

# CHAPTER 13

## INTRODUCTION JOSHUA 13

In this chapter Joshua is informed by the Lord, or put in mind, that part of the land of Canaan remained unconquered, and which it was; and is directed to divide the whole land among the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh, (<sup><6130></sup>Joshua 13:1-9); and since the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the other half tribe of Manasseh, had received their inheritance on the other side Jordan, (<sup><6138></sup>Joshua 13:8); that is described in general, (<sup><6139></sup>Joshua 13:9-14); and, then the particular portion of Reuben, (<sup><6135></sup>Joshua 13:15-23); and of Gad, (<sup><6134></sup>Joshua 13:24-28); and of the half tribe of Manasseh, (<sup><6132></sup>Joshua 13:29-33).

**Ver. 1.** *Now Joshua was old, [and] stricken in years*, etc.] How old he was cannot be said precisely, but it is very probable he was now about an hundred years of age, for he lived to be an hundred ten; and the land of Canaan was seven years in dividing, as the Jews generally say, and it seems as if he did not live long after that:

*and the Lord said unto him*: either spoke to him out of the tabernacle, or appeared to him in a dream or vision:

*thou art old, [and] stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed*: that is, very much of the land of Canaan, which God had promised to Abraham, yet remained unconquered by Joshua, and unpossessed by the children of Israel; and the old age of Joshua is observed, to intimate to him that through it, and the infirmities of it, he was unable to go out to war, and to finish this work, which must be left to be done by others hereafter; and that he should with all expedition set about another work he was capable of doing, before he died, which was the division of the land among the tribes of Israel.

**Ver. 2.** *This [is] the land that yet remaineth*, etc.] Unconquered and not enjoyed, namely, what is after described; and this account is given for Joshua's information, that he might know what to divide, and for the people of Israel's sake, that they might know what they had a right to a claim upon; what they should endeavour to possess themselves of, and

what the Lord would deliver into their hands, provided they were obedient to his will, for, because they were not, hence many of these places never came into their possession, though divided to them by lot:

*all the borders of the Philistines*; whose country bordered and lay upon the shores of the Mediterranean sea, in the southwest of the land of Canaan:

*and all Geshuri*; the principal city belonging to it is said to be in Syria, (<sup>2018B</sup>2 Samuel 15:8); and had a king over it in the times of David, (<sup>2018B</sup>2 Samuel 3:3); and seems never to have come into the hands of the Israelites.

**Ver. 3.** *From Sihor, which [is] before Egypt*, etc.] Which Jarchi and Kimchi interpret of the river Nile, and so that river is called, (<sup>2018B</sup>Jeremiah 2:18); it seems to have this name from the waters of it being black and turbid; and hence it was called by the Greeks “Melas”; and by the Latins “Melo”; though it is thought, that not properly the river itself is here meant, which did not reach to the borders of Palestine, but a branch of it, a rivulet from it, for so a traveller <sup>f272</sup> writes,

“in a journey of about five days from Gaza towards Egypt, the hithermost arm of the Nile is received by the sea, and is commonly called Carabus?”

*even unto the borders of Ekron northward*: that is, from the southwest of Palestine, near to which was the river Nile, to the northern part of it, where stood the principality of Ekron, one of the five which belonged to the Philistines:

*[which] is counted to the Canaanite*; which was reckoned as belonging to the posterity of Canaan, though the Philistines got possession of it, who descended from Mizraim; and indeed it was only accounted as belonging to Canaan and his sons; of right, and according to the grant of God, it belonged to the seed of Abraham:

*five lords of the Philistines*; who had not kings, as other countries and cities in the land of Canaan had, and their cities were called lordships, principalities, and not kingdoms, and are as follow:

*the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites*: so called from Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, the cities they were in possession of:

*also the Avites*; it is not certain whether these were a distinct principality from the other five, or a people dispersed among them; which seems most likely, since those were the original inhabitants, but were driven out or destroyed by the Philistines, though it seems some remained and dwelt among them; (see <sup><6123></sup>Deuteronomy 2:23).

**Ver. 4.** *From the south, all the land of the Canaanites*, etc.] That is, of those Canaanites who were particularly so called, in distinction from those of the other nations or tribes, and who dwelt in several parts of the land, some in the east and others in the west, (see <sup><6103></sup>Joshua 11:3); and, as it seems here, some in the south: now on the side of the south, as Kimchi interprets it, all the land of the Canaanites was left, that is, remained unconquered and not possessed:

*and Mearah that [is] beside the Sidonians*; the inhabitants of Sidon, and parts adjacent: what this place was, which belonged to the Sidonians, for so it may better be rendered, is not certain; some take it to be a cave belonging to them: Sandys <sup>f273</sup> speaks of a number of caves cut out of the rock in those parts, called the caves of the Sidonians, and afterwards the caves of Tyre; so it is interpreted by the Targum, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions others take it to be the river Magoras, Pliny <sup>f274</sup> makes mention of as on the borders of Lebanon near Zidon and Berytus: mention is made of the waters of Mearah along with the waters of Tiberias in Jewish writings <sup>f275</sup>; but rather something of more importance than a cave or a river is meant; most likely a tract of land near Sidon, and which belonged to it, and reached

*unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites*; of this place, (see Gill on <sup><6128></sup>Joshua 12:18”).

**Ver. 5.** *And the land of the Giblites*, etc.] This was another country that remained unconquered; the Greeks call it Byblus, and near to which Pliny <sup>f276</sup> speaks of a place called Gabale, and is now called Gibyle; it is <sup>f277</sup> said to be

“pleasantly situated by the seaside, and at present it contains but a little extent of ground, but yet more than enough for the small number of its inhabitants:”

it was in greater splendour, and its inhabitants of more fame, in the times of Ezekiel, (<sup><6270></sup>Ezekiel 27:9);

*and all Lebanon toward the sunrise*; or east of the land; all that inhabited that mountain remained unconquered, though the conquest was carried as far as the borders thereof:

*from Baalgad, under Mount Hermon*; of which (see <sup>-06117</sup>Joshua 11:17);

*unto the entering into Hamath*: which was the north border of the land; (see <sup>-06118</sup>Numbers 34:8).

**Ver. 6.** *All the inhabitants of the hill country*, etc.] Not in Judea, but in and about Lebanon, as follows:

*from Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim*; of which (see <sup>-06118</sup>Joshua 11:8);

*[and] all the Sidonians*; the inhabitants of the ancient city of Sidon, and the villages and lands belonging to it: these remained unconquered, and never were possessed by the Israelites:

*them will I drive out from before the children of Israel*: which, though it may have a special respect unto the Sidonians, with whom the clause is closely connected, yet may include all the above lands unconquered, out of which, as well as Sidon, the Lord promises to drive the inhabitants, to make way for the children of Israel; that is, on condition of their obedience, for it appears that not only the Sidonians, but many others, even the chief, and most of those mentioned, were never possessed by them:

*only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance*; that is, the whole land, as Abarbinel rightly remarks, both what was subdued and what was not; that was the business, and all the business, Joshua had now to do; he was not to be employed in making any further conquests, but leave them to others, and apply himself to the division of the land, by lot, to the tribes that as yet had no portion assigned them:

*as I have commanded thee*; now, at this time.

**Ver. 7.** *Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance*, etc.] Having the command and authority of God for it, he was to set about it at once, with all diligence and application:

*unto the nine tribes*: of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali, in which order they are placed, when the Lord gave to Moses the names of the men that should divide the land under Eleazar and Joshua, (<sup>-06116</sup>Numbers 34:16-28);

*and the half tribe of Manasseh*; that half which had no inheritance on the other side Jordan, and for which a prince of the children of Joseph was appointed to divide, (<sup>40423</sup>Numbers 34:23).

**Ver. 8.** *With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance*, etc.] That is, along with the half tribe of Manasseh, but not with that half of it before mentioned, who was to have division of a part with the nine tribes, but with the other half of the tribe settled beyond Jordan; with them the tribes of Reuben and Gad had received their portion at their own request, and so were to have no share in the present distribution:

*which Moses gave them beyond Jordan eastward*; at their desire, (<sup>40431</sup>Numbers 32:1-5), and upon certain conditions to be performed by them, (<sup>40420</sup>Numbers 32:20-23);

*[even] as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them*; this character of Moses, as the “servant of the Lord”, seems to be observed to show that he gave the said tribes their inheritance: according to the will of God, and in obedience to it: here end the words of the Lord to Joshua, and next follows an account of the land given to the two tribes and a half described by the writer of this book.

**Ver. 9.** *From Aroer, that [is] on the bank of the river Arnon*, etc.] A city belonging to Moab, from whence the description begins, the river Arnon, on which it was situated, being the border between Moab and the Amorites, (<sup>40213</sup>Numbers 21:13);

*and the city that [is] in the midst of the river*; or “even the city”; meaning the same city of Aroer, it lying both on the bank of it, and in the middle of it, or it was a double city, as may seem from (<sup>42372</sup>Isaiah 17:2); and so differently situated at that river:

*and all the plains of Medeba unto Dibon*; of these two places, (see <sup>40213</sup>Numbers 21:30); between them lay a plain, which some take to be the plain of Moab; but it rather seems to be a plain that was between these two places, and, according to (<sup>40337</sup>Joshua 13:17), Dibon itself was in a plain.

**Ver. 10.** *And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon*, etc.] A city he took from the Moabites, and made it his royal seat, (<sup>40216</sup>Numbers 21:26):

*unto the border of the children of Ammon*; which was the river Jabbok, (<sup><RB6></sup>Deuteronomy 3:16).

**Ver. 11.** *And Gilead*, etc.] The land of Gilead, which was part of the kingdom of Og, half of which was given to Reuben, and the other half to Gad:

*and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites*; of which (see <sup><RB4></sup>Deuteronomy 3:14);

*and all Mount Hermon*; called also Sirion, Shenir, and Sion, (<sup><RB9></sup>Deuteronomy 3:9 4:48);

*and all Bashan unto Salcah*; another part of the dominions of Og, (<sup><RB0></sup>Deuteronomy 3:10).

**Ver. 12.** *All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup><RB3></sup>Joshua 12:4”);

*who remained of the remnant of the giants*; was descended from those that remained in Ashtaroth, after the rest were cut off by Chedorlaomer, (<sup><RB5></sup>Genesis 14:5); called there the Rephaim, as here:

*for these did Moses smite, and cast them out*: that is, not only the giants, but the inhabitants of the above kingdom, the greatest part of them; for the Geshurites and the Maachathites are excepted in (<sup><RB3></sup>Joshua 13:13).

**Ver. 13.** *Nevertheless, the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites*, etc.] Neither in the times of Moses, nor in the times of Joshua:

*but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day*: in full possession of their cities unmolested; yea, in later times they became separate and distinct kingdoms; for we read both of the king of Geshur, and of the king of Maachah, (<sup><RB2></sup>2 Samuel 3:3 10:6).

**Ver. 14.** *Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance*, etc.] Neither the Lord, nor Moses by his order, nor did he appoint any inheritance for them, either beyond Jordan, or on this side it, for the Lord was to be their inheritance, (<sup><RB0></sup>Numbers 18:20);

*the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire [are] their inheritance, as he said unto them*; (<sup><RB0></sup>Deuteronomy 18:1); and which are

put for the whole of what was granted to them for their subsistence, as tithes, firstfruits, etc.

**Ver. 15.** *And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben [inheritance] according to their families.*] According to the number of them, and sufficient for them.

**Ver. 16.** *And their coast was from Aroer that [is] on the bank of the river Arnon, etc.*] As the country of Sihon is described, (<sup><0613></sup>Joshua 13:9); from whence it appears that it was his country which was given to Reuben, though not all of it:

*and the city that [is] in the midst of the river;* (see Gill on “<sup><0613></sup>Joshua 13:9”);

*and all the plain by Medeba;* which reached unto Dibon, (<sup><0613></sup>Joshua 13:9).

**Ver. 17.** *Heshbon, and all her cities that [are] in the plain, etc.*] Which was by Medeba, and reached to Dibon:

*Dibon, and Bamothbaal, and Bethbaalmeon;* Dibon was rebuilt by Gad, though it belonged to Reuben, and perhaps was inhabited by both, being on the borders of each; and Bamothbaal signifies the high places of Baal; (see <sup><0241></sup>Numbers 22:41); perhaps this is the same with Bamoth in the valley, (<sup><0213></sup>Numbers 21:20); and Bethbaalmeon is the same with Baalmeon in (<sup><0338></sup>Numbers 32:38); where it is highly probable was a temple of Baal, since both “beth” signifies an house, and “meon” an habitation.

**Ver. 18.** *And Jahazah, etc.*] Called Jahaz, (<sup><0223></sup>Numbers 21:23), where the battle was fought between Sihon and Israel:

*and Kedemoth;* near to which was a wilderness, which took its name from it, from whence Moses sent messengers with words of peace to Sihon, (<sup><0226></sup>Deuteronomy 2:26);

*and Mephaath;* thought to be the Maipha of Ptolemy <sup>f278</sup>; here Jerom says <sup>f279</sup>, in his time was a garrison of Roman soldiers, because of the desert that was near. It was a city, with its suburbs, given to the Levites, as were the two preceding, (<sup><0236></sup>Joshua 21:36,37); Adrichomius <sup>f280</sup> takes it to be the same with Malle, which, Josephus says, <sup>f281</sup> was called the city of the strangers.

**Ver. 19.** *And Kirjathaim*, etc.] Of which (see Gill on “<sup><-0627></sup>Numbers 32:37”);

*and Sibmah*; of which (see Gill on “<sup><-0618></sup>Numbers 32:3”) and (see Gill on “<sup><-0628></sup>Numbers 32:38”);

*and Zarethshahar, in the mount of the valley*; which was built on one of the mountains that looked over the valley of Moab, as did Nebo, Pisgah, Abarim; perhaps it is the same place Josephus <sup>f282</sup> calls Zara, to which he joins the valley of the Cilicians, and mentions it along with Heshbon, Medeba, and other cities of Moab; according to Adrichomius <sup>f283</sup>, it was in the mount of the valley of Bethpeor, which next follows.

**Ver. 20.** *And Bethpeor*, etc.] So called from Peor, the idol of the Moabites, and where very likely there had been a temple built to the honour of it; over against this place was a valley, where Israel abode some time, (<sup><-0629></sup>Deuteronomy 3:29);

*and Ashdodpisgah*; of which (see <sup><-0617></sup>Deuteronomy 3:17);

*and Bethjeshimoth*; of which (see <sup><-0630></sup>Numbers 33:49).

**Ver. 21.** *And all the cities of the plain*, etc.] In the champaign country, as well as those in the mountainous part:

*and all the kingdom of Sihon*; or, as Masius renders the words, “which all had been the kingdom of Sihon”; for the whole kingdom of Sihon was not given to Reuben, only a part of it, and the rest to Gad, as in (<sup><-0627></sup>Joshua 13:27);

*king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon*; as in (<sup><-0630></sup>Joshua 13:10);

*whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba*; not at the same time that Sihon was smitten by him, but afterwards in a war with Midian, (<sup><-0618></sup>Numbers 31:8); where their names are given as here; and there they are called kings of Midian, petty kings, and, as it seems by what follows, were subject to Sihon, and therefore are here mentioned:

*[which were] dukes of Sihon dwelling in the country*; for Midian, as Kimchi supposes, and not without reason, was under the government of Sihon, and these were his nobles, though they dwelt in the land of Midian.



**Ver. 22.** *Balaam also, the son of Beor the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword*, etc.] At the same time that the princes of Midian were slain, and which is also observed, (see Gill on “<sup><0610></sup>Numbers 31:8”). Kimchi supposes that he returned to Midian, on hearing that the counsel he gave to them, to ensnare Israel with their daughters, had taken effect, in order to receive his wages, and so received his righteous doom and just reward; it is commonly said by the Jews <sup>f284</sup>, that he was slain by Phinehas:

*among them that were slain by them*; among the above princes, and the common soldiers, of which there was a great slaughter; even all the males of Midian were slain, (<sup><0610></sup>Numbers 31:7).

**Ver. 23.** *And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border [thereof]*, etc.] As their border eastward was Aroer on the river Arnon, so their border westward was the river Jordan:

*this [was] the inheritance of the children of Reuben, after their families, the cities and the villages thereof*; which Moses gave them on the other side Jordan; and next follow an account of the inheritance of the tribe of Gad in those parts.

**Ver. 24.** *And Moses gave [inheritance] unto the tribe of Gad*, etc.] On the other side Jordan, as he did to Reuben:

*[even] unto the children of Gad, according to their families*: according to the number and largeness of them, dividing to each their part and portion.

**Ver. 25.** *And their coast was Jazer*, etc.] Their southern coast; of Jazer, (see <sup><0213></sup>Numbers 21:32); where it is called Jaazer, and is mentioned in (<sup><2168></sup>Isaiah 16:8); and in (<sup><2482></sup>Jeremiah 48:32), where it is spoken of as a city of Moab, as it was in the days of those prophets:

*and all the cities of Gilead*; which lay in those parts, for the whole was not given to this tribe, half of Gilead was given to the half tribe of Manasseh, (<sup><6133></sup>Joshua 13:31);

*and half the land of the children of Ammon*; not what then belonged to them, but what had been taken from them by the Amorites; and which Israel taking from them, had a right to retain, though they were forbid meddling with any of their land in present possession; (see <sup><8129></sup>Deuteronomy 2:19) (<sup><07113></sup>Judges 11:13-24);

*unto Aroer that [is] before Rabbath*; Aroer was a city of Moab, situated on the river Arnon, (<sup><0639></sup>Joshua 13:9); and stood over against Rabbath, a city of the Amorites, since called Philadelphia, the same that Joab took, (<sup><0026></sup>2 Samuel 12:26); though Reland thinks <sup>f285</sup>, that according to the situation of these cities another Aroer must be here meant, and which belonged to the Amorites.

**Ver. 26.** *And from Heshbon unto Ramathmizpeh, and Betonim*, etc.] This was their coast from the south to the north, and so describes their eastern border, which reached from Heshbon, given to the tribe of Reuben, (<sup><0637></sup>Joshua 13:7); to these places mentioned; Ramathmizpeh, the same with Ramothgilead, which Jerom <sup>f286</sup> says was a village in his time, and lay two miles from Philadelphia or Rabbath before mentioned, to the east; it should be to the west; of Betonim we nowhere else read, it seems to have been near to Ramath:

*and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir*; the former of these was the place where the angels met Jacob, and who gave it the name from thence; and in later times a city of this name was built there, and was near the river Jabbok, (<sup><0632></sup>Genesis 32:2); Debir is different from that in the tribe of Judah, (<sup><0651></sup>Joshua 15:15); in the Septuagint version here it is called Daibon, perhaps the same with Dibon, the tribe of Gad rebuilt, and is called Dibongad, (<sup><0624></sup>Numbers 32:34 33:45); unless Lidbar here should be the same with Lodebar in Gilead, (<sup><0072></sup>2 Samuel 17:27).

**Ver. 27.** *And in the valley, Betharam*, etc.] The same with Bethharan, (see Gill on “<sup><0626></sup>Numbers 32:36”):

*and Bethnimrah*; sometimes called Nimrah, (<sup><0638></sup>Numbers 32:3,36); near to which were some waters, called the waters of Nimrim, (<sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 15:6); It was in Jerom’s <sup>f287</sup> time a large village; it seems to have its name from leopards, which perhaps had their haunts hereabout:

*and Succoth*: the place where Jacob pitched his tent after he had passed over Jabbok; it is called in the Jerusalem Talmud <sup>f288</sup> Thaarabah:

*and Zaphon*; which in the same Talmud is Amatho or Amathus, which Jerom says <sup>f289</sup> is a village beyond Jordan, twenty one miles from Pella to the south, though he places it in the tribe of Reuben:

*the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon*; which was not given to the tribe of Reuben, (<sup><0632></sup>Joshua 13:21);

*Jordan and [his] border*; that is, the cities which were near it, as Kimchi; or that were upon the bank of it, as Jarchi;

*[even] unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth*; the same with the lake of Gennesaret, (<sup><RB1></sup>Luke 5:1);

*on the other side Jordan eastward*; the other from that in which the inheritance of Gad lay, which was beyond Jordan, from the land of Canaan.

**Ver. 28.** *This [is] the inheritance of the children of Gad, after their families*, etc.] As described in (<sup><RB27></sup>Joshua 13:27):

*the cities and their villages*; the cities given them, some of which are mentioned by name, and the villages adjacent and belonging to them were included in them.

**Ver. 29.** *And Moses gave [inheritance] unto the half tribe of Manasseh*, etc.] Whether at their request or of himself, there being land enough for them, and the two tribes of Gad and Reuben, is not certain:

*and [this] is [the possession] of the half tribe of Manasseh, by their families*; which is after related and described.

**Ver. 30.** *And their coast was from Mahanaim*, etc.] A place in the tribe of Gad, (<sup><RB26></sup>Joshua 13:26); which was the boundary of the half tribe that way:

*all Bashan*; so famous for its oxen, and for pasturage for them, and for its oaks, called by Josephus Batanea:

*all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan*; which, besides Bashan, took in the kingdom of Argob or Trachonitis, half the land of Gilead, all which was possessed by the half tribe of Manasseh: (see <sup><RB3></sup>Deuteronomy 3:13);

*and all the towns of, Jair which [are] in Bashan, threescore cities*; of Jair, and his relation to Manasseh, and of his taking these cities, and the number of them, (see <sup><RB34></sup>Numbers 33:41 <sup><RB4></sup>Deuteronomy 3:4,14).

**Ver. 31.** *And half Gilead*, etc.] The other half not given to the Gadites, who had that half of it which Sihon possessed, and the tribe of Manasseh that half of it which Og possessed, (see <sup><RB12></sup>Deuteronomy 3:12,13);

*and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan*; which are particularly mentioned, because royal cities, (<sup><RB30></sup>Joshua 13:10); (see <sup><RB04></sup>Deuteronomy 1:4);

*[were pertaining] unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh; and who was his only son; however, to his posterity only was this inheritance given, though not to them all:*

*[even] to one half of the children of Machir, by their families;* which seems to confirm it that Manasseh had no other son, since his whole posterity, both the half tribe on the other side, as well as that in the land of Canaan, were denominated from him; though he seems to have had another son, who perhaps died without issue, (<sup><1374></sup>1 Chronicles 7:14).

**Ver. 32.** *These [are the countries] which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, etc.]* Which is particularly described, that each might know their proper portion:

*on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward;* of the land of Canaan; of Jordan by Jericho, (see Gill on "<sup><020></sup>Numbers 22:1").

**Ver. 33.** *But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not [any] inheritance, etc.]* Neither on the other side Jordan, nor did he order them any in Canaan; but expressly declared they were to have no part in the division of it, though they were his own tribe; which shows him to be a disinterested man, that he faithfully observed the orders and instructions the Lord gave him:

*the Lord God of Israel [was] their inheritance, as he said unto them;* what was given to the Lord out of the sacrifices, and the tithes, and firstfruits, that were theirs; (see <sup><0480></sup>Numbers 18:20-32 <sup><0580></sup>Deuteronomy 18:1-8).