

## Joshua 18-19

### 18:1-2

Apparently the responsibility to receive their inheritance was that of each tribe; each tribe, represented by their leaders, was to be the initiator; the “go-getter”, God would call them to be, submissively and obediently, pro-active.

The tribe of Judah, Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, and Ephraim had already received their inheritance, but the remaining 7 tribes had not.

We read in v. 1 that, “the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh...”

It almost sounds as if they planning to stay at Shiloh – there they were **together**, and there was the **tabernacle**, and it all sounds rather convenient, but...they were being disobedient. The victory had been won corporately, but not individually.

*“Up to this point, Israel’s central encampment in the land had been at Gilgal, near Jericho, where they had observed several religious ceremonies (4:19, 20; 5:2–12; 9:6). Now the entire congregation moved to Shiloh, about 15 miles northwest of Jericho, where they set up the tent of meeting. This would remain an important Israelite religious center for several hundred years (19:51; 21:2; Judg. 18:31; 21:12; 1 Sam. 1:9) until the taking of Jerusalem in David’s day. The ark was kept there (1 Sam. 3:3), and it was brought into battle against the Philistines, who captured it when Samuel was judge (1 Sam. 4). Soon after this, Shiloh was destroyed (Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:14). tabernacle of meeting: This is the first of two references to the tabernacle in this book; the other reference is in 19:51. The tabernacle was an elaborate portable tent that served as God’s “home” when the Israelites were in the wilderness. The name tabernacle or tent of meeting usually means this tabernacle.” - Nelson, Thomas (2008). The NKJV Study Bible*

It’s interesting to see the root reason for their rebellion:

### 18:3

The real reason for not obtaining their inheritance was **negligence**. Joshua called them to the carpet...how long? How long will you **neglect** to go and possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers has given you?

Neglect...it's been the cause, the culprit for a lot of chaos among God's people. This is why we read commands of caution throughout the Scriptures:

In Nehemiah 10:39 we read the call of commitment, not to ***neglect*** the house of God.

In 1 Timothy 4:14, Paul wrote to Timothy, and God spoke through Paul, "Do not ***neglect*** the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hand of the eldership."

We need to be so careful not to neglect the house of God, which affects our relationship with Him, and we are not to neglect the gifts of God, which is our responsibility for Him.

This whole nemesis of neglect can be pretty dangerous, which is why we read in Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape if we ***neglect*** so great a salvation..."

The Hebrew people were falling away...so they were warned of the great sin of neglect.

The Hebrew word translated "neglect" (07503 רפה raphah raw-faw') - means to show oneself slack. Hence, the people were lacking because they were slacking...they were lazy.

They weren't necessarily full-on rejecting, but they were full-on neglecting.

According to Matthew Henry it had been a year or more...they were just kicking it.

Warren Wiersbe said this, "Seven tribes still had to have their inheritance marked out for them, and apparently they were slow to respond to the challenge. Unlike Caleb and the daughters of Zelophehad, these tribes didn't have faith and spiritual zeal. These tribes had helped fight battles and defeat the enemy, but now they hesitated to claim their inheritance and enjoy the land God had given them."

We read in Proverbs 12:27, "The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, but diligence is man's precious possession"

You see, the successful Christian, is the diligent Christian, the Godly go-getter, the one who takes those steps, and knocks on those doors – who takes God at His Word, and even though the work is more like a war...they know it's worth it!

I pray we would ***reject***, the sin of ***neglect***.

What will happen if you neglect your car? (it'll break down)

What will happen if you neglect your house? (it'll fall down)

What will happen if you neglect your body? (you will suffer and die)

What will happen if you neglect your wife and children? (separation, desperation, no relation)

What will happen if you neglect your obligation to God, your salvation from God? (not good, definitely dangerous)

Joshua knew this was not good, so:

*“Joshua stirs the Israelites up to take possession of their lots. He is ready to do his part, if they will do theirs.” - Matthew Henry*

And so, He provides the plan:

### **18:4-7**

Joshua says, okay, choose 3 men from each tribe, I’ll send them out to survey the land (which ends up meaning they would describe it in writing); this would total 21 men;

They were to return to Joshua and divide the remaining land into 7 sections; Judah and Joseph would keep their territory. They were then to divide up the land, as the Lord would determine.

*“The possibility is that there were 2 containers before Joshua. In the one were the names of the 7 tribes. The other had the descriptions of the 7 portions. Thus from 1 vessel would be taken the name, and from the 2<sup>nd</sup> the description of the portion to be assigned that tribe.” - Beacons*

Of course the tribe of Levi, the priests were excluded from owning land, we see that again in v. 7a, no land for the Levites, and for good reason, the **LORD** was their inheritance (it’s absolutely amazing to me how often this is repeated).

The Levites were not to own land, nor was this tribe to live together in 1 area, God wanted them scattered throughout the nation, so they might minister to all the people. We’ll see the different areas they live in, when we get to Chapter 20.

So...the Levites got God - their place was the priesthood.

Numbers 18:7, “...I give your priesthood to you as a gift for service...”

Numbers 18:20, “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.’”

Joshua 13:33, “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.”

We read in the latter portion of v. 7, that Gad, Reuben and the ½ tribe of Manasseh had already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan.

All this is a good plan from Joshua their leader:

### **18:8-10**

They did what Joshua asked, they did their part, and God did His; and we will see it's not over till it's over, but, in order to go forward in our walk with the Lord, we need to stay in step with the Spirit; our walk really is a step-by-step process of cooperation in order to be and do, all that God wants us to be and do.

Our responsibility in conjunction with God's sovereignty; I've told you many times, that one of my favorite verses in all the Bible is Proverbs 21:31, "[The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but deliverance is of the LORD.](#)"

God will do the impossible, when you and I do the possible.

We need to pray, and obey and walk in His way.

Martin Luther said, "*If I should **neglect** prayer for a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith.*"

Neglect is a slow flow to failure.

Life is like a tender plant; when properly nourished, it becomes sturdy and enduring, but when neglected it soon withers and dies.

Maybe you don't know what you're supposed to do. Well, the will of God begins in the Word, the Bible, there you will learn God's revealed will. When you respond to that (His revealed will), you will draw near to God, and little by little, you will begin to discover God's concealed will. You won't hesitate to survey the land, bring it before Jesus, who will gladly give you your land, your responsibilities, your opportunities, your family, your flock, your friends, your job for Jesus, which brings so much joy for the journey.

The first to receive their inheritance from these 7, is Benjamin:

### **18:11-27**

The land for ***Benjamin*** would be in what today is known as the West Bank.

With 26 cities...

*“The territory contained some cities which have been lost in antiquity, but others whose names continue to the present. Jericho, Bethel, Gibeon, Ramah, and Mizpeh are some of the more familiar names.” - Beacons*

*“Benjamin's portion was small, but it was choice. It occupied the heart of the land and possessed within its borders the firstfruits of Israel's labors in Canaan.” - MacDonald, William (1995). Believer's Bible Commentary*

(v. 16 – Rephaim = giants)

### **19:1-9**

It's interesting...the land for **Simeon**, and it's 17 cities were **within** the inheritance of Judah.

Here we read the reason being that Judah's inheritance was too small for them, but there's also another vital reason, found way back in the book of Genesis 49:5-7. It was part of the reaping of Simeon's sin...it affected and infected his descendants.

Wow...what a difference we make for future generations...for good or bad.

According to Beacons, *“This tribe seems to have had very little influence on the subsequent history of Israel.”*

We see further ramifications in 1 Chronicles 4:27 speaking of the tribe of Simeon, *“Shimei had 16 sons and 6 daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, nor did any of their families multiply as much as the children of Judah.”*

### **19:10-16**

The land for **Zebulun** (modern-day, northern Israel)

12 cities with their villages

### **19:17-23**

The land for **Issachar** (modern-day, northern Israel)

16 cities with their villages

*“Issachar received for the most part the large and fertile plain of Jezreel.” – Keil & Delitzch*

In Jesus' day it was the area, the province of Galilee that we read so much about in the Bible.

For God blessed them...a little over 1400 years later, we read in [Matthew 4:13-16](#) “And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

### **19:24-31**

The land for **Asher** (modern-day, northern Israel and into areas of southern Lebanon)

22 cities with their villages

### **19:32-39**

The land of **Naphtali** (modern-day, northern Israel and into areas of southern Lebanon)

19 cities

And then the final tribe: Dan

### **19:40-48**

The land for **Dan**...that they seemingly never really possessed.

We read in Judges 1:34-35, that “the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; and the Amorites were determined to dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, yet when the strength of the house of Joseph became greater, they were put under tribute.”

So what happened was some of the descendants of Dan traveled 100 miles out of the will of God and killed groups of absolutely defenseless people, who apparently were not part of God's original plan; the tribe of Dan traded God's plan of work and war, for their own plan, which happened to be a whole easier (Judges 1:34; 18:27-31). They did not take the high road, they took the toll road, the low road, they chose the road of less resistance...and they paid dearly.

*“This tribe never lived up to its promise. The Danites were unable to conquer much of the territory assigned to them. The original inhabitants, the Amorites, kept the Danites*

*confined to the hill country of Ephraim and Benjamin. Unable to conquer their allotted territory, some members of the tribe of Dan migrated far to the northernmost area of the Promised Land conquered the isolated city of Laish, which they renamed Dan.” – Nelson’s Bible Dictionary*

It’s interesting that in the book of Revelation (7:5-8), the list of 12 tribes does not include Dan, they’ve been excluded, with Levi taking His place.

He is mentioned in the book of Ezekiel (48:1) in reference to the time of the Millennial kingdom...God is gracious, but how important it is that we work and war by faith, not doing our own will, but only the will of the Lord!

## **19:49-50**

### Joshua’s Inheritance

It’s so neat to see the character of Joshua, the way he led the tribes and encouraged the tribes, willing to fall-in towards the end of the line, not insisting on the front – then...seeing the LORD give him the desires of His heart.

He asked for the city of Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim, and the Lord gave it to him.

[Psalms 84:11](#) “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.”

[Psalms 37:4](#) “Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

## **19:50**

*“The involvement of Eleazar the priest, Joshua, ... and the heads of the ... tribes, as well as the mention of the tabernacle at Shiloh, all lend an air of importance and solemnity. The entire distribution of the land had taken place under God’s watchful eye, decently and in order.” - Nelson, Thomas (2008). The NKJV Study Bible*

God is good...all He asks is that we’d be willing to work, to walk, to war for His glory and their good as well.

May God guard us from laziness and neglect; may we be encouraged by our great Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ to go up and out, and possess the land, the life that He has for each and every one of us. Amen?