

LESSON FOUR

THE DIVISIONS OF CANAAN

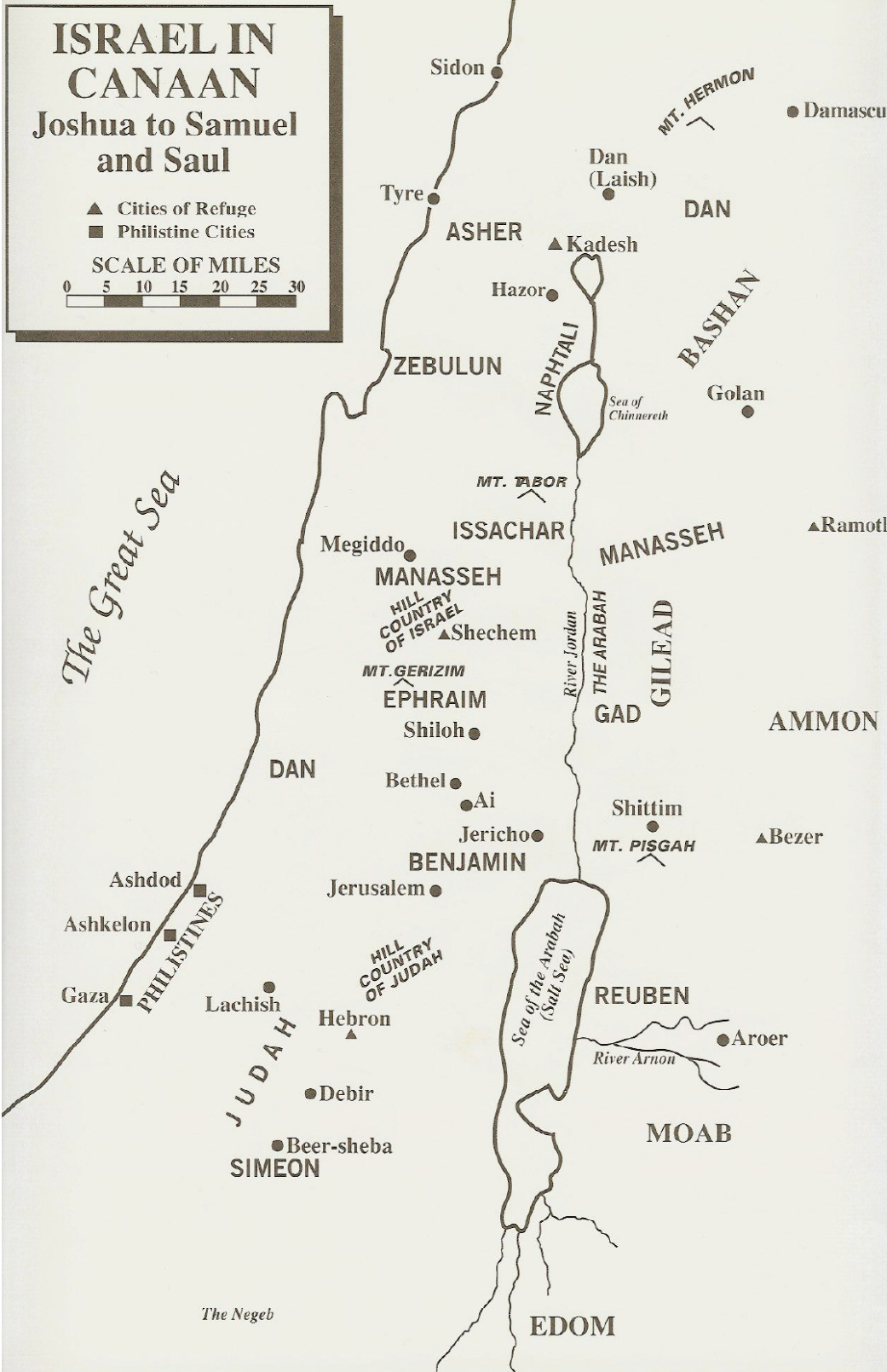
A. **THE DIVISION OF THE LAND: (Joshua 13).**

When Joshua was old and well stricken in years, the Lord told him to divide the land by portion to the tribes, as he had formerly commanded him (Joshua 13:1-6). Not all the enemies had been subdued. Important confederations of Canaanites from the north and south had to be conquered, but there were major pockets of resistance, which challenged the right of Israel to the land, as late as the time of Saul.

Under Joshua's leadership, 31 kings had been conquered. Now Joshua was commanded to divide the land among the tribes. Joshua, with the help of Eleazar, the high priest, now had the task of dividing the land. In dividing Canaan, Joshua both recognized the victories given by God and encouraged the tribes to enter and occupy the land assigned to them. Joshua divided the land as follows:

1. Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh. These tribes already had their territory assigned to them on the east side of the Jordan, during the lifetime of Moses.
2. Judah. The territory assigned to Judah was very large. It consisted of southern Canaan, stretching from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean and including Kadesh-Barnea.
3. Ephraim and Manasseh. The important central part of Canaan was given to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. This was still inhabited by a number of Canaanite groups that had to be conquered. Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim. Gideon came from the tribe of Manasseh. For many years, Ephraim was the principle tribe.
4. Benjamin and Dan. These tribes were assigned territory between the lands of Judah and the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. At the border between Judah and Benjamin was the city of the Jebusites. This city, Jerusalem, later became the spiritual and political center of Israel. The tribe of Dan had difficulty in establishing itself in the coastal area, and a group of them migrated to the extreme northern sector of Canaan.
5. Asher, Zebulum, Issachar, and Naphtali. These tribes received inheritance in the north. This area later became Galilee. It was here where Jesus spent the greater part of his earthly life.
6. Simeon. Simeon was given no land area as such, but was assigned cities within the large territories of Judah. Seventeen cities were named. One reason for this was that the part of the children of Judah was too much for them (Joshua 19:1-9). Another reason was that Simeon was one of the smallest of the tribes, numbering only 22,000 men at the time of the second census.
7. Levi. The tribe of Levi was not given a tribal inheritance since they were devoted to the offices connected with the priesthood. The tithes and offerings of the whole people supported them. They were given 48 cities for their residence; six of which were cities of refuge. The Levites lived throughout the land of Canaan.

B. MAP OF THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN AND DIVISIONS OF THE LAND:



C. CALEB'S PORTION:

Caleb was not an Israelite. He was a descendent of Kenaz, a grandson of Esau. Caleb represented the tribe of Judah when the spies went into Canaan, but he was not actually of the tribe of Judah. At Kadesh-Barnea, Moses had promised him that region and now Caleb reminded Joshua of this promise. Caleb was now 85 years old but he drove out the Anakim from the land and possessed the mountain that had been promised him.

Caleb was a great character. He was courageous, faithful, energetic, generous, and humble. We shall always remember Caleb by his great faith and the fact that at the age of 85 he said, "Give me this mountain."

D. THE TABERNACLE AT SHILOH: (Joshua 18:1).

Shiloh was chosen as the resting-place for the ark of the tabernacle. It was located in the territory of Ephraim, north of Bethel. Here the ark remained for many generations. It remained the central place of worship until just before God allowed the building of the temple. The Hebrew people went here from year to year to celebrate the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. After the ark had been removed from Shiloh, God forsook Shiloh and its judgments came upon it (Psalm 78:58-61, Jeremiah 7:12, I Samuel 21:1-6, I Chronicles 16:39, I Chronicles 21:29).

E. THE CITIES OF REFUGE: (Joshua 20:1-9).

Six cities were set apart to be cities of refuge. Three of these cities were located east of Jordan and three were located west of Jordan. These cities were set apart to make provision for the protection of all those who unwittingly committed murder. The names of these cities were 1) Kadesh; 2) Shechem; 3) Kirjath-arba; 4) Bezer; 5) Ramoth and 6) Galan.

F. THE PORTION OF THE LEVITES:

After the land was divided the Levites requested that Eleazar the priest, present their claim for cities to dwell in. They were given no division of land but 48 cities and their suburbs were their portions. They served at Shiloh and later at Jerusalem. It was God's plan that the Levites, the ministers to the people, live, holy, separate lives. God gave them the tithe of their brethren for their support (Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26). Tithing was not instituted under the law, it began with Abraham (Genesis 14:20).

G. THE ALTAR EAST OF JORDAN:

The tribes, who chose to stay on the east side of Jordan, had passed over Jordan with their brethren and helped them subdue the land. Then Joshua commanded them to go home, cautioning them to remain faithful to the Lord. However, they did a very unwise act when they passed over Jordan. They built a great altar on the bank of the Jordan. This almost resulted in war for the other tribes feared that this would create a rival establishment to Shiloh. Phinehas and ten princes were sent to confer with them. They showed them that they needed no altar beside the altar of the Lord at Shiloh (Joshua 22:19). However, the men of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh explained that they had no intention to ever offer sacrifice on the altar, but build it only as a witness that "*the Lord is God*" (Joshua 22:34). Their explanation was accepted.

There is a lesson taught here. From the time of the building of the tabernacle, God has had one place for his altar. First it was in the tabernacle, next it was in the temple and now it is in his church.

H. THE DEATH OF JOSHUA:

About 12 or 14 years after the final division of the country, Joshua assembled the heads of all the tribes of Shechem, and gave his final charge. They were intreated to cleave to the Lord and they vowed never to turn to idols.

The life of Joshua is a great inspiration to all. Until the day of his death, he declared: "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (*Joshua 24:15*). He died at the age of 110 years and was laid to rest in the family burial ground.

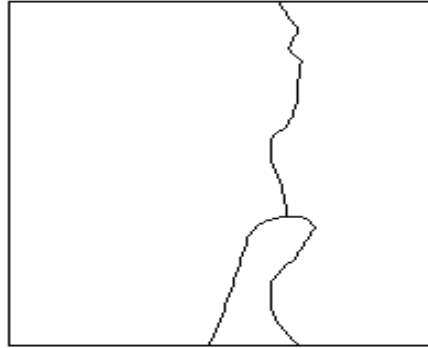
LESSON FOUR

SELF HELP TEST

A.

Mark on the map the following:

Ai
Hebron
Gilgal
Shechem
Shiloh
Gibeon
Jerusalem
Bethel
Jordan River
Jericho



B. Name and locate the six cities of refuge.

C. Explain what was wrong with building an altar east of Jordan.