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JOSHUA 13:1 Now Joshua was old and well advanced in years. The LORD said to him, "You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very much land to be possessed.

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Joshua being old, the Lord informs him of the land yet remaining to be possessed, Jos 13:1. Of the unconquered land among the Philistines, Jos 13:2, Jos 13:3. Among the Canaanites, Sidonians, and Amorites, Jos 13:4, Jos 13:5. The inhabitants of the hill country and the Sidonians to be driven out, Jos 13:6. The land on the east side of Jordan, that was to be divided among the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, Jos 13:7-12. The Geshurites and the Maachathites not expelled, Jos 13:13. The tribe of Levi receive no inheritance, Jos 13:14. The possessions of Reuben described, Jos 13:15-23. The possessions of Gad, Jos 13:24-28. The possessions of the half tribe of Manasseh, Jos 13:29-31. Recapitulation of the subjects contained in this chapter, Jos 13:32, Jos 13:33.

#### Verse 1

Joshua was old - He is generally reputed to have been at this time about a hundred years of age: he had spent about seven years in the conquest of the land, and is supposed to have employed about one year in dividing it; and he died about ten years after, aged one hundred and ten years. It is very likely that he intended to subdue the whole land before he made the division of it among the tribes; but God did not think proper to have this done. So unfaithful were the Israelites that he appears to have purposed that some of the ancient inhabitants should still remain to keep them in check, and that the respective tribes should have some labor to drive out from their allotted borders the remains of the Canaanitish nations.

There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed - That is, very much when compared with that on the other side Jordan, which was all that could as yet be said to be in the hands of the Israelites.

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JOSHUA 13:2 "This is the land that still remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all the Geshurites;

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#### Verse 2

The borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri - The borders of the Philistines may mean the land which they possessed on the sea-coast, southwest of the land of Canaan. There were several places named Geshuri, but that spoken of here was probably the region on the south of Canaan, towards Arabia, or towards Egypt. - Calmet. Cellarius supposes it to have been a country in the vicinity of the Amalekites.

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JOSHUA 13:3 from the Shihor, which is before Egypt, even to the border of Ekron northward, which is counted as Canaanite; the five lords of the Philistines; the Gazites, and the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avvim,

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#### Verse 3

From Sihor, which is before Egypt - Supposed by some to be the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, near to the Arabian Desert; called also the river of Egypt, Num 34:5; Jer 2:18. On this subject an intelligent friend favors me with the following opinion: - "The river Sihor is supposed by some to be the Nile, or a branch of it. Others think it the same as what is frequently called the river of Egypt, which lay before or towards the borders of Egypt; which arose out of the mountains of Paran, and ran westward, falling into that bay of the Mediterranean which lies south of the land of the Philistines. This river is often mentioned as the boundary of the Israelites to the southwest, as Euphrates, the great river, was on the northeast. "There was a desert of considerable distance between what is called the river of Egypt and the isthmus of Suez. Solomon reigned to the borders of Egypt, i.e., to this desert; but not in Egypt, nor to the river Nile. "Upon the whole, (though there are difficulties in the matter), I incline to think that the river in question was not the Nile. Sihor (black) might, from some circumstances, be applied to another river as well as the Nile; though some places in Isaiah and Jeremiah seem to restrict it to the Nile." - J. C.

Ekron northward - Ekron was one of the five lordships of the Philistines, and the most northern of all the districts they possessed. Baal-zebub, its idol, is famous in Scripture; see 2Kgs 1:2, etc. The five lordships of the Philistines were Gaza, Ashdod, Askalon, Gath, and Ekron. There is no proof that ever the Israelites possessed Ekron; though, from Jos 15:11, some think it was originally given to Judah, but the text does not say so; it only states that the border of the tribe of Judah went out Unto the Side of Ekron. From Jos 19:43, we learn that it was a part of the lot of Dan, but it does not appear to have been possessed by any of those tribes.

Counted to the Canaanite - It is generally allowed that the original possessors of this country were the descendants of Canaan, the youngest son of Ham. The Philistines sprang from Mizraim, the second son of Ham, and, having dispossessed the Avim from the places they held in this land, dwelt in their stead. See Gen 10:13, Gen 10:14.

Five lords of the Philistines - These dynasties are famous in the Scriptures for their successful wars against the Israelites, of whom they were almost the perpetual scourge.

Also the Avites - These must not be confounded with the Hivites. The Avites seem to have been a very inconsiderable tribe, who dwelt in some of the skirts of Palestine. They had been originally deprived of their country by the Caphtorim; and though they lived as a distinct people, they had never afterwards arrived to any authority.

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JOSHUA 13:4 on the south; all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the border of the Amorites;

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#### Verse 4

The land of the Canaanites - This lay on the south of the country of the Philistines, towards the sea-coast.

Mearah - Supposed to be the city Maratha, on the Mediterranean Sea. - Calmet. Or the river Majora, which falls into the Mediterranean Sea, between Sidon and Berytus. See Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. v., c. 20.

Aphek - See on Jos 12:18 (note).

To the borders of the Amorites - Though the term Amorite is sometimes used to designate the inhabitants in general of the land of Canaan, yet it must be considered in a much more restricted sense in this place. As no Amorites are known to have dwelt in this quarter, Calmet supposes we should read Aramites or Syrians. Joshua, says he, proceeds from Sidon to Aphek, a city of Syria, between Heliopolis and Babylon where was the temple of the Venus of Aphek, and which is spoken of in 1Kgs 20:26; 2Kgs 13:17, as the capital of the kings of Syria. From this Joshua passes on to the frontiers of the Syrians, towards Gebal or Gabala, which, according to Ptolemy, was situated in Phoenicia. This conjecture of Calmet is not supported by any authority either from the ancient versions or MSS. Houbigant, however, approves of it: the emendation is simple as it consists in the interchange of only two letters in the same word, הארמי haarammi, for האמרי haemori.

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JOSHUA 13:5 and the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal Gad under Mount Hermon to the entrance of Hamath;

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#### Verse 5

The land of the Giblites - This people dwelt beyond the precincts of the land of Canaan, on the east of Tyre and Sidon. See Eze 27:9; Psa 83:7; their capital was named Gebal. See Dodd.

All Lebanon - See on Jos 11:17 (note).

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JOSHUA 13:6 all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim, even all the Sidonians; them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only allocate it to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you.

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#### Verse 6

Misrephoth-maim - See on Jos 11:7 (note).

These will I drive out - That is, if the Israelites continued to be obedient; but they did not, and therefore they never fully possessed the whole of that land which, on this condition alone, God had promised them: the Sidonians were never expelled by the Israelites, and were only brought into a state of comparative subjection in the days of David and Solomon. Some have taken upon them to deny the authenticity of Divine revelation relative to this business, "because," say they, "God is stated to have absolutely promised that Joshua should conquer the whole land, and put the Israelites in possession of it." This is a total mistake.

1. God never absolutely, i.e., unconditionally, promised to put them in possession of this land. The promise of their possessing the whole was suspended on their fidelity to God. They were not faithful, and therefore God was not bound by his promise to give them any part of the land, after their first act of national defection from his worship.

2. God never said that Joshua should conquer the whole land, and give it to them; the promise was simply this: "Thou shalt bring them into the land, and thou shalt divide it among them:" both of which he did, and procured them footing by his conquests, sufficient to have enabled them to establish themselves in it for ever.

3. It was never said, Thou shalt conquer it all, and then divide it; no. Several of the tribes, after their quota was allotted them, were obliged to drive out the ancient inhabitants. See on Jos 11:18 (note).

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JOSHUA 13:7 Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh.”

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Verse 7

The nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh - The other half tribe of Manasseh, and the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, had got their inheritance on the other side of Jordan, in the land formerly belonging to Og king of Bashan, and Sihon king of the Amorites.

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JOSHUA 13:8 With him the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them:

JOSHUA 13:9 from Aroer, that is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain of Medeba to Dibon;

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Verse 9

From Aroer - See on Jos 12:2 (note).

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JOSHUA 13:10 and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, to the border of the children of Ammon;

JOSHUA 13:11 and Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah;

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Verse 11

Border of the Geshurites - See on Jos 12:5 (note).

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JOSHUA 13:12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (the same was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); for Moses attacked these, and drove them out.

JOSHUA 13:13 Nevertheless the children of Israel didn't drive out the Geshurites, nor the Maacathites: but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel to this day.

JOSHUA 13:14 Only he gave no inheritance to the tribe of Levi. The offerings of the LORD, the God of Israel, made by fire are his inheritance, as he spoke to him.

JOSHUA 13:15 Moses gave to the tribe of the children of Reuben according to their families.

JOSHUA 13:16 Their border was from Aroer, that is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain by Medeba;

JOSHUA 13:17 Heshbon, and all its cities that are in the plain; Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon,

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Verse 17

Bamoth-baal - The high places of Baal, probably so called from altars erected on hills for the impure worship of this Canaanitish Priapus.

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JOSHUA 13:18 Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

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Verse 18

Jahaza - A city near Medeba and Dibon. It was given to the Levites, 1Chr 6:78.

Kedemoth - Mentioned Deu 2:26; supposed to have been situated beyond the river Arnon.

Mephaath - Situated on the frontiers of Moab, on the eastern part of the desert. It was given to the Levites, Jos 21:37.

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JOSHUA 13:19 Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shaha in the mount of the valley,

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Verse 19

Kirjathaim - This city, according to Eusebius, was nine miles distant from Medeba, towards the east. It passed from the Emim to the Moabites, from the Moabites to the Amorites, and from the Amorites to the Israelites, Gen 14:6; Deu 2:20. Calmet supposes the Reubenites possessed it till the time they were carried away by the Assyrians; and then the Moabites appear to have taken possession of it anew, as he collects from Jer 48:1 etc., and Eze 25:9 etc.

Sibmah - A place remarkable for its vines. See Isa 16:8, Isa 16:9, Jer 48:32.

Zareth-shaha, in the mount of the valley - This probably means a town situated on or near to a hill in some flat country.

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JOSHUA 13:20 Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth Jeshimoth,

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Verse 20

Beth-peor - The house or temple of Peor, situated at the foot of the mountain of the same name. See Num 25:3.

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JOSHUA 13:21 all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck with the chiefs of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land.

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#### Verse 21

The princes of Midian - See the history of this war, Num 31:1, etc.; and from that place this and the following verse seem to be borrowed, for the introduction of the death of Balaam here seems quite irrelevant.

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JOSHUA 13:22 The children of Israel also killed Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, with the sword, among the rest of their slain.

JOSHUA 13:23 The border of the children of Reuben was the bank of the Jordan. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and its villages.

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#### Verse 23

The cities and the villages - By villages, חצרִים chatserim, it is likely that moveable villages or tents are meant, such as are in use among the Bedouin Arabs; places where they were accustomed to feed and pen their cattle.

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JOSHUA 13:24 Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, to the children of Gad, according to their families.

JOSHUA 13:25 Their border was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, to Aroer that is before Rabbah;

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#### Verse 25

Half the land on the children of Ammon - This probably was land which had been taken from the Ammonites by Sihon, king of the Amorites, and which the Israelites possessed by right of conquest. For although the Israelites were forbidden to take the land of the Ammonites, Deu 2:37, yet this part, as having been united to the territories of Sihon, they might possess when they defeated that king and subdued his kingdom.

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JOSHUA 13:26 and from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim to the border of Debir;

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#### Verse 26

Ramath-mizpeh - The same as Ramoth-gilead. It was one of the cities of refuge, Jos 20:8; Deu 4:47.

Mahanaim - Or the two camps. Situated on the northern side of the brook Jabbok, celebrated for the vision of the two camps of angels which Jacob had there; see Gen 32:2.

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JOSHUA 13:27 and in the valley, Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, the Jordan's bank, to the uttermost part of the sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan eastward.

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Verse 27

Beth-aram - This city was rebuilt by Herod, and called Livias, in honor of Livia, the wife of Augustus. Josephus calls it Julias, Julia being the name which the Greeks commonly give to Livia. - Calmet.

Succoth - A place between Jabbok and Jordan where Jacob pitched his tents, from which circumstance it obtained its name, see Gen 33:17.

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JOSHUA 13:28 This is the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and its villages.

JOSHUA 13:29 Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It was for the half-tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families.

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Verse 29

The half tribe of Manasseh - When the tribes of Reuben and Gad requested to have their settlement on the east side of Jordan, it does not appear that any part of the tribe of Manasseh requested to be settled in the same place. But as this tribe was numerous, and had much cattle, Moses thought proper to appoint one half of it to remain on the east of Jordan, and the other to go over and settle on the west side of that river.

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JOSHUA 13:30 Their border 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.

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Verse 30

The towns of Jair - These were sixty cities; they are mentioned afterwards, and in 1Chr 2:21, etc. They are the same with the Havoth-jair mentioned Num 32:41. Jair was son of Segub, grandson of Esron or Hezron, and great-grandson of Machir by his grandmother's side, who married Hezron of the tribe of Judah. See his genealogy, 1Chr 2:21-24.

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JOSHUA 13:31 Half Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even for the half of the children of Machir according to their families.

JOSHUA 13:32 These are the inheritances which Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan at Jericho, eastward.

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Verse 32

Which Moses did distribute - Moses had settled every thing relative to these tribes before his death, having appointed them to possess the territories of Og king of Bashan, and Sihon king of the Amorites. For particulars on this chapter, the reader, if he judge it of consequence, may consult Calmet.

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JOSHUA 13:33 But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance. The LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as he spoke to them.

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