

Six more allocations

• Simeon

The Book of Joshua continues to describe the tribal lands of Israel. After Benjamin there are six more remaining tribal areas mentioned.

1. **The tribe of Simeon was given land within the inheritance of Judah.** <sup>1</sup> There is no description of the boundaries of the tribe of Simeon; there is only a list of towns. Some of the towns also appear on the lists of Judah's town. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 19:1-9

<sup>2</sup> see 15:26-32, 42

• Zebulun

2. **The tribe of Zebulun was given a relatively small area west of the sea of Galilee.** <sup>1</sup> Its border is described in detail. The description begins in the south and travels clockwise around the border. <sup>2</sup> Its town are listed in 19:15, and the description is rounded off in 19:16.

<sup>1</sup> 19:10-16

<sup>2</sup> 19:10-14

• Issachar

3. **The tribe of Issachar was given a small area south-west of the Sea of Galilee.** <sup>1</sup> The list mentions towns rather than a detailed border. This may be because its border is implied in the description of the borders of the surrounding tribes.

<sup>1</sup> 19:17-23

• Asher

4. **The tribe of Asher was given land along the Mediterranean coast.** <sup>1</sup> Its border is described in 19:24-29, and its significant towns in 19:30-31.

<sup>1</sup> 19:24-31

• Naphtali

5. **The tribe of Naphtali was given land north-west of the Sea of Galilee.** <sup>1</sup> Its border <sup>2</sup> and its towns <sup>3</sup> are again listed before the unit is brought to a close in 19:39.

<sup>1</sup> 19:32-39

<sup>2</sup> 19:32-34

<sup>3</sup> 19:35-8

• Dan

6. **The tribe of Dan had a stretch of land west of Benjamin reaching to the coast.** <sup>1</sup> No border is described. Its border is implied in the descriptions of the three surrounding tribes. It is simply a list of towns.

<sup>1</sup> 19:40-48

• Joshua's inheritance

In the arrangement of the Book of Joshua, the author-editor puts Caleb <sup>1</sup> and Joshua <sup>2</sup> at either side of the story of the tribes being given their allocations of land. Now the survey comes to a close and there is a section mentioning Joshua himself. <sup>3</sup> Joshua 19:5 1 reminds us of how it is all done. By priestly and royal administration, by the will of God in determining the lot, in the presence of God at the door of the tent of meeting – everyone receives the description of what God wants to give them.

<sup>1</sup> 14:6-15

<sup>2</sup> 19:49-50

<sup>3</sup> 19:49-50

• More on the Christians inheritance

I have suggested that the Christian equivalent to all of this is first the experience of 'reaping from the Holy Spirit', and secondly, it is a calling to an area of ministry.

It might be asked: does the Christian have an earthly inheritance like that of the tribes of Israel? Let us pursue the matter further.

3. Treasure in heaven

3. **The Christian's 'inheritance' consists of treasure in heaven.** It is a mysterious matter and perhaps no one knows exactly how God's plans for our heavenly reward will actually work out. 'It does not yet appear what we shall be'. <sup>1</sup> Yet it is clearly taught that everything that is done for Jesus in this life is in some way 'laid up' as treasure in heaven. The Israelites got their inheritance in stages. It was first outlined for them, and they were told about it. Then they had to enter into a lifestyle of conflict to actually attain the inheritance. The Christian's experience is similar. By the Holy Spirit an area of 'territory' is put to us for us to attain. Again and again throughout the New Testament we are told that if we attain God's will for our lives, what we have done will be treasure in heaven.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John 3:2

**4. Given in connection with the resurrection of the body**

- Levels of glory

4. **The final phase of the Christian's inheritance is given in connection with the resurrection of the body.** In the New Testament resurrection and reward are brought into close relationship. It is those who have 'done good' who qualify for the 'resurrection that leads to life'. <sup>¶1</sup> Resurrection is the time of receiving the final phase of inheritance. It is clear from the testimony of the New Testament that there will be variations in levels of glory in the resurrection of the body.

<sup>¶1</sup> John 5:29

'One star differs from another star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead'. This is why after speaking of the resurrection Paul can say 'Therefore ... be steadfast . . . knowing that your toil is not in vain...'. Our conflict for God is not in vain; it secures inheritance. Supremely and finally it secures inheritance at the resurrection.

**5. Final phase in territorial**

5. **The final phase of Christian inheritance is territorial.** We have posed the question: does the Christian have an earthly inheritance? Yes, he does. '*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*'. Paul speaks of the promise to Abraham and his seed that he would be '*heir of the world*'. He takes the promise of the territory of Israel, and widens it to make it a promise of the entire world. <sup>¶1</sup> We wait for a new heavens and a new earth in which dwells righteousness. The new Jerusalem does not remain in the sky. It comes down upon earth. <sup>¶2</sup> The final glory for the Christian will be the possession of a glorified body to live in a glorified world. It is the final fulfilment of the allocation of territorial inheritances to the people of Israel. We have territorial inheritance as well.

<sup>¶1</sup> Romans 4:13

<sup>¶2</sup> Revelation 21:1-2

**6. Co-heir with Jesus**

- Jesus is our Joshua!

6. **The Christian's inheritance is to be as a co-heir with Jesus.** It is notable in the account of Joshua that the last person whose inheritance is mentioned is Joshua himself. The one who was supervising the entire programme of territory to be won for God, had himself territory to be won for God. Joshua was also living and working with the knowledge that God would reward him with inheritance.

Jesus is our Joshua! He is the One who leads us into the promised land. He allocates areas of life for us to conquer for God. He also lived for inheritance. After His resurrection He could say 'All authority has been given unto me...'. <sup>¶1</sup> He was 'appointed heir of all things'. <sup>¶2</sup> Jesus lived for the joy that was set before Him. We live in the same way He lived.

<sup>¶1</sup> Matthew 28:18

<sup>¶2</sup> Hebrews 1:2



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