

A photograph of a desert landscape at night. The foreground and middle ground are filled with rolling sand dunes, their surfaces marked by fine, rhythmic ripples. A small, dark, scrubby bush is situated on a dune in the center-right. The sky above is a deep, dark blue, densely populated with stars of varying brightness. The overall scene is serene and vast.

Word on Wednesdays

Joshua 13

Joshua 13

Now Joshua was old and advanced in years, and the Lord said to him, “You are old and advanced in years, and there remains yet very much land to possess.


2 This is the land that yet remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites 3 (from the Shihor, which is east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is counted as Canaanite; there are five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the Avvim,

4 in the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the boundary of the Amorites, 5 and the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath,

6 all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, even all the Sidonians. I myself will drive them out from before the people of Israel. Only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you. 7 Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”

Q1. Who drives the remaining people out? God or them?

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- A night sky with the Milky Way galaxy visible, silhouetted saguaro cacti in the foreground, and a list of two items.
1. God will do it.
 2. We will do it.

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Judges 1

After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” 2 The Lord said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.”

Ezekiel 28

The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord God:

“Because your heart is proud,
and you have said, ‘I am a god,
I sit in the seat of the gods,
in the heart of the seas,’
yet you are but a man, and no god,

- 
1. God will do it.
 2. We will do it.
 3. Both 1 & 2

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John 15

5 I am the vine; you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.



Reflection

Take a moment now to
thank God for the fruit in your life.

Joshua 13

8 With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them: 9 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland of Medeba as far as Dibon; 10 and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the boundary of the Ammonites; 11 and Gilead, and the region of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah;

12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he alone was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); these Moses had struck and driven out. 13 Yet the people of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites, but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel to this day.

14 To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance. The offerings by fire to the Lord God of Israel are their inheritance, as he said to him.

15 And Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of the people of Reuben according to their clans. 16 So their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland by Medeba; 17 with Heshbon, and all its cities that are in the tableland; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, 18 and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

19 and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zerethshahar on the hill of the valley, 20 and Beth-peor, and the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, 21 that is, all the cities of the tableland, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses defeated with the leaders of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land. 22 Balaam also, the son of Beor, the one who practiced divination, was killed with the sword by the people of Israel among the rest of their slain. 23 And the border of the people of Reuben was the Jordan as a boundary.

This was the inheritance of the people of Reuben,
according to their clans with their cities and villages.

24 Moses gave an inheritance also to the tribe of Gad,
to the people of Gad, according to their clans. 25 Their
territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half
the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of
Rabbah, 26 and from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and
Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir,
27 and in the valley Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth,
and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of
Heshbon, having the Jordan as a boundary,

to the lower end of the Sea of Chinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan. 28 This is the inheritance of the people of Gad according to their clans, with their cities and villages.

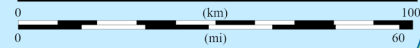
29 And Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It was allotted to the half-tribe of the people of Manasseh according to their clans. 30 Their region extended from Mahanaim, through all Bashan, the whole kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities, 31 and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

These were allotted to the people of Machir the son of Manasseh for the half of the people of Machir according to their clans.

32 These are the inheritances that Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. 33 But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the Lord God of Israel is their inheritance, just as he said to them.

THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Around 1200-1050 B.C.
(according to the Book of Joshua)



Mediterranean Sea

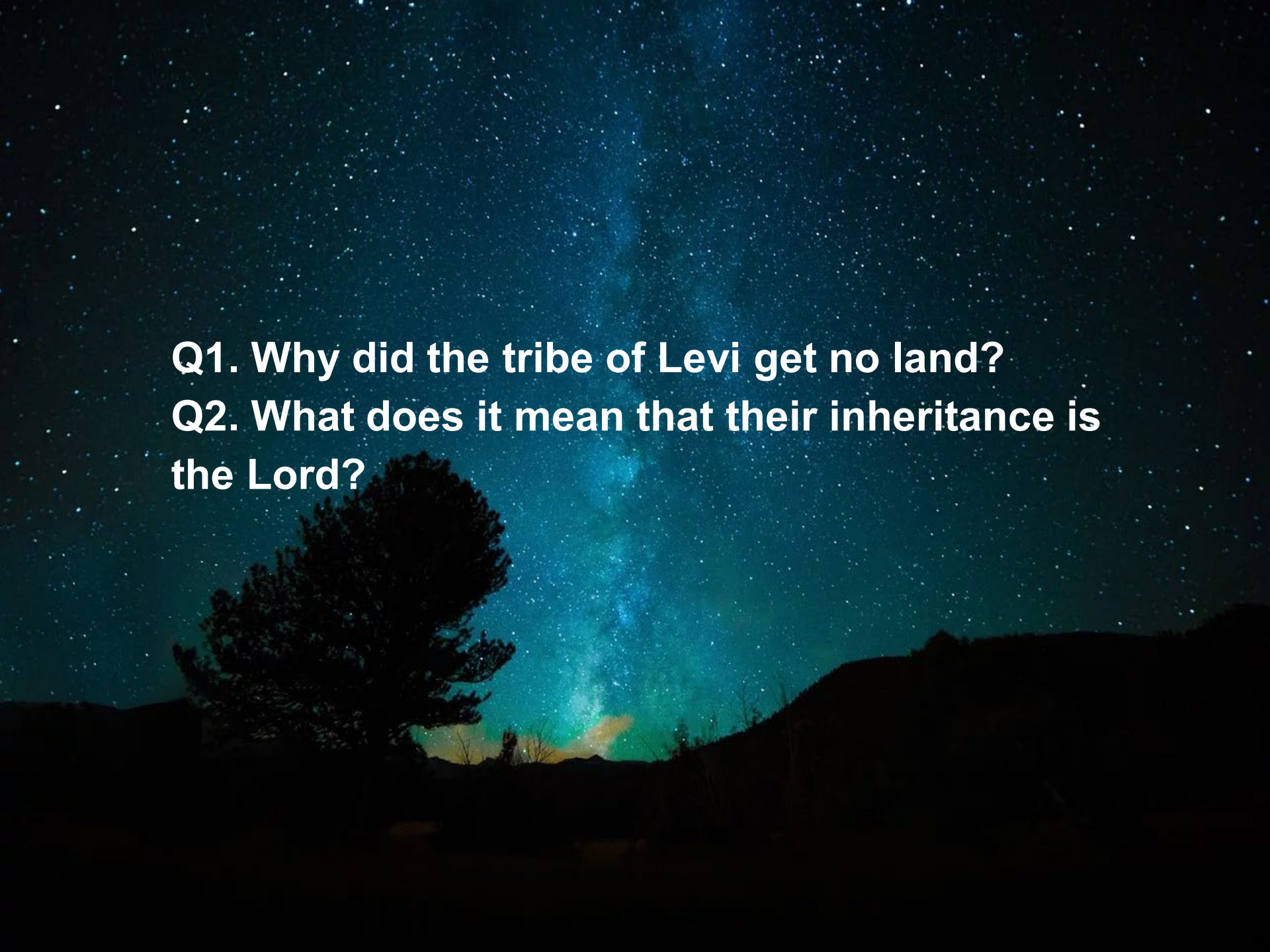




Q1. Why did the tribe of Levi get no land?

Q2. What does it mean that their inheritance is the Lord?

Q3. Why is the allotment of the land only to the 9.5 tribes?



Q1. Why did the tribe of Levi get no land?
Q2. What does it mean that their inheritance is the Lord?

Exodus 32

25 And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), 26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. 27 And he said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'"

28 And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. 29 And Moses said, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day."

Deuteronomy 10

8 At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord to stand before the Lord to minister to him and to bless in his name, to this day. 9 Therefore Levi has no portion or inheritance with his brothers. The Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord your God said to him.)

Numbers 3

5 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 “Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him. 7 They shall keep guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. 8 They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. 9 And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the people of Israel.

10 And you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall guard their priesthood. But if any outsider comes near, he shall be put to death.”

11 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 12 “Behold, I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the people of Israel. The Levites shall be mine, 13 for all the firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord.”

Numbers 18

24 For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the Lord, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.”

Numbers 35

The Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, saying, 2 “Command the people of Israel to give to the Levites some of the inheritance of their possession as cities for them to dwell in. And you shall give to the Levites pasturelands around the cities. 3 The cities shall be theirs to dwell in, and their pasturelands shall be for their cattle and for their livestock and for all their beasts. ...

7 All the cities that you give to the Levites shall be forty-eight, with their pasturelands. 8 And as for the cities that you shall give from the possession of the people of Israel, from the larger tribes you shall take many, and from the smaller tribes you shall take few; each, in proportion to the inheritance that it inherits, shall give of its cities to the Levites.”

A night sky with the Milky Way galaxy visible, silhouetted trees in the foreground, and a question about the allotment of the promised land.

Q. Why is the allotment of the promised land only to the 9.5 tribes?

Numbers 32

Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that indeed the region was a place for livestock, 2 the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying,

3 “Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh,
Shebam, Nebo, and Beon, 4 the country which the
Lord defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a
land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.”
5 Therefore they said, “If we have found favor in
your sight, let this land be given to your servants as
a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan.”



Q. Was it right of Reuben and Gad to ask for land outside the promised land?

Numbers 32

6 And Moses said to the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben: "Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here? 7 Now why will you discourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord has given them? 8 Thus your fathers did when I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea to see the land. 9 For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the Lord had given them. 10 So the Lord's anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying,

11 'Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me, 12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the Lord.' 13 So the Lord's anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord was gone.

14 And look! You have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the Lord against Israel. 15 For if you turn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

16 Then they came near to him and said: "We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, 17 but we ourselves will be armed, ready to go before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land.

18 We will not return to our homes until every one of the children of Israel has received his inheritance. 19 For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has fallen to us on this eastern side of the Jordan.”

20 Then Moses said to them: “If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the Lord for the war, 21 and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the Lord until He has driven out His enemies from before Him,

22 and the land is subdued before the Lord, then afterward you may return and be blameless before the Lord and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord.

23 But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out. 24 Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what has proceeded out of your mouth.”

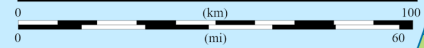


Reflection

If you did not have to worry about money, how would your life be different?

THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Around 1200-1050 B.C.
(according to the Book of Joshua)



Mediterranean Sea

ARAMEANS





Genesis 15

7 And he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." 8 But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" 9 He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. 11 And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."



Reflection

Consider the faithfulness of God in your life.
Take a moment to thank Him.