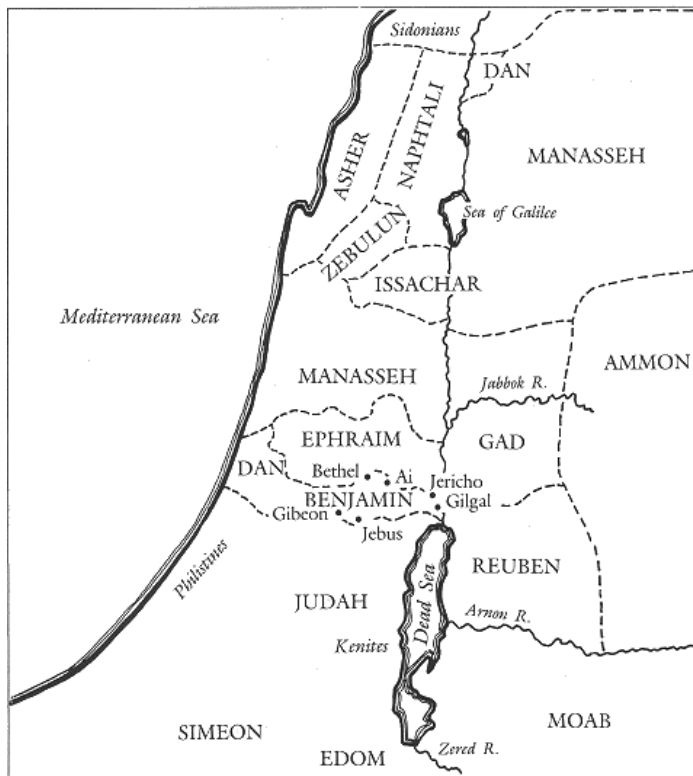


THRESHOLDS

3. RESPONSIBILITY HVC, Feb. 16, 2020 Joshua 17:7-18 (NLT)

How do you react when you do not feel like you are being treated fairly or getting your fair share?



What was your reaction when you first heard this Scripture read, before it was explained?

Joshua 17:14 (NLT)

The descendants of Joseph came to Joshua and asked, “Why have you given us only one portion of land as our homeland when the LORD has blessed us with so many people?”

How would you have felt if you a member of one of the other tribes and you heard this?

In what kind of areas in your life do you find yourself experiencing dissatisfaction or frustration?

Joshua 17:15 (NLT)

Joshua replied, “If there are so many of you, and if the hill country of Ephraim is not large enough for you, clear out land for yourselves in the forest where the Perizzites and Rephaites live.”

What would *you* have said if you were Joshua?

What other kind of things could Joshua have said instead?

Why do you think he chose to respond in this way?

Joshua 17:16 (NLT)

The descendants of Joseph responded, “It’s true that the hill country is not large enough for us. But all the Canaanites in the lowlands have iron chariots, both those in Beth-shan

*and its surrounding settlements and those in the valley of Jezreel. They are **too strong for us.***

What kinds of things in your world seem “too strong” for you?

What makes you most afraid?

Psalm 16:5–6 (NIV84)

*LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup;
you have made my lot secure.*

*The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely I have a delightful inheritance.*

Where in your life can you say what David is saying in this psalm?

On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), how deeply do you think you believe God has assigned your “portion and cup”?

What difference does it make for you to think of your life in this way? Can you give some specific examples?

What problems does this concept create for you?

Was there ever a time in your life when you did not believe in God and assumed there was no real rhyme or reason to your life? What do you remember about it? What was it like?

As you look at your life, what do you appreciate *most* about what God has “ordained” or “assigned” to you?

Deuteronomy 7:17–19 (NLT)

*Perhaps you will **think to yourselves**, ‘How can we ever conquer these nations that are **so much more powerful than we are?**’ But **don’t be afraid** of them! Just **remember** what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all the land of Egypt.... The LORD your God will use this **same power** against all the people you fear.*

What kind of things in your life are “*much more powerful*” than you are?

How do these words from Deuteronomy encourage you?

Joshua 17:12-13 (NLT)

*But the descendants of Manasseh were **unable to occupy** these towns because the Canaanites were determined to stay in that region. **Later, however**, when the Israelites became strong enough, they forced the Canaanites to work as slaves. But they did **not** drive them out of the land.*

What do you make of the fact that at first they were “*unable*” to drive out the Canaanites, but later were able to do so?

How might that apply to some problem areas in your life?

Deuteronomy 7:1–4 (NLT)

*“When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are about to enter and occupy, **he will clear away many nations ahead of you**: the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. These seven nations are **greater and more numerous than you**. When the LORD your God hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, **you must completely destroy them**. Make **no treaties** with them and show them no mercy. You must **not intermarry** with them. Do not let your daughters and sons marry their sons and daughters, **for they will lead your children away from me to worship other gods**. ...*

Why do you think God was so concerned that they drive out the Canaanites rather than enslave them?

Why is idolatry (worshipping other gods) such a big deal?

Joshua 17:17-18 (NLT)

*Then Joshua said to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph, “Since you are so large and strong, you will be given **more than one portion**. The **forests of the hill country will be yours as well**. Clear as much of the land as you wish, and take possession of its farthest corners. And you will drive out the Canaanites from the **valleys**, too, even though they are strong and have iron chariots.”*

What do you think was Joshua’s “tone” when he said this to the tribes of Joseph?

How would you have felt if you had been in those tribes and heard this?

2 Corinthians 5:7 (ESV)

for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Do you consider yourself more of a “sight-walker” or a “faith-walker”? Why?

How do you think we can get better at living by faith?

How tempted are you to “covet” others’ things? Why?

Could you pray this prayer every day and mean it?

St. Philaret prayer ...

Help me to believe that all that comes to me throughout the course of the day comes from your hand.

In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all are sent by you.

What do you think is holding you back from cutting down the trees and Canaanites in *your* life?!

How can the group pray for you?