Deuteronomy 3:8

That was repeated in Deuteronomy 4:47 and it was referring to the kings Sihon and Og. Therefore, this is referring to a connection between the hornet and its associated word meaning leprosy.

The Lord promised health and long life to Israel if they held to His laws. As they were going into a land defiled by those things which are opposed to a healthy lifestyle, the enemy had been, or would be, afflicted with disease to the point where they were incapable of standing up to Israel’s armies.

Thus, “the hornet” is a metaphor for God’s judgment of sickness upon them, preparing them for destruction by Israel. As the Bible records that Israel actually faced these foes in battle, this is a reasonable explanation for the term “the hornet” which is said to have been sent before them.

The same types of effects are noted upon the people of Israel during their own times of siege from the enemies who came against them.

The overall evidence demonstrates that the words “the hornet” are speaking of the effects upon the people as a result of their destruction by Israel, as the Lord led them. As noted, this included...

^{12 (con’t)} ***also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.***

The word “also” is not in the text and it confuses the substance of what is said: *sh’ne malkhe ha’emori lo b’karvkha v’lo b’qashtekha* – “two kings the Amorite, no in your sword and no in your bow.” Pretty much everyone says this is referring to the two kings east of the Jordan, Sihon and Og.

Rather, it pertains to two main kings, but it is referring to Amorites on both sides of the Jordan. This goes back, for example, to Joshua 10, where it said –

“Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it.” Joshua 10:5

There, as quite often is the case elsewhere, it is singular, showing the united nature of the people: *va’yeas’phu va’yaalu khameshet malkhe ha’emori* – “And gathered together and went up five kings the Amorite.” It is five kings, but one people, even though they were not all Amorites.

Rather, they included Hittites, Jebusites, etc. But they are lumped together as being a part of “the Amorite.” After the battle, it repeated the notion that the Lord delivered up the Amorite before the children of Israel.

In this chapter, the listing given in the previous verse began with the Amorite. Thus, the rest of the people groups are listed under the Amorite. There was the Amorite east of Jordan, and there was the Amorite west of the Jordan. The words speak of the total victory over the enemies in all the land they possess.

It is because of these words that I say this belongs in the final section of the discourse, that of The Planting of Israel in the Land of Promise. This verse is only referring to the battles after they have been completed in the narrative.

The defeat of the two kings was recorded in verses 24:8 & 11. The defeat in 24:8 was the king of the Amorite (lumped together as one) east of the Jordan and the defeat in 24:11 was the king of the Amorite (lumped together as one) west of the Jordan.

Therefore, this is more an explanation that rest has been granted than a description of the process of granting it. The Lord provided the rest through His efforts. With that, He then reaffirms that notion...

13 I have given you a land for which you did not labor,

More precisely: “And I have given to you a land which not you did become weary in her.” The word “for” implies attaining the land, but that is not what is being conveyed. It is referring to the things in the land. In other words, the Lord gave them the land as noted in the previous verse.

But within the land, there was no need to then start making it productive. That was all set up for them by the previous inhabitants who the Lord drove out. Forests were cleared, wells were dug, roads were in place, thorns would have been burned off (and Israel is full of thorns!), etc.

This is indicated by the use of the word *yaga*, to become weary. It comes from a primitive root signifying to grasp. As such, it means to be exhausted, tire, toil, be weary, and so on. When one is tired, he will grasp onto something to hold himself up. Israel did not have this problem. And more, the next words are said in a similar fashion...

13 (con't) and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them;

The translation is just right. The cities were there, they were cleared of inhabitants, and Israel moved right in and started cooking dinner that night. And more...

13 (con't) you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.'

The words are fine but reversed: “Vineyards and olive groves which not you did plant, you eat.” At the first harvest, all they had to do was go out and start plucking produce off the vines and trees. After that, the maintenance would be up to them. Israel was given a land of abundance by the Lord. He did everything to prepare it for them in advance.

If one thinks about it, if the land was divided into languages at the time of Peleg, who was born in the year 1758 Anno Mundi, and Abraham received his call in 2084AM, then the population of Canaan at the time would not have been great.

However, with the addition of almost five hundred years between the promise and Israel's entry into the land (Joshua began in the year 2555AM), there would have been many more people, many more cities, much more productive land, etc. The Lord prepared everything by His wisdom to ensure Israel could immediately move in and be secure.

As for the contents of this verse, it is exactly what Moses said would be the case –

“So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build,¹¹ houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—¹² *then* beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.” Deuteronomy 6:10-12

As this is so, and as Moses also warned, Joshua continues...

¹⁴ **“Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth,**

v’atah yeru eth Yehovah v’ivdu oto b’tamim u-b’emeth – “And now, fear Yehovah and serve Him in perfection and in truth.” The word fear signifies to have a fearful reverence of the Lord. In treating Him flippantly, He will be displeased and consequences for that attitude will result.

The word translated as perfection, *tamim*, is found in much of the Old Testament. However, it is found mostly in three books: Leviticus, Numbers, and Ezekiel.

In those books, it is mostly used in reference to the unblemished nature of the sacrifices offered to the Lord. They were to be perfect because they are given as typical of the Lord. The idea is that just as the Lord is perfect, so is to be the service of the Lord’s people toward Him.

The word *emeth*, or truth, is from *aman*, to confirm or support. Thus, there is a sense of assuredness, establishment, and faithfulness being conveyed. In this, the people were not to simply go through the motions, nor just pay lip service. Rather, they were to serve perfectly and faithfully.

But more, to serve in truth would be to serve in accord with the word given by the Lord through Moses. If the Lord is perfect, then the word He gave was perfect as well. As the word anticipated the coming of Jesus (John 5:39, etc.), then the logical deduction to be made is that only in serving the Lord through Jesus is one serving Him in perfection and in truth.

Jesus conveyed this thought in John 4 –

“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.’

²⁵ The woman said to Him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming’ (who is called Christ). ‘When He comes, He will tell us all things.’

²⁶ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am *He*.’” John 4:21-26

As for Israel at the time of Joshua, in order to properly serve the Lord, Joshua says...

¹⁴ (con’t) **and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!**

Rather than a separate thought as rendered here, it is all one sentence, “...and serve the Lord.” The narrative here implicitly returns to the Genesis account where Jacob said the same thing to his family –

“And Jacob said to his household and to all who *were* with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that *are* among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. ³ Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.” ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which *were* in their hands, and the earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.’” Genesis 35:2-4

As was seen previously, the gathering is in Shechem, the same location as that account in Genesis. But notice also that Joshua clearly says that not only did the fathers on the other side of the Euphrates worship other gods, but so did the fathers who lived in Egypt.

They had fallen into the world of idolatry as is evidenced in Leviticus 17:7 and Amos 5:25. The latter is then cited by Stephen in Acts 7, as noted in our text verse. They had to be called out of that in order to make them a people prepared for the Lord. As these things are only anticipatory of the coming of Christ, one can more fully understand the words of Zechariah –

“He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Luke 1:17

John the Baptist was to prepare Israel for the coming Messiah. Israel rejected Him and were exiled. Someday, they will be come to Christ. Hence, the return of Elijah as one of the two witnesses of Revelation is ahead. As for Israel under Joshua...

15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve,

There is a strong emphasis in the words: *v'im ra b'enekhem la'avod eth Yehovah bacharu lakhem ha'yom eth mi taavodun* – “And if evil in your eyes to serve Yehovah, choose to you the day whom you will (surely) serve.” As Bob Dylan said, “...you're gonna have to serve somebody.”

Joshua is essentially letting Israel's leaders know this. Either one will serve the Lord or he will find other gods to serve, even if it is the god of self because man is designed to serve someone. Or maybe...

15 (con't) whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River,

im eth elohim asher avedu avothekhem asher b'ever ha'nakhar – “if gods which served your fathers which in side the River.” It means the gods of Mesopotamia across the Euphrates. These were household gods, gods of stone on the street corners, etc. They were those things fashioned and designed by man for the purpose of being man's gods...

15 (con't) or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.

v'im eth elohe ha'emori asher atem yoshvim b'artsam – “And if gods the Amorite which you dwell in their land.” These gods leaned toward nature and creation, such as Baal, Asherah, the sun, moon, stars, and so forth.

The connection between all of them is that they are false gods of man's devising. They are powerless to assist and powerless to save. Whereas...

15 (fin) But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

v'anokhi u-beiti naavod eth Yehovah – “And I, and my house, we will serve Yehovah.” He has made the proclamation and it is essentially an eternal one. The reason is because there is no record of Joshua’s family apart from his father Nun.

It says he is from the tribe of Ephraim in Numbers 13:8, and although there is a Joshua recorded in 1 Chronicles 7:27, that may not even be the same Joshua. The father’s name is spelled differently, Non instead of Nun. But even if it is the same Joshua, there is no record beyond him, it simply says, “Non, his son, and Joshua, his son.” That would make him the last of his house.

Therefore, as there is no record of Joshua having a wife or children, his proclamation – from a scriptural sense – extends the word “house” to those who are of his caliber and faith rather than a recorded family. The same thought is expressed by Paul in Galatians 6–

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:10

In this, one can see Joshua as a type of Christ, he being the head of the house of faith just as Jesus is the head of the household of the faithful in Him. Joshua and his life are being carefully depicted again and again to reveal the Person and work of the Lord.

And this is exactly what the word wants us to see. Everything is centered on the coming of Jesus Christ and then the further explanation and revelation of Him into the future. It is He who is the focal point of our understanding of God as well as our experience with Him.

God is in the infinite realm; we are in the finite realm. The two cannot interact without a connector between the two. But even more, God is holy and pure. Man is fallen and tainted. God in Christ is the Purifier and Connector. He is the Way to God and the Door through whom access is finally obtained.

Without Him there is no hope. But with Him, there is absolute surety. Thank God for Jesus Christ who alone gives us the joy of restoration and reconciliation with our heavenly Father. Yes, thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Closing Verse: *“You drove out the nations with Your hand,
But them You planted;
You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.*

*³ For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword,
Nor did their own arm save them;
But it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance,
Because You favored them.” Psalm 44:2, 3*

Next Week: Joshua 24:16-28 *The people need to be properly shod to walk before the Lord carefully...* (For He Is a Holy God, Part III) (57th Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

For He Is a Holy God, Part II

‘Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt
And you came to the sea as directed by Me
And the Egyptians pursued your fathers
With chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea

So they cried out to the LORD
And He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the
-----sea upon them, and covered them too
And your eyes saw what I did in Egypt
Then you dwelt in the wilderness a long time; the days did accrue

And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the
-----other side of the Jordan
And they fought with you; a battle did ensue
But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land
And I destroyed them from before you

Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab
Arose to make war against Israel
And sent and called Balaam the son of Beor
To curse you, that prophesying dumbbell

But I would not listen to Balaam
Therefore he continued to bless you
So I delivered you out of his hand

Because Balak's plans were askew

Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho
And the men of Jericho fought against you
Also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites
The Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites too

But I delivered them into your hand
My victory over them was grand

I sent the hornet before you
Which drove them out from before you as you know
Also the two kings of the Amorites
But not with your sword or with your bow

I have given you a land for which you did not labor
And cities which you did not build, such was your grant
And you now dwell in them
You eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant

"Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth
And put away the gods your hearts have inclined toward
Which your fathers served on the other side of the River
-----and in Egypt
Serve the LORD!

And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD
Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve
Whether the gods which your fathers served
That were on the other side of the River, if you have the nerve

Or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell
But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD
-----so to you I tell

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 24:16-28 **(FOR HE IS A HOLY GOD, PART III)**

There are countless ways to conduct a church service. For the most part, if the heart is right in the pastor, if he is properly directed to the truth of the Lord, and if he competently handles the word, the way the service is conducted will be more up to the preferences of the pastor and the congregants than anything else.

People go where they feel comfortable. This is why I never have a problem with people coming once to the Superior Word and then not returning. They didn't benefit from what I was saying in the way that they would prefer.

Some pastors can take a passage from Joshua, say almost nothing about the passage itself, and still give a sermon that edifies the people who listen. That isn't my style, but as long as he is preaching a message in line with the word in some manner, who could argue against it?

As for what I believe is important in a church service, and why I do things as I do, it is because being grounded in the word is the surest way of not being misled or completely swept away from the faith. If you want to know the importance of people being grounded, listen to these words from Adam Clarke based on his evaluation of Joshua 24:16 –

“God forbid that we should forsake the Lord - That they were now sincere [meaning the people speaking to Joshua] cannot be reasonably doubted, for they served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and the elders that outlived him, Joshua 24:31; but afterwards they turned aside, and did serve other gods. ‘It is ordinary,’ says Mr. Trapp, ‘for the many-headed multitude to turn with the stream - to be of the same religion with their superiors: thus at Rome, in Diocletian's time, they were pagans; in Constantine's Christians; in Constantius's, Arians; in Julian's apostates, and in Jovinian's, Christians again! And all this within less than the age of a man. It is, therefore, a good thing that the heart be established with grace.’” Adam Clarke

Text Verse: *“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.” 1 Timothy 4:6*

In the church where I was ordained, a defective person was selected to be the pastor and he ran the church, a big and thriving one, right into the ground. That can and does

happen. But the thing that shocked me most was where some of the people who attended went when they left the church.

Some went off to Charismatic churches, some became full-blown Calvinists, some to reformed churches, and some have now taken the path down Woke Way. Others stopped going to church, etc. None of those things were because of failed doctrine by the previous pastors. Rather, their doctrine was sound and biblically based.

The problem then had to be that the congregants didn't regard learning the word and doctrine as an important part of their walk. That bothered me, and it continues to bother me. Imagine what Clarke said. In the span of a single lifetime, Rome converted several times between some pretty disparate beliefs.

What we need as people are warnings, real sincere warnings about the cost of not paying heed to instruction. Here in the US, we didn't pay heed to our Founding Fathers' words. We often don't pay heed to street signs or to other laws that will keep us from harm. We ignore our consciences too.

One thing I constantly warn about this church about is doctrine. Pay heed to yourself and your doctrine. I can't think of anything more important to the believer in Christ than that one point.

Joshua will warn the people about this today. Will Israel pay heed? Great lessons such as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Witness to You (verses 16-28)

¹⁶ So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us

It is the same expression used in Joshua 22:29, *khalilah lanu* – "Profane thing to us." The idea itself is utterly repugnant to them. It would be something that was defiling in and of itself, and it would be a mark of apostasy. That is then further explained with the words...

¹⁶ (con't) that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods;

me'azov eth Yehovah la'avod elohim akherim – “from forsaking Yehovah to serve gods other.” The people are adamant that they will remain faithful to the Lord and not forsake him.

In Joshua 22, the eastern tribes were accused of rebellion, thus eliciting their response of denial. Here, Joshua is certain they will forsake Him –

“Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day...” Joshua 22:29

“Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods.”

-Joshua 24:16

There is no doubt about their sincerity, but as Adam Clarke noted, there is also the truth that people will closely follow a human leader at the expense of faithful obedience to the Lord. For now, however, the people explain the reason for their firm stand...

¹⁷ for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt,

It is an emphatic statement that includes a verb being used as a noun: *ki Yehovah elohenu hu ha'maaleh otanu v'eth avotenu* – “For Yehovah our God, He, the Bringer Up us and our fathers.” Their adamant proclamation is based on the fact that it was the Lord who delivered them.

Holding to this in the future will require at least two things: 1) That the people will tell about the deeds of the Lord to the next generations, and 2) that the people will have faith that what they were told was true.

To get this, we can look at any major discipline in Scripture, such as creation, salvation, the resurrection, etc. For example, to hold to the creation narrative, we need to read about it in the Bible. However, we also need to believe what it says is true. As for Israel, their words continue with...

¹⁷ (con't) from the house of bondage,

Rather: *mi'beith avadim* – “from house slaves.” They were slaves in Egypt and the Lord brought them out to be free men. However, when one is under law, he is in bondage

(Galatians 4:24), a slave to the law. Jesus, Peter, and Paul each acknowledge this in their words. Next, they say...

17 (con't) who did those great signs in our sight,

v'asher asah l'enenu eth ha'othoth ha'gedoloth ha'eleh – “And who did to our eyes the signs, the great, the these.” There is no need to take the words of the verse 18 which include “the Amorites” and thus say that this is only speaking of things that occurred prior to their encountering the Amorites.

The people are making a general statement that the Lord had done great things in their sight from the time they left Egypt until that day. They are speaking of the absolute trustworthiness of the Lord to preserve them from start to finish. This is stated next, saying...

17 (con't) and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed.

The wording is more specific: *vayishmerenu b'kal ha'derek asher halaknu bah u-b'kol ha'amim asher avarnu b'qirbam* – “And kept us in all the way which we walked in, and in all the peoples which we passed in their midst.” As just noted, this does not have to exclude what is next said. It is an all-inclusive statement of protection, from beginning to end.

The next words go from Israel's protection to the dispossession of the enemies...

18 And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land.

The word “and” in this verse probably should be taken as “even.” In other words, the Amorite is being used collectively to speak of all the people: *v'garesh Yehovah eth kal ha'amim v'eth ha'emori yoshev ha'arets me'panenu* – “And drove out, Yehovah, all the peoples, even the Amorite, dwelled the land before our faces.”

There were many people groups in Canaan, identified by the plural “peoples.” However, the Amorite has been a term used in this chapter to speak of all of them as one group. Because of this faithful attention by the Lord as He tended to Israel...

18 (con't) We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God.”

The words are emphatic: *gam anakhnu naavod eth Yehovah ki hu elohenu* – “Also, we will serve Yehovah for He our God.” This is the response to Joshua’s words of verse 15. They have worked through the reason for it before stating it.

Joshua presented them with a list of gods they could choose from and then he said whom he would serve. Israel countered with all that the Lord had done for them and thus they affirm He is their God –

“And I, and my house, we will serve [*naavod*] Yehovah.” (v. 15)

“Also, we will serve [*naavod*] Yehovah for He our God.” (v. 18)

19 But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the LORD,

The word “cannot” can be construed in different ways. Rather: *vayomer Yehoshua el ha’am lo tukelu la’avod eth Yehovah* – “And said Joshua unto the people, ‘No you able to serve Yehovah.’” The word *yakol* speaks of power or ability. Joshua doesn’t tell them they cannot serve the Lord, as if they were not permitted to do so, but because they are not able to do so. It is something beyond their ability to perform. He next gives the emphatic reasons for this...

19 (con’t) for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God;

In the first clause, Joshua uses the majestic plural, *elohim*, united with the plural holies, thus giving the superlative sense of most holy: *ki elohim qedoshim hu el qano hu* – “for God holies, He; God jealous, He.” Both clauses are emphatic. The first speaks of the many perfections of the Lord while the second refers to the adamant state in which He guards His name.

It is because of this that Israel is not able to serve Him. Joshua already knows that they are prone to fail and of their hardheadedness and obstinance in recklessly pursuing sin...

19 (con’t) He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

It is incorrect: *yisa l’pishakhem u’l’khatotekhem* – “He will not bear to your transgression and (even) to your sins.” Rather than “forgive” it means that the Lord will not put up with their wrongdoing. This is then defined by Joshua, first in the singular, “your transgression.”

This is the only time the noun *pasha*, or transgression, is used in Joshua. It signifies a state of national revolt. He notes the collective nature of that by saying, “your sins.” The sins of the people when unchecked through punishment or repentance, become a national transgression. With that, Joshua again brings in the thought of serving other gods...

²⁰ If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good.”

It is not a conditional if, but an adamant when: *ki taazvu eth Yehovah v'avadtem elohe nekhar v'shav v'hera lakhem v'kilah etkhem akhare asher hetiv lakhem* – “When you forsake Yehovah and serve gods foreign, and He turns, and He does evil to you, and He finishes you, after which he has done good to you.”

Joshua takes their words of verse 16, and turns them around:

“Profane thing to us from forsaking Yehovah to serve gods other.” (vs. 16)
“When you forsake Yehovah and serve gods foreign.” (vs. 20)

The word translated as foreign is *nekar*. It comes from the verb *nakar* which signifies “to recognize.” They have claimed that they know the Lord by the great things He has done in their sight. And yet, Joshua says they will forsake Him and recognize foreign gods rather than Him.

One could say that verses like Malachi 3:6 cannot be true. It says, “For I *am* the Lord, I do not change.” If God treats Israel in one manner and then turns and treats them in another manner, then it must be that the Lord has changed. Incorrect.

It is Israel that changes in relation to the Lord. Joshua is making this plain and clear. The response of the Lord to the actions of the people is consistent with His holy and jealous nature. Throughout Israel’s history, this truth will be on display, and yet, Israel will rarely comprehend or even acknowledge it. Not perceiving that Joshua knows better than they do, they respond again...

²¹ And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the LORD!”

Joshua has spoken clearly and emphatically concerning the matter. Israel has responded assuredly to him that they will, in fact, prove him wrong. Notice the structure –

“And I, and my house, we will serve [naavod] Yehovah.” (v. 15)

“Also, we will serve [naavod] Yehovah for He our God.” (v. 18)

“And said Joshua unto the people, ‘No you able to serve [la’avod] Yehovah.’”
(vs. 19)

“And said the people to Joshua, ‘No, for Yehovah we will serve [naavod].’”

Their response of *lo ki*, “No, for,” is a claim that they are able to serve Him and they will serve Him. Because of their adamant proclamation, it next says...

²² So Joshua said to the people, “You *are* witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him.”

Rather than “against yourselves,” it reads: *edim atem ba’khem ki atem b’kheartem la’khem eth Yehovah la’avod oto* – “Witnesses you in yourselves for you have chosen to you Yehovah, to serve Him.” The words “in yourselves” may ultimately be a witness against them, but the immediate sense is that they have now made the choice that was previously set before them in verse 15 –

“And if evil in your eyes to serve Yehovah, choose [*bakhar*] to you the day whom you will (surely) serve.” (vs. 15)

“Witnesses you in yourselves for you have chosen [*bakhar*] to you Yehovah, to serve Him.” (vs. 22)

With the choice acknowledged by Joshua, the people respond accordingly...

²² (con’t) And they said, “We *are* witnesses!”

vayomeru edim – “And they said, ‘Witnesses.’” They have made the choice and witnessed in themselves that it is so. Therefore, they are accountable for the words they have spoken. In the future, if they fail to serve the Lord, their words will be witnesses against them.

Of this verse, the Pulpit commentary says, “And it is well to observe ... that such an excuse never was pleaded afterwards, that the obligation, though evaded, was never disavowed.”

I just can't agree with that. To ask, "Why has this happened to us," is to implicitly avow that there is no guilt on their part. But this type of sentiment is seen repeatedly later in their history. A classic example of this is found in Jeremiah –

"And it shall be, when you show this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what *is* our iniquity? Or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?' ¹¹ then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the LORD; 'they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law. ¹² And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me. ¹³ Therefore I will cast you out of this land into a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.'"

-Jeremiah 16:10-13

It could be that the instruction to the people was so lacking that they had no idea they were not to follow, serve, and worship other gods, but that seems much less likely than that they ignored their obvious guilt.

The evidence of this is found in Israel today as well as the church. What the Lord expects is known to both, but that is disavowed as frequently as leaves fall in the autumn. Here is another explicit example in Jeremiah –

"Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, with all the women who stood by, a great multitude, and all the people who dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying: ¹⁶ 'As *for* the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you! ¹⁷ But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. ¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.'"

The people had been given the word of the Lord from Moses. Jeremiah also spoke the word of the Lord for them, and yet they disavowed their conduct as being responsible

for their troubles. As for the people's words to Joshua, he next directs them accordingly...

²³ “Now therefore,” he said, “put away the foreign gods which are among you,

v'atah hasiru eth elohe ha'nekhar asher b'qirb'khem – “And now, put away gods the foreign which in your midst.” It isn't known if Joshua is speaking instructionally in an if/then manner or if he is actually implying that there are foreign gods to be found among the people.

It is hard to imagine that, especially with the mandates of the law so obviously fresh among the people. But it is not impossible. The account in Judges 2, if connected to this account now, does seem to imply it though.

It seems his words are instructional, “If you see them among you, put them away.” This also appears likely based on verse 31 saying that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua. Either way, if there were foreign gods among them, they are privately held, not publicly on display as they will be in the future.

²³ (con't) and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel.”

v'hatu eth l'vavkhem el Yehovah elohe Yisrael – “And extend, to your heart, unto Yehovah, God Israel.” This statement makes me think that the previous clause was instructional.

He is telling them this as a guide and a guard into the future, not an accusation about their conduct in the present. This is more likely because there is no follow-up to his words noted by the people, as the Bible is accustomed to providing when such is the case.

²⁴ And the people said to Joshua, “The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!”

eth Yehovah elohenu naavod u-b'qolo nishma – “Yehovah our God we will serve, and in His voice we will hear.” This is the third time this has been stated –

“And answered the people, and said... Also, we will serve [*naavod*] Yehovah for He our God.” (vs 16 & 18)

“And said the people to Joshua, ‘No, for Yehovah we will serve [*naavod*].’” (vs. 21)

“And said the people to Joshua, ‘Yehovah our God, we will serve [*naavod*], and in His voice we will hear.” (vs. 24)

The threefold repetition stands as an emphatic and complete witness to the matter. As such, their words are binding upon themselves, those under them, and those who follow them. Because of this, it next says...

²⁵ So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day,

vayikroth Yehoshua berith la’am ba’yom ha’hu – “And cut, Joshua, covenant to the people in the day, the it.” To cut a covenant means to sacrifice an animal or animals to solidify the matter. This was seen in Exodus 24 –

“And Moses took half the blood and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.’ ⁸ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.’” Exodus 24:6-8

This is explained in detail in Hebrews 9 –

“For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. ¹⁷ For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. ¹⁸ Therefore not even the first *covenant* was dedicated without blood. ¹⁹ For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, ‘This *is* the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.’ ²¹ Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. ²² And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Hebrews 9:16-22

With that understood, it next says...

²⁵ (con’t) and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

Almost every translation says “them,” but that is not what it says: *vayasem lo khoq u-mispat bishkhem* – “And set to him statute and ordinance in Shechem.” Exactly what

this means is hard to say. It is very similar to Exodus 15:25 where it says of Moses, “There set to him statute and ordinance and there He tested him.”

With only a very few exceptions, everyone incorrectly translates the pronoun as “them.” But does it mean the Lord set the statute for Moses, and there the Lord tested him? Or does it refer to Israel in the singular? The next verse in Exodus is all in the singular as well.

My guess is that he was speaking solely to Moses as the leader of His people and thus representative of all the people. The singular being taken for the collective.

Here in Joshua, it cannot be “covenant,” as in, “set to the covenant a statute and ordinance.” This is because the word *berith* is feminine. Thus, the words of this clause would have a gender mismatch.

It may be referring to Israel as a single entity, or it may be referring to the Lord. Because the preceding verses have presented the voluntary words of the people concerning their serving the Lord, He being the reference is not out of possibility. It would take us back to the opening words of the chapter –

“And gathered Joshua all tribes Israel Shechem-ward, and called to elders Israel, and to his heads, and to his judges, and to his officers and stationed themselves before the God.” Joshua 24:1

“And cut, Joshua, covenant to the people in the day, the it, and set to Him statute and ordinance in Shechem.” Joshua 24:25

If so, the statute and ordinance would not be for the Lord to obey, but for Him to monitor concerning the people’s obedience. That seems more likely based on what is coming in the next two verses...

²⁶ Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God.

vayiktov Yehoshua eth ha’devarim ha’eleh b’sepher torath elohim – “And wrote, Joshua, the words, the these, in book Law God.” The big question here is, “What words did he write?” Is it only what has transpired here in Chapter 24? Or does it mean the whole book of Joshua, inclusive of these words?

This takes us back to what was said in the first sermon of Chapter 24. If this gathering at Shechem is the same as that recorded in Joshua 8, it would mean that the law was read at this time, and it would then follow logically that Joshua would read what he had compiled. Charles Ellicott says concerning this verse –

“Primarily ‘these words’ appear to refer to the transaction just recorded. But it must be observed that this is also the second signature among the sacred writers of the Old Testament. The first is that of Moses, in Deuteronomy 31:9 : ‘Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests,’ &c. The next signature after Joshua’s is that of Samuel (1Samuel 10:25): ‘Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in the [not a] book, and laid it up before the Lord.’ We have here a clue to the authorship of the Old Testament, and to the view of the writers who succeeded Moses in what they did. They did not look upon themselves as writers of distinct books, but as authorised to add their part to the book already written, to write what was assigned to them ‘in the book of the law of God.’ The unity of Holy Scripture is thus seen to have been an essential feature of the Bible from the very first.” Charles Ellicott.

Whether this is only referring to the words of Chapter 24 or of all of Joshua’s writings, it next says...

²⁶ (con’t) **And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.**

Rather: *vayiqah even gedolah vay’qimeha sham takhath ha’alah asher b’miqdash Yehovah* – “and took stone, whopping, and set it up there under the oak which in sanctuary Yehovah.” The stone is a witness between the two parties to the covenant that has been set forth.

This is why my thoughts about the use of the singular in the previous verse may be referring to the Lord. The statute and judgment were set before Him, the God, to monitor. The stone stands as a witness to this fact. Standing it under the tree indicates that this is may have been the same tree that was standing when this occurred –

“And Jacob said to his household and to all who *were* with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that *are* among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. ³Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.’ ⁴So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which *were* in their hands,

and the earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.” Genesis 35:2-4

As that was hundreds of years earlier, that tree is either very old, or another tree has grown in its place. Either way, the stone now being erected is a witness to Israel of the past and of what is expected in the future.

Saying it is “in the sanctuary of the Lord” means that it is in the place set apart as holy to the Lord. That was carefully detailed in the first sermon of Chapter 24 where it noted altars built by both Abraham and Jacob in this area.

²⁷ And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us,

Notice that Joshua includes himself in the address: *hineh ha’even ha’zoth tihyeh banu la’edah* – “Behold, the stone, the this shall be to us to witness.” The stone is personified here, indicating that it stands as representative of the Lord who is the other party involved in the covenant.

To ignore that the Lord heard the words by ignoring the covenant based on the words would make them as senseless as the inanimate stone that is used as representative of the Lord.

As for the stone, regardless as to whether or not these events are occurring at the same time as the ceremony in Joshua 8, it is certain that the great and impressive altar that was built in that chapter was already standing. As this is so, this stone was not used in the building of the altar, even though it was in that area. As such, it makes its own picture of Christ –

“The stone *which* the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.

²³ This was the LORD’s doing;
It is marvelous in our eyes.” Psalm 118:22, 23

The altar pictured Christ, but this stone does as well because it stands as representative of the covenant that has been cut between Israel and the Lord. As it next says...

²⁷ (con’t) for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us.

The stone, representing the words of the Lord from verses 24:2-13, is said to have heard. This then is to be a permanent reminder of what He said. When it is seen, what was said is to be called to mind.

However, because this account about the stone is recorded in the continuing Torah of God, those words also call to mind the stone each time they are read. As such, whether physically standing in front of a person or being read out of the Law...

²⁷ (con't) **It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God."**

There is a strong emphasis in the words: *v'hayetah ba'khem l'edah pen t'khashun b'lohekhem* – "And it shall be in you to witness, lest you (surely) lie in your God."

The word *kakhash* comes from a primitive root meaning to be untrue in word or in deed. The people have repeatedly said that they will serve the Lord. Thus, if they fail to do this by serving other gods, they will have lied against the Lord. The warning is set. With that, it next says...

²⁸ (fin) **So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.**

It is more succinct: *vayshalakh Yehoshua eth ha'am ish l'nakhalato* – "And sent, Joshua, the people; man to his inheritance." This ends the main narrative portion of the book of Joshua. The final five verses will detail the death and burial of Joshua along with a few other key points relevant to close out the book.

*Let us fear the Lord all our days
Serving in sincerity and truth as well
He is worthy of all our praise
For He has saved us from the clutches of hell*

*It was by grace alone that we have been saved
It was solely by the merits of our Lord Jesus
By His works alone the path was paved
See! Such wonderful things He has done for us*

*Praises to our God and King!
All glory and honor belong to Him alone
For all of eternity to Him we shall sing
He is the faithful witness, the rejected Stone*

*This was the Lord's doing, so marvelous in our eyes
He is Jesus our Hope and our heavenly Prize*

II. Explaining the Passage

Despite the large number of verses that comprise these past three sermons, the explanation of why they are recorded is short and simple to understand. Many of the anticipations of Christ have been given already as we have gone through the verses, and so there is no need to repeat them now.

Simply stated, Joshua 24 began with all of the tribes being gathered together to Shechem. As has been seen in previous sermons, Shechem, [Having a Sense of] Responsibility, looks at the believer who understands his violation of the law and has accepted Christ's fulfillment of it.

Throughout Joshua, that has been seen again and again in typology. Christ fulfilled the law, Christ died in fulfillment of the law, etc. The number of pictures concerning this have been abundant. These people are not under law, but under grace. This is what the words to the people from the Lord in verses 2-13 clearly indicated.

Everything was showing how God, working to maintain the proper worship of the Lord, continued His plan of redemption. He called out Abraham from the land where they served other gods, He led him to Canaan and gave him Isaac. To Isaac was given Jacob.

However, a note about Esau comes right out of the blue – "To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess." That is a picture of the Lord allowing the made man (Adam and his descendants) to continue in the world with the awareness of sin (pictured by Mount Seir), even if he is not imputed sin because "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Romans 5:13).

In the meantime, the Lord called out a particular group of people to ensure that the proper worship of the Lord continued. As was noted, the one main point that was strikingly omitted out of all of the Lord's words – from Abraham all the way through – is any mention of the law.

Everything the Lord stated constituted His grace being bestowed upon this select line without any hint of them having earned what they received. This went even to the granting of land, cities, vineyards, and olive groves. All Israel had to do was believe, follow, and receive.

Everything in those details, from the calling of Abraham on, has anticipated the coming of Messiah. It was He who each person in the line of promise pictured. It was He who was anticipated in the Exodus from Egypt and the time of their rejection of Him in the wilderness.

He was the one anticipated in all of the battles leading up to and following their entrance into Canaan. It was His fulfillment of the law (which remained unstated to the people to demonstrate this) that secured their inheritance for them. He is both the Provider of the inheritance and the reason for it. All of it was noted as grace upon His people.

Joshua is coming to a close. Israel has its inheritance, and it will dwell in it. This will be true with Israel of the future when they finally receive Jesus as a nation. But the heart of man is prone to wander. This is the reason for the continuous back and forth between Joshua and the people in today's verses.

Israel will someday receive the Lord, but even after this, they must be faithful to Him. This final passage of Joshua is given to warn them of that. Even during the millennial reign of Christ, they will have free will, and they will need to hold fast to the Lord, serving Him.

Though the number of verses concerning this is only a few, it is still evident that the people can choose or reject Jesus. A notable example of this is found in Isaiah 65 –

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create;
For behold, I create Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing,
And her people a joy.

¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
And joy in My people;
The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.

²⁰ “No more shall an infant from there *live but a few days*,
Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days;
For the child shall die one hundred years old,
But the sinner *being* one hundred years old shall be accursed.” Isaiah 65:17-20

Israel is being told in typology that just because they will be nationally saved, they can depart from the Lord, and so they must be careful to properly serve Him.

Both Joshua and the stone picture Jesus. He is the One to establish the faith and He is the witness to the fact that Israel has agreed to the proper worship of Him, because He is the incarnate Lord God.

This is more certain because it says that before he set up the stone, Joshua wrote those words in the Book of the Law of God. Jesus is the incarnate Word. That which is written in the Torah of God is written in anticipation of Him.

Whether or not the stone that Joshua set up is still there is irrelevant. It is written in the word, and thus it is an eternal testament to the stone which is the witness of what is recorded there.

The Lord gave Israel a history lesson to remind them of where they had come from, why they were where they are, and how that came about. They are being told to hold fast to the Lord who saved them by grace.

It may even be that Israel of the future will read this final chapter of Joshua, notice the remarkable lack of any mention of the law, and finally realize that they have been pursuing the wrong avenue to pleasing God all along. They look to the law as a means to an end when, in fact, it has nothing to do with their being right with God, except as it is fulfilled in Jesus.

As just said a moment ago, Jesus is the true focal point for the worship of God because He is the Lord God. Whatever worship Israel conducts in the millennium will be centered on this fact.

For those in the church who believe this, our future is set already. There is no need to be admonished of such things. What we need to be admonished about is living in a right and proper manner while we are here. Though our salvation is not in question, our lives will be less fulfilling apart from holy and obedient living, and our rewards will be based upon that.

And more, if we let our guard down, our own children and those around us may be the ones to find out, all too late, that we failed to live uprightly. It is our responsibility to do this as Christians, and to share the reason for the hope we have with those we

encounter in our walk (1 Peter 3:15). Let us do so, to the glory of the Lord who bestowed His wonderful grace upon us.

Closing Verse: *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:28, 29*

Next Week: Joshua 24:29-33 *Our trip through the book has been hugely fun...* (Joshua the Son of Nun) (58th and Final Joshua Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

For He Is a Holy God, Part III

So the people answered and said:

“Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD

-----to serve other gods, we would be flipped!

For the LORD our God is He who brought us

And our fathers up out of the land of Egypt

From the house of bondage

Who did those great signs in our sight leaving the enemy aghast

And preserved us in all the way that we went

And among all the people through whom we passed

And the LORD drove out from before us all the people

Including the Amorites who dwelt in the land

We also will serve the LORD

For He is our God, ever near at hand

But Joshua said to the people

“You cannot serve the LORD, as surely as I live

For He is a holy God; He is a jealous God

He will not your transgressions nor your sins forgive

If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods

Then He will turn and do you harm and consume you

-----hear my word

After He has done you good

And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!"

So Joshua said to the people

"You are witnesses against yourselves this day

That you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him."

And they said, "We are witnesses, so we say

"Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are

-----among you, so to you I tell

And incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel

And the people said to Joshua on that day

"The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day

And made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem

-----yes, down Shechem way

Then Joshua wrote these words

In the Book of the Law of God, His infallible word

And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak

That was by the sanctuary of the LORD

And Joshua said to all the people

"Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us not to defraud

For it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us

It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God

So Joshua let the people depart

Each to his own inheritance they did start

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word

Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You

May we carefully heed each thing we have heard

Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone

We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

JOSHUA 24:29-33 (JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN)

Apart from the clear connection to Jesus that runs throughout the book of Joshua, there is one major theme that has been repeatedly seen in the typology of this book.

There have been innumerable things pictured in Joshua, from national Israel's future salvation to the rapture of the church to salvation by grace through faith, how inheritances are secured, the introduction of the New Covenant, and so forth.

But all of these things are dependent upon one major aspect of what Christ has done. We have seen the death of Christ, His resurrection and exaltation to God's right hand, and more. But what is THE one thing that all of these things are ultimately focused on?

More than that, what will be the result of it coming about? If you are not sure, consider Paul's writings. What does Paul focus on above all other points of doctrine? Hint: Nearly the entire book of Galatians and a majority of the book of Romans focus on it. Only a few of his books don't explicitly refer to it. What is it? He speaks of it in our text verse...

Text Verse: *"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." Romans 3:27, 28*

It is such an important point that the very first words ever spoken to man (as recorded in the Bible) to the very last words of Scripture are focused on this issue –

"Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
Genesis 2:16

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Revelation 22:21

One can choose law or grace. This is what Joshua has most heavily focused on. And there is a reason for this. The glory of God is not displayed in man's observance of the law. It is seen in those who trust Him apart from their own merit.

God gave mankind law, man failed, and death was the result. Without the coming of Jesus to fulfill the law, nothing else in human history would have any eternal value. This is the lesson of Joshua and of the Bible. The law or grace.

We can choose one or the other, but we cannot have both and be pleasing to God except as the law is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Joshua has shown us this. Today, a brief summary of it will be seen once again as the book closes out.

Jesus! His coming and His perfection, this is what the Bible is about. It is His work that is highlighted. God came to dwell among us and to remove the burden of law from us. The devil wants nothing more than for you to stay under the law and try to work your way to heaven.

Don't let him trick you. Christ has gone before us. Let us trust wholly and completely in what He has done. This wonderful truth is seen in Joshua and indeed is be found throughout God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. One Hundred and Ten Years Old (verses 29-33)

²⁹ Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died,

v'hi akhare ha'devarim ha'eleh vayamath Yehoshua bin nun eved Yehovah – “And it was after the words, the these, and died Joshua son of Nun, servant Yehovah.” Joshua means The Lord is Salvation. Nun means Increase. This is the tenth and final time in the book of Joshua that this full name, Joshua the son of Nun, is used.

Bullinger says “that ten is one of the perfect numbers, and signifies *the perfection of Divine order*, commencing, as it does, an altogether new series of numbers. The first decade is the representative of the whole numeral system, and originates the system of calculation called ‘decimals,’ because the whole system of numeration consists of so many *tens*, of which the first is a type of the whole.”

He then says of it, “Completeness of order, marking the entire round of anything, is, therefore, the ever-present signification of the number *ten*. It implies that nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.”

Scripture does not give a date concerning when Joshua called the tribes together at Shechem, nor are we now told how long after that occurred that Joshua died, whether it was a week or a year later.

What is noted is that this gathering was the last great recorded moment of Joshua's life. At Shechem, the Lord, through him, had faithfully reminded the people of their original calling through their father, Abraham, demonstrating that it was an act of grace. He noted the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – a granting that came without merit on their part.

He reminded them of their sojourn in Egypt and of the Lord's deeds on their behalf. He had defeated Pharaoh and his army, the Amorites on both sides of the Jordan, and He had given them a land for which they did not labor and cities which they did not build. The land was filled with vineyards and olive groves upon their arrival.

Everything came apart from Israel's merit. Instead, it was all grace bestowed upon them. After the Lord reminded them of these things, Joshua asked the people to choose whom they would serve, noting that he and his house would serve the Lord.

The people likewise agreed to serve the Lord, noting that it was He who had done all of the great things for them, restating some of those deeds and repeatedly stating that He was the One whom they would serve. He had proven Himself faithful, and so they vowed to faithfully serve Him. After that, it said –

“But Joshua said to the people, ‘You cannot serve the LORD, for He *is* a holy God. He *is* a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good.” Joshua 24:19, 20

The words of Joshua were unlike the closing words of Moses. Moses blessed the individual tribes, and then it said –

“So Moses came with Joshua the son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. ⁴⁵ Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel, ⁴⁶ and he said to them: ‘Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. ⁴⁷ For it *is* not a futile thing for you, because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess.” Deuteronomy 32:44-47

Where Moses proclaimed the law was their life, Joshua never directly mentioned the law. Rather, he focused his words on forsaking the Lord through the service of other gods. Sin would result in turning from the Lord.

You can see the difference. If a person remains faithful to the Lord, there is forgiveness, even for committed sin. David had Uriah killed and took his wife. And yet the Lord forgave him because his heart was set on the Lord.

However, in forsaking the Lord and turning to other gods, there is no forgiveness of transgressions and sins. Such a person cuts himself off from the only Source of life. As for Joshua, he has been used as a type of Christ Jesus, the One who fulfills the will of the Lord. That was seen back in Joshua 11 –

“As the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.” Joshua 11:15

After Joshua completed these things, the land was divided according to inheritance. Likewise, Jesus fulfilled the will of the Lord. Through Him, the inheritance is received. This included those who received their inheritance by Moses.

Despite the eastern tribes being granted their inheritance conditionally, it still was not realized until after Joshua had completed the campaign for Canaan. The same is true with Jesus. The Old Testament saints do not receive any actual inheritance until after Jesus returns. That was seen in Joshua 22.

Everything in Joshua has played out according to a greater plan of redemption in Christ Jesus. Joshua has anticipated Jesus as the leader who goes before his people clearing the way for them to receive their inheritance. With his typological role in this unfolding drama complete, it notes that he has died...

²⁹ (con't) ***being one hundred and ten years old.***

ben meah va'esher shanim – “son hundred and ten years.” This is ten years less than Moses (Deuteronomy 34:7) and the same age as Joseph (Genesis 50:26) from whom he descended. One hundred and ten is the product of 10 x 11. The meaning of ten was previously given. Of eleven, Bullinger says –

“If ten is the number which marks the perfection of Divine order, then eleven is an addition to it, subversive of and undoing that order. If twelve is the number which marks the perfection of Divine government, then eleven falls short of it. So that whether we regard it as being 10 + 1, or 12 – 1, it is the number which marks disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration.”

Like Joseph who died at this age, there is in these men a perfection of divine order marked with a state of imperfection. The two men were types of Christ in their lives, meaning they anticipate His coming. And yet, they were *only* types of Christ. God used these fallen men to typologically look ahead to the perfection seen in Jesus. As for the death of Joshua, it next says...

³⁰ And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Serah,

vayiqberu oto bigvul nakhalatho b'timnath serakh – “And they buried him in border his inheritance in Timnath Serah.” The meaning is that he was buried in his own land, given to him according to Joshua 19 –

“When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. ⁵⁰ According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it.” Joshua 19:49, 50

Timnath Serah means Extra Portion. It next says...

³⁰ (con't) which is in the mountains of Ephraim,

asher b'har ephrayim – “which in Mount Ephraim.” As seen previously, a mountain (*har*) is a lot of something gathered. It is synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. Ephraim means Twice Fruitful with a secondary meaning of Ashes. This is said to be...

³⁰ (con't) on the north side of Mount Gaash.

Mits'phon l'har gaash – “from north to Mount Gaash.” The word *tsaphon*, north, signifies that which is hidden or treasured away because the north receives less light in the northern hemisphere.

Strong's notes the name Gaash comes from the verb *gaash*, to shake or quake. Thus it means something like A Shaking or A Quaking.

It cannot go unnoted that the Greek and Arabic translations of this verse include the following: “there they put with him into the tomb in which they buried him, the knives

of stone with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Galgala, when he brought them out of Egypt, as the Lord appointed them; and there they are to this day.”

Either the words are original, and the Hebrew intentionally dropped them, or they are not original, and for some reason the translators of the Septuagint decided it was necessary to include them. If original, it could be that the Hebrew dropped them out because of the words “when he brought them out of Egypt.”

That would appear to be contradictory to what it says elsewhere about Moses being the one to bring them out of Egypt. But that is no excuse for removing the words. There would be nothing contradictory about it.

The reason is because of how the Hebrew is worded elsewhere. In Joshua 5:5, for example, it said, “For circumcised were all the people, the comers out. And all the people, the born (pl.) in the wilderness – in the way, in their coming out from Egypt – no circumcised.”

It isn't that they came out of Egypt and were no longer coming out of Egypt. The entire process, from Exodus until they arrived safely in Canaan, is considered as part of coming out of Egypt. Until they entered Canaan, they were on their way out of Egypt. Thus, there is no contradiction in saying Moses brought them out, Joshua brought them out, and also that the Lord brought them out.

Also, Judges 2:6-9 closely matches the words recorded here in Joshua, but they do not include the extra words. It could be that the scribes of the Hebrew text, along with thinking there was a contradiction, also thought because Judges 2 was of sufficient detail, then the words were also not necessary here.

If the words are not original, it is hard to imagine why the Septuagint, as well as the Arabic writers, would include them. They are otherwise so arbitrary that it seems impossible someone would make them up and insert them into their translation.

³¹ **Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua,**

vayaavod Yisrael eth Yehovah kol yeme Yehoshua – “And served Israel Yehovah all days Joshua.” It is a note of faithfulness to the Lord because of the leader. Throughout the times of the judges and kings, it will be seen that the people remain faithful when the leader is faithful to the Lord. Likewise, the people will fall away from the Lord when the king is unfaithful. Also...

³¹ (con't) **and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua,**

v'kol yeme ha'zeqenim asher heeriku yamim akhare Yehoshua – “And all days the elders who prolonged days after Joshua.” Of these words, Ellicott mistakenly says that the prolonging of the days of the elders, “seems to suggest that Joshua’s death was comparatively an early death. Had he thought and laboured more for himself and less for Israel, he also might have prolonged his days.”

It needs to be remembered that Joshua came out of Egypt as an adult. Other than he and Caleb, every other person who entered Canaan was under twenty at the exodus from Egypt. Thus, they all were younger than Joshua.

Also, their lives didn’t go much beyond Joshua’s. The people had already begun to apostatize by Judges 2. They made covenants with the inhabitants of the land, and by Judges 2:11, they were worshipping the Baals and other gods. But even if that is considered a general summary. Judges 3 specifically notes this –

“So the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs. ⁸ Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim eight years. ⁹ When the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother.” Judges 3:7-9

Othniel, Caleb’s younger brother, was the first judge of Israel. And yet, by the time he became judge, the people had departed from the Lord. Thus, it was a very short time after Joshua’s death that these things began to take place. However, for a short time, the people served the Lord under the elders...

³¹ (con't) **who had known all the works of the LORD which He had done for Israel.**

It is singular: *v'asher yadeu eth kal maaseh Yehovah asher asah l'Yisrael* – “and who knew all work Yehovah which had done to Israel.” Everything the Lord had accomplished is summed up as one great act on behalf of the nation.

The Israelites, though under twenty at the exodus, had seen everything that the Lord had done and were fully aware of the consequences for rejecting such knowledge,

having personally seen every person older than them perish at the word of the Lord through the years of wilderness wanderings.

With that, the next words are given as a confirmation that the promise of the children of Israel to Joseph was fulfilled in its due time...

³² The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up out of Egypt, they buried at Shechem,

v'eth atsmoth Yoseph asher heelu bene Yisrael mi'mitsrayim qaberu bishkhem – “And bones Joseph which had ascended sons Israel from Egypt buried in Shechem.”

Nothing is said as to when Joseph's burial took place. It could have been as soon as the land was conquered, at some point afterwards, or even at the calling of the people to Shechem at the beginning of Chapter 24.

The stating of it here is a note of closure showing the fulfillment of an oath, regardless of when it actually took place. This oath is recorded in Genesis 50, about 200 years earlier –

“And Joseph said to his brethren, ‘I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.’ ²⁵ Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.’ ²⁶ So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.” Genesis 50:24-26

In Acts 7, Stephen notes that not only were the bones of Joseph brought up, but so were the bones of the other fathers as well. However, the text here is only concerned with the fulfillment of the oath made by the sons of Israel. The actual removal of Joseph's bones is recorded in Exodus 13:19 –

“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you.’”

Joseph means both He Shall Add and Take Away.

Egypt means Double Trouble.

Shechem is identical to *shekem*, shoulder. Thus, it literally means Shoulder. However, that comes from *shakam* signifying to incline, as in inclining the shoulder to a burden. Hence, it is normally translated as to rise or start early. Abarim defines Shechem as “[Having a Sense Of] Responsibility.”

Joseph was buried in Shechem...

32 (con't) in the plot of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem

b'khelqath ha'sadeh asher qanah Yaaqov meeth bene khamor avi shekhem – “in parcel the field which acquired Jacob from sons Hamor, father Shechem.” Jacob has several meanings that all point to his birth when he grabbed Esau’s heel. It literally means Heel Catcher, but that also has several independent meanings such as Supplanter, One Who Trips Up, One Closely Following, etc. Each is tied to the thought of grabbing the heel of another.

Hamor means Donkey, but that comes from the verb *khamar*, to be red, so it also means Red One. The land was bought...

32 (con't) for one hundred pieces of silver,

b'meah q'sitah – “in hundred *q'sitah*.” The *q'sitah* comes from an unused root probably meaning to weigh out. Hence, it is a specific weight, probably like an ingot or a particular sized coin. The transaction is recorded in Genesis 33:18-20 –

“Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. ¹⁹ And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for one hundred pieces of money. ²⁰ Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.”

In weighing out the money, the transfer was made...

32 (con't) and which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph.

v'yihyu livne Yoseph l'nakhalah – “And became to sons Joseph to inheritance.” The granting of the land to Joseph is recorded in Genesis 48 –

“Then Israel said to Joseph, ‘Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.’” Genesis 48:21, 22

With that, we come to the final verse of the book of Joshua...

³³ **And Eleazar the son of Aaron died.**

Eleazar, Whom God Helps, was the second high priest of Israel –

“Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them on Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. ²⁹ Now when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.” Numbers 20:28, 29

³³ (con’t) **They buried him in a hill *belonging to Phinehas his son,***

The Hebrew is more precise: *v’yiqberu oto b’givath pin’khas beno* – “And buried him in Hill Phinehas, his son.” The JPS Tanakh translates it as “the Hill of Phinehas.” The SLT gives the same idea while leaving the Hebrew untranslated – “in Gibeah of Phinehas.”

Due to the shortness of the Hebrew, it seems correct to say *Givath Pin’khas*, or Phinehas Hill. As has been seen several times in Joshua, the word translated as hill comes from a root that is etymologically connected to Gabbatha in the New Testament. Regardless of the translation, this is the connection that we are being asked to make.

The name *pin’khas*, or Phinehas, means Mouth of Brass, and thus, Mouth of Judgment, because brass signifies judgment. With this noted, the verse, the chapter, and the book of Joshua finish with...

³³ (fin) **which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim.**

asher nitan lo b’har ephrayim – “which was given to him in Mount Ephraim.” Eleazar is buried in the same tribal land grant as that of Joshua. Of this, Ellicott rightly says –

“The inheritance of Phinehas as a priest would lie within the tribe of Judah (Joshua 21:13, &c.) or Benjamin. This gift to Phinehas in Mount Ephraim, near the seat of government, seems to have been a special grant to him over and above his inheritance.

But inasmuch as the tabernacle itself was at Shiloh, in Mount Ephraim, it was altogether suitable and natural that some place of abode should be assigned to the priests in that neighbourhood, where they were compelled to reside.”

The Greek translation adds several sentences more at the end of Joshua that seem unlikely to be original, even if they may be historically accurate to some measure. With that noted, the book of Joshua has come to its end.

*Be strong and of good courage; I am with you
Fear not and be not dismayed
Others may depart, but I am faithful and true
It is I who have all your debts paid*

*I will bring you into the inheritance
And there I will place you forever
Of Me failing, there is not a chance
Nothing can the bond between us sever*

*Be strong and of good courage, trust in Me
Fear not and be not dismayed; I am with you
The word I have spoken, so shall it be
I am the Lord your God, faithful and true*

II. Pictures of Christ

To close out the book of Joshua, these final five verses have been affixed to the lengthy discourse that preceded them. The first thing noted in verse 29 was the death of Joshua, the son of Nun. As noted, this was the tenth and final time that his full name was given.

The ten instances are given to show the perfection of divine order concerning the types of Christ. Nothing is wanting. The number and order are perfect. The whole cycle is complete. Everything that needs to be seen in the typology of Joshua the man concerning Jesus is sufficiently revealed.

Joshua (The Lord is Salvation), the son of Nun (Increase), died. He is here called *eved Yehovah*, servant of Yehovah, the same as Moses was called at his death. That is given as a type of Christ –

“Behold, My Servant [*avdi*] shall deal prudently;
He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.” Isaiah 52:13

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go.” Acts 3:13

Including the father’s name, Nun, is – as before – given to reveal that Jesus is the One who increases the family of God by including both Jews and Gentiles. That is seen in Isaiah 49 –

“Indeed He says,
‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant [*eved*]
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’” Isaiah 49:6

The next words of note were the age of Joshua at his death, one hundred and ten years. Being only a type of Christ, there is a note of imperfection to be found. This is the product of 10x11. It reveals that the whole cycle is complete, but the imperfection of him as a son of Adam who bore his own original sin is included.

Verse 30 noted the burial of Joshua in Timnath Serah, Extra Portion. It speaks of the full scope of Christ’s work as was noted in Isaiah 49:6. His work includes not only Israel but the Gentiles as well, making the effect of it the Extra Portion.

After that, the text continued, saying, “which is in Mount Ephraim.” Saying this was in the mount (*har*), points to the effect of His work, the mountain being synonymous with a large but centralized group of people. It refers to the uniting of all believers, Jews and Gentiles, as one in Christ.

Noting Ephraim points to the same truth again. Ephraim means Twice Fruitful. It signifies that Christ’s work has produced fruit in the conversion of both Jews and Gentiles. The secondary meaning of Ashes speaks of the price He paid to make this possible which was the afflictions He endured.

Still in verse 30, it noted that the location was “from north to Mount Gaash.” In Scripture, *tsaphon*, north, signifies that which is hidden or treasured away because the

north receives less light in the northern hemisphere. It thus speaks of those who are “hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3).

If Timnah Serah signifies those redeemed by Christ and the north signifies that they are hidden in Christ, then Mount Gaash, Mount Shaking, would signify what is not hidden in Christ and what has been separated from Him. This is seen in. Hebrews 12 –

“See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.’ ²⁷ Now this, ‘Yet once more,’ indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:25-29

As noted, the Greek and Arabic translations of verse 30 include the words concerning the stone knives used to circumcise the people in Gilgal being buried in the tomb with Joshua.

If original, it would signify that it is only through the death of Christ that the nation of Israel will be truly circumcised. To understand that, you can revisit the sermons from Joshua 5.

Verse 32 mentioned Joseph. Placing this at the end of Joshua is given for typology as well. Joseph, He Shall Add/Take Away, is given to reveal the work of Christ again. He is the One to add people to God’s flock, having taken away their reproach.

Naming Egypt, Double Trouble, indicates those brought out from the predicament they were in, meaning fallen and without God.

Noting Shechem, [Having a Sense of] Responsibility, looks to the believer who understands his violation of the law and has accepted Christ’s fulfillment of it.

This is then reconfirmed in the words that Joseph was buried “in the field which acquired Jacob from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.” Jacob pictures Christ, the one who follows after or supplants Adam.

The field represents the world (Matthew 13:38). It is an open place of productivity. Hamor, Red One, pictures Adam, the man made from the red soil of the earth which the name Adam implies. *Adam* (ruddy) comes from *adom*, to be red.

Jacob (Christ the second Man/the last Adam, as noted in 1 Corinthians 15), purchased the field (the world) from the sons of Hamor (the Red One – Adam) for those who accept his work (Shechem).

This was for one hundred (10x10) *q'sitah*. In the amount Bullinger notes that “nothing is wanting; that the number and order are perfect; that the whole cycle is complete.” The perfection of divine order is realized in the work of Christ.

It was then said that this field had become the inheritance of the children of Joseph. It speaks of the secured and eternal inheritance for those in Christ.

Verse 32, the last verse of the book, then mentioned the death of Eleazer, Whom God Helps, the son of Very High, who was buried in Givath Pin'khas, which is in Mount Ephraim. It again anticipates the work of Christ. He is the one Whom God Helps –

“But I *am* poor and needy;
Make haste to me, O God!
You *are* my help [*ezri*] and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not delay.” Psalm 70:5

Jesus is the Son of the Most High (Luke 8:28). He received the Mouth of Judgment at Gabbatha which is in Mount Ephraim. That gives the same symbolism just explained when it noted Joshua's burial.

Every name and location in these final five verses of Joshua points to various manifestations of Christ, His work, or its effects in relation to His people.

Therefore, the point is to once again highlight the scope of the work of Christ and also to reiterate to Israel their future national salvation based on the work of Christ. But they must hold fast to Him in that capacity as a nation as well. The work of Christ was effective for the salvation of individual Jews and Gentiles, but it is also effective for the collective nation of Israel as well.

And yet, in their national salvation, they must remember that each individual is responsible to the Lord personally. It is not unlike the church. Christ is the Savior of the church, but each person has an individual choice to make to become a member of it.

As for the law versus grace, Christ is the embodiment and fulfillment of the law. The only way to enter God's presence is by receiving the grace of God in Christ who died in fulfillment of that law.

No other point has been so significantly highlighted in this book. One account after another has shown this. The death of Moses outside of the promise, the faith of Rahab, the crossing through the Jordan (the death of Christ) with the Ark (Christ the embodiment of the law) in view of the people, the raising of the stone monuments, the circumcision of the people after crossing through the Descender (Christ), the ending of the manna at that time, the destruction of Jericho, the sin of Achan, the defeat of Ai and the hanging of its king (the law), the building of the altar at Mount Ebal, the treaty of the Gibeonites, the defeat of the five kings and their hanging (the five books of Moses), to name a few.

That is only a snapshot of the first ten chapters of Joshua. And it continued on with this same theme again and again. Each story has revealed Jesus Christ, the world's need for Him, the typological warnings that one cannot be saved by law but by grace, and so on.

From the very first moments of man on earth, it is law that has brought calamity upon man. What we need is Jesus who frees us from the bondage of the law, be it the law of Adam or the more burdensome law of Moses.

This has been the main theme of Joshua: God in Christ has accomplished everything necessary to secure our salvation and free us from the burden of law. In a right relationship with God, works are excluded except the works of God in Christ.

When we return to Joshua in our reading of the Bible, let us remember this. He is the One to lead us into our inheritance. He is the One who has defeated the enemy. He is the One who will return to raise His people and bring them to Himself. Jesus! The book of Joshua has been given to reveal Jesus. Thank God for Jesus Christ, who has made our restoration with Him possible. Yes. Thank God for Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Oh what an army, Lord,
You'll have at your side!
The weak, not the strong,

will stand at your side.
The rejected, the lost,
the poor, and the weak.
Those called by the world
unsuccessful and meek.

The needy, the sick,
the guilty, the shamed,
stained with imperfections,
with sins in their veins.
Those who, on their knees,
were searching for the Truth.
Those, will one day,
stand with You.

Not many rich
will be drawn to your side.
Not many mighty
in You will abide.
Not many with knowledge
and filled with success,
will look for You,
to be truly blessed.

Oh what an army, Lord,
You'll have at your side!
Those who brought You the cross will stand at your side.
Those hated by the world,
yet loved by You.
The strongest army ever!
Because their King
is the Truth.

Izabela Bednara - 20 May 2023

Closing Verse: *"Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith." Romans 3:29, 30*

Next Week: Judges 1:1-8 *The people want to know wazzup...* (Judah Shall Go Up) (1st Judges Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who has defeated the enemy and who now offers His people rest. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Joshua the Son of Nun

Now it came to pass after these things
That Joshua the son of Nun as we are told
He, the servant of the LORD, died
Being one hundred and ten years old

And they buried him within the border
Of his inheritance at Timnath Serah where he did reside
Which is in the mountains of Ephraim
On Mount Gaash's north side

Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua
And all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua as well
Who had known all the works of the LORD
Which He had done for Israel

The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel had brought up
-----out of Egypt
They buried at Shechem, in the plot of ground which Jacob
-----had bought
From the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred
-----pieces of silver
And which had become an inheritance of the children of Joseph
-----as we have been taught

And Eleazar the son of Aaron died
They buried him in a hill (a fitting place it would seem)
Belonging to Phinehas his son
Which was given to him in the mountains of Ephraim

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word

Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And Lord God, thank you for this wonderful book
Joshua! What a marvel to have studied it
Into every detail possible we took a look
And to You our thanks and praise we now submit!

Hallelujah to Christ our Lord!
Hallelujah for Joshua, a marvelous part of Your superior word!

Hallelujah and Amen!
Indeed, Hallelujah and Amen...