

References for *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*

NOVEMBER 1-7

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JOSHUA 18-19

“Jehovah’s Wise Way of Dividing the Land”

it-1 359 ¶1 Boundary

It thus appears that the distribution of the land among the tribes was governed by two factors: the result of the casting of the lot, and the size of the tribe. The lot may have established only the approximate location of the land inheritance each tribe would have, thus designating an inheritance in one section or another of the land, such as to the N or S, E or W, along the coastal plain, or in the mountainous region. The decision of the lot proceeded from Jehovah and hence would serve to prevent jealousy or quarreling among the tribes. (Pr 16:33) By this means God would also guide matters so that the situation of each tribe would fall in accordance with the inspired deathbed prophecy of the patriarch Jacob recorded at Genesis 49:1-33.

it-1 1200 ¶1 Inheritance

Hereditary lands. The inheritance of the sons of Israel was given to them by Jehovah, who outlined the boundaries of the land to Moses. (Nu 34:1-12; Jos 1:4) The sons of Gad, the sons of Reuben, and half of the tribe of Manasseh were granted their allotment of territory by Moses. (Nu 32:33; Jos 14:3) The rest of the tribes received their inheritance by lot at the direction of Joshua and Eleazar. (Jos 14:1, 2) In harmony with Jacob’s prophecy at Genesis 49:5, 7, Simeon and Levi were not given a separate

section of territory as inheritance. Simeon’s territory consisted of land (along with enclave cities) inside the territory of Judah (Jos 19:1-9), while Levi was granted 48 cities throughout the entire territory of Israel. Since the Levites received the appointment to special service at the sanctuary, Jehovah was said to be their inheritance. They received the tithe as their portion or inheritance in return for their service. (Nu 18:20, 21; 35:6, 7) Families were given assignments within the territory of their tribe. As families would increase and sons would inherit, the land would be progressively divided up into smaller and smaller parcels.

it-1 359 ¶2 Boundary

After the casting of the lot had determined the geographic location of a tribe, it would then be necessary to determine the extent of its territory on the basis of the second factor: its proportionate size. “You must apportion the land to yourselves as a possession by lot according to your families. To the populous one you should increase his inheritance, and to the sparse one you should reduce his inheritance. To where the lot will come out for him, there it will become his.” (Nu 33:54) The decision of the lot as to the basic geographic location would stand, but adjustment could be made as to the size of the inheritance. Thus, when Judah’s territory was found to be too large, its land area was reduced by assigning portions of it to the tribe of Simeon.—Jos 19:9.

Spiritual Gems

it-1 359 ¶5 Boundary

The account of the division of the territory W of the Jordan shows that first the lots

for Judah (Jos 15:1-63), Joseph (Ephraim) (Jos 16:1-10), and the half tribe of Manasseh settling W of the Jordan (Jos 17:1-13) were determined, their boundaries and cities being enumerated. After this, there appears to have been an interruption of the dividing of the land, since the camp of Israel is shown to have moved from Gilgal to Shiloh. (Jos 14:6; 18:1) The length of time involved is not stated, but Joshua eventually reprimanded the remaining seven tribes for their dilatory attitude as to settling the rest of the land. (Jos 18:2, 3) Various explanations have been offered as to the cause of this attitude on the part of the seven tribes, some commentators reasoning that the abundance of spoil obtained during the conquest and the relative freedom from any immediate threat of attack by the Canaanites may have caused these tribes to feel no particular urgency about taking possession of the remaining portion of the territory. A reluctance to face up to the problem of dealing with the pockets of strong enemy resistance there may have contributed to this tardiness. (Jos 13:1-7) Also, their knowledge of this portion of the Promised Land may have been considerably more limited than of those sections already allotted.

NOVEMBER 8-14

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JOSHUA 20-22

"Lessons From a Misunderstanding"

w06 4/15 5 ¶3

Keys to Communicating With Your Mate

Frank communication can prevent misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Early in the history of the Israelites, the tribes of

Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh who dwelled east of the Jordan River built "an altar great in conspicuousness" by the Jordan. Other tribes misunderstood their actions. Thinking that their brothers across the Jordan had committed an act of apostasy, the tribes on the west prepared to war with the "rebels." Before setting out to war, though, they sent a delegation to communicate with the eastern tribes. What a wise move! They found that the altar was not for making illegal burnt offerings or sacrifices. Rather, the tribes on the east feared that in the future the other tribes would tell them: "You have no share in Jehovah." The altar would be a witness that they too were worshippers of Jehovah. (Joshua 22:10-29) They named the altar Witness, likely because it served as a witness that to them Jehovah was the true God.—Joshua 22:34, footnote.

w08 11/15 18 ¶5

"Pursue the Things Making for Peace"

Some Israelites may have felt that there was already sufficient evidence of wrongdoing and that a sneak attack would result in fewer casualties. Rather than acting hastily, however, the tribes west of the Jordan sent delegates to discuss the problem with their brothers. They asked: "What is this act of unfaithfulness that you have perpetrated against the God of Israel in turning back today from following Jehovah?" Actually, the tribes that had built the altar were not acting unfaithfully. But how would they react to such an accusation? Would they lash out at their accusers or refuse to speak to them? The accused tribes replied mildly, clearly stating that their actions were really motivated by their desire to serve Jehovah. Their response preserved their relationship with God and saved lives. Calm discussion

cleared up the matter and restored peace.
—Josh. 22:13-34.

Spiritual Gems

***it-1* 402 ¶13**

Canaan

Though so many of the Canaanites survived the major conquest and resisted subjugation, it could still be said that “Jehovah gave Israel all the land that he had sworn to give to their forefathers,” that he had given them “rest all around,” and that “not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; it all came true.” (Jos 21:43-45) All around the Israelites the enemy peoples were cowed and offered no genuine threat to their security. God had stated earlier that he would drive the Canaanites out “little by little” so that the wild beasts would not multiply in a suddenly desolated land. (Ex 23:29, 30; De 7:22) Despite the superior war equipment of the Canaanites, including war chariots with iron scythes, any failure of the Israelites finally to take certain areas could not be charged to Jehovah’s account as a failure on his part to fulfill his promise. (Jos 17:16-18; Jg 4:13) Rather, the record shows that the Israelites’ few defeats were due to unfaithfulness on their part.—Nu 14:44, 45; Jos 7:1-12.

NOVEMBER 15-21

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | JOSHUA 23-24

“Joshua’s Final Admonition to the Nation”

***it-1* 75**

Alliance

A different situation prevailed with the entry of the nation of Israel into Canaan, the Land

of Promise. The Sovereign God had given Israel full right to the land in fulfillment of his promise to their forefathers. They were, therefore, not entering as alien residents, and Jehovah prohibited their making alliances with the pagan nations in the land. (Ex 23:31-33; 34:11-16) They were to be subject only to God’s laws and statutes, not to those of the nations due for eviction. (Le 18:3, 4; 20:22-24) They were particularly warned against forming marriage alliances with such nations. Such alliances would intimately involve them not only with pagan wives but with pagan relatives and their false religious practices and customs, and this would result in apostasy and a snare. —De 7:2-4; Ex 34:16; Jos 23:12, 13.

***w07* 11/1 26 ¶19-20**

The Word of Jehovah Never Fails

¹⁹ Surely from what we have seen with our own eyes, we can say: “Not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed.” (Joshua 23:14) Jehovah delivers, protects, and sustains his servants. Can you point to any promise of his that failed to be fulfilled at his appointed time? It is impossible to do so. We wisely trust in the reliable Word of God.

²⁰ What of the future? Jehovah has told us that most of us can hope to live on an earth transformed into a delightful paradise. A few among us have the hope of ruling with Christ in heaven. Whatever our hope, we have every reason to remain faithful as did Joshua. The day will come when our hope will be realized. Then we will look back on all the promises that Jehovah has made, and we too will say: “They have all come true.”

Spiritual Gems

w04 12/1 12 ¶1

Highlights From the Book of Joshua

24:2—Was Abraham’s father, Terah, a worshiper of idols? Initially, Terah was not a worshiper of Jehovah God. He likely worshiped the moon-god named Sin—a popular deity in Ur. According to Jewish tradition, Terah might even have been a maker of idols. However, when Abraham leaves Ur at God’s command, Terah goes with him to Haran.—Genesis 11:31.

NOVEMBER 22-28

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD | JUDGES 1-3

“A Story of Courage and Intrigue”

w04 3/15 31 ¶3

Ehud Breaks the Oppressor’s Yoke

Ehud’s plans succeeded, not because of any cleverness on his part, nor because of any incompetence on the part of the enemy. The outworking of divine purposes does not depend on human factors. The primary reason for Ehud’s success was that he had God’s backing as he acted in harmony with His invincible will to liberate His people. God had raised up Ehud, “and when Jehovah did raise up judges for [his people], Jehovah proved to be with the judge.”—Judges 2:18; 3:15.

w04 3/15 30 ¶1-3

Ehud Breaks the Oppressor’s Yoke

Ehud’s first step was to prepare “a sword for himself”—a doubled-edged sword that was short enough to be concealed under his clothes. He may have expected to be searched. Swords were normally worn on the left side of the body, where right-handers could quickly draw them. Being

left-handed, Ehud hid his weapon “underneath his garment upon his right thigh,” where the king’s guards were less likely to search. Without hindrance, therefore, “he proceeded to present the tribute to Eglon the king of Moab.”—Judges 3:16, 17.

The details of the initial events in Eglon’s court are not provided. The Bible simply says: “It came about that when [Ehud] had finished presenting the tribute, he at once sent the people away, the bearers of the tribute.” (Judges 3:18) Ehud presented the tribute, accompanied the bearers of the tribute to a safe distance from Eglon’s residence, and returned after dismissing them. Why? Did he have those men with him for protection, because of mere protocol, or perhaps simply as porters for the tribute? And did he want them out of the way for safety before carrying out his plan? Whatever his thinking was, Ehud bravely retraced his steps alone.

“[Ehud] turned back at the quarries that were at Gilgal, and he proceeded to say: ‘I have a secret word for you, O king.’” How he managed to regain entry to Eglon’s presence is not explained in the Scriptures. Should not the guards have been suspicious? Did they think that a single Israelite presented no threat to their lord? Did Ehud’s coming alone create the impression that he was betraying his countrymen? Whatever the case, Ehud sought a private audience with the king, and he got it.—Judges 3:19.

Spiritual Gems

w05 1/15 24 ¶7

Highlights From the Book of Judges

2:10-12. We must have a regular program of Bible study so as ‘not to forget Jeho-

vah's doings.' (Psalm 103:2) Parents need to sound down the truth of God's Word into the hearts of their children.—Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

NOVEMBER 29–DECEMBER 5

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JUDGES 4-5

"Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People"

w15 8/1 13 ¶1

"I Arose as a Mother in Israel"

Sisera! The very name caused terror and panic in Israel. The Canaanite religion and culture were brutal, featuring child sacrifice and temple prostitution. What was it like to have a Canaanite general and his army dominating the land? Deborah's song reveals that travel was nearly impossible in the land and village life had all but ended. (Judges 5:6, 7) We may imagine people cowering in the woods and hills, afraid to farm or to live in unwallled villages and terrified to travel on the open roads lest they be attacked, their children taken, and their women raped.

w15 8/1 13 ¶2

"I Arose as a Mother in Israel"

Terror reigned for 20 years, until Jehovah saw evidence that his stubborn people were ready to change or, as the inspired record of the song of Deborah and Barak says, "Until I, Deborah, rose up, until I arose as a mother in Israel." We do not know if Deborah, the wife of a man named Lappidoth, was a mother in a literal sense, but this expression was intended figuratively. In effect, Jehovah assigned Deborah to pro-

vide the nation with motherly protection. He commissioned her to summon a strong man of faith, Judge Barak, and direct him to rise up against Sisera.—Judges 4:3, 6, 7; 5:7.

w15 8/1 15 ¶2

"I Arose as a Mother in Israel"

Jael had to think fast. She offered Sisera a place to rest. He ordered her to conceal his presence from any man who might come looking for him. She covered him when he lay down, and when he asked her for water, she gave him creamy milk. Soon Sisera sank into a deep sleep. Jael then took a pair of household implements that tent-dwelling women used often and skillfully—a tent pin and a mallet. Crouching near Sisera's head, she now faced the terrifying task of acting as an executioner for Jehovah. Even an instant of uncertainty or hesitation could have meant disaster. Did she think of God's people and of how this man had brutalized them for decades? Or did she think of the privilege of taking her stand for Jehovah? The record does not say. We know only that the deed was soon done. Sisera was dead!—Judges 4:18-21; 5:24-27.

Spiritual Gems

w05 1/15 25 ¶5

Highlights From the Book of Judges

5:20—How did the stars fight from the heavens in behalf of Barak? The Bible does not say whether this involved angelic assistance, meteorite showers that were interpreted ominously by Sisera's wise men, or perhaps astrological predictions for Sisera that proved false. Undoubtedly, however, there was some type of divine intervention.

DECEMBER 6-12

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JUDGES 6-7

"Go With the Strength You Have"

w02 2/15 6-7

Godly Principles Can Benefit You

Someone who had a healthy attitude about himself and who made a sound appraisal of his own worth, was Gideon, a judge among the ancient Hebrews. He did not seek to be leader of Israel. When he was designated to fill that role, however, Gideon called attention to his unworthiness. "My thousand is the least in Manasseh, and I am the smallest in my father's house," he explained.—Judges 6:12-16.

w05 7/15 16 ¶3

"Jehovah's Sword and Gideon's!"

What terror the Midianites now experience! Suddenly, the stillness is broken by the shattering of 300 jars, the blare of 300 horns, and the shouts of 300 men. Stunned, especially by the cry "Jehovah's sword and Gideon's!," the Midianites add their own cries to the din. In the chaos, it is impossible for them to tell friend from foe. The 300 stand still in their assigned positions as God causes the enemies to use their own swords to slaughter one another. The camp is routed, escape is cut off, and mop-up operations involving an arduous pursuit permanently remove the Midianite threat. The long and murderous occupation has finally come to an end.—Judges 7:19-25; 8:10-12, 28.

Spiritual Gems

w05 1/15 26 ¶6

Highlights From the Book of Judges

6:25-27. Gideon used discretion so as not to anger his opposers needlessly. When

preaching the good news, we must be careful not to offend others unduly by the way we speak.

DECEMBER 13-19

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JUDGES 8-9

"Humility Is Better Than Pride"

w00 8/15 25 ¶3

How Do You Handle Differences?

Gideon, heavily involved in battle against Midian, called on the tribe of Ephraim to help. However, after the battle was over, Ephraim turned on Gideon and complained bitterly that he had not called on them at the outset of the fighting. The record states that "they vehemently tried to pick a quarrel with him." Gideon said in response: "What now have I done in comparison with you? Are not the gleanings of Ephraim better than the grape gathering of Abiezer? It was into your hand that God gave Midian's princes Oreb and Zeeb, and what have I been able to do in comparison with you?" (Judges 8:1-3) By his well-chosen, calming words, Gideon avoided what could have been a disastrous intertribal war. Those of the tribe of Ephraim may have had a problem with self-importance and pride. However, that did not stop Gideon from working to bring about a peaceful outcome. Can we do similarly?

w17.01 20 ¶15

Why Modesty Still Matters

¹⁵ Gideon is an excellent example of modesty in action. When Jehovah's angel first appeared to him, Gideon readily acknowledged his modest background and credentials. (Judg. 6:15) After he accepted Jehovah's assignment, Gideon made sure

that he thoroughly understood what was required, and he looked to Jehovah for guidance. (Judg. 6:36-40) Gideon was bold and courageous. Yet, he acted with caution and shrewdness. (Judg. 6:11, 27) He did not seize upon his assignment to gain prominence. Rather, as soon as he could, he gladly returned to his former place.—Judg. 8:22, 23, 29.

w08 2/15 9 ¶9

Walk in Jehovah's Ways

9 *To be God's friends, we must be "humble in mind."* (1 Pet. 3:8; Ps. 138:6) The importance of humility is shown in Judges chapter 9. Gideon's son Jotham said: "Once upon a time the trees went to anoint a king over them." The olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine were mentioned. They represented worthy individuals who did not seek to rule over their fellow Israelites. But the bramble—useful only as fuel—represented the kingship of proud Abimelech, a murderer eager to dominate others. Though he 'played the prince over Israel three years,' he met an untimely death. (Judg. 9:8-15, 22, 50-54) How much better it is to be "humble in mind"!

Spiritual Gems

it-1 753 ¶1

Ephod, I

In spite of Gideon's good intentions to commemorate the victory Jehovah had given Israel and to honor God, the ephod "served as a snare to Gideon and to his household," because the Israelites committed spiritual immorality by worshiping it. (Jg 8:27) However, the Bible does not say that Gideon himself worshiped it; on the contrary, he is specifically named by the apostle Paul as one of the 'great cloud' of faithful pre-

Christian witnesses of Jehovah.—Heb 11:32; 12:1.

DECEMBER 20-26

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JUDGES 10-12

"Jephthah—A Spiritual Man"

w16.04 7 ¶9

Being Faithful Leads to God's Approval

9 Examples of faithful ones like Joseph, who showed mercy to his brothers—even though "they began to hate him"—may also have influenced Jephthah's response. (Gen. 37:4; 45:4, 5) Meditating on such examples would have helped Jephthah to choose a course of action that was pleasing to Jehovah. The conduct of his brothers no doubt hurt him deeply, but he would not hold back from serving Jehovah and His people. (Judg. 11:9) The fight to defend Jehovah's name was more important to Jephthah than any personal conflicts. He was determined to be faithful to Jehovah, resulting in good for himself and for others.—Heb. 11:32, 33.

it-2 27 ¶2

Jephthah

Jephthah, a man of action, lost no time in exercising vigorous leadership. He sent a message to the king of Ammon, pointing out that Ammon was the aggressor in invading Israel's land. The king replied that it was land Israel had taken from Ammon. (Jg 11:12, 13) Here Jephthah showed himself to be, not a mere rough, uncultured warrior, but a student of history and particularly of God's dealings with his people. He refuted the Ammonite argument, showing that (1) Israel did not molest Ammon, Moab, or Edom (Jg 11:14-18; De 2:9, 19, 37; 2Ch 20: 10, 11); (2) Ammon had not possessed the

disputed land at the time of the Israelite conquest, because it was in the hands of the Canaanite Amorites and God had given their king, Sihon, and his land into Israel's hand; (3) Ammon had not disputed Israel's occupation for the past 300 years; therefore, on what valid basis could they do so now?—Jg 11:19-27.

it-2 27 ¶3

Jephthah

Jephthah got at the heart of the matter when he showed that the issue revolved around the matter of worship. He declared that Jehovah God had given Israel the land and that for this reason they would not give an inch of it to worshipers of a false god. He called Chemosh the god of Ammon. Some have thought this to be an error. But, although Ammon had the god Milcom, and though Chemosh was a god of Moab, those related nations worshiped many gods. Solomon even wrongly brought the worship of Chemosh into Israel because of his foreign wives. (Jg 11:24; 1Ki 11:1, 7, 8, 33; 2Ki 23:13) Furthermore, “Chemosh” may mean “Subduer, Conqueror,” according to some scholars. (See *Gesenius's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, translated by S. Tregelles, 1901, p. 401.) Jephthah may have called attention to this god as being given credit by the Ammonites for ‘subduing’ or ‘conquering’ others and giving them land.

Spiritual Gems

it-2 26

Jephthah

Jephthah a Legitimate Son. The mother of Jephthah was “a prostitute woman,” not meaning, however, that Jephthah was born of prostitution or was illegitimate. His mother *had been* a prostitute prior to her

marriage as a secondary wife to Gilead, just as Rahab had once been a prostitute but later married Salmon. (Jg 11:1; Jos 2:1; Mt 1:5) That Jephthah was not illegitimate is proved by the fact that his half brothers by Gilead's primary wife drove him out so that he would not share in the inheritance. (Jg 11:2) Additionally, Jephthah later became the accepted leader of the men of Gilead (of whom Jephthah's half brothers seemed to be foremost). (Jg 11:11) Moreover, he offered a sacrifice to God at the tabernacle. (Jg 11:30, 31) None of these things would have been possible for an illegitimate son, for the Law specifically stated: “No illegitimate son may come into the congregation of Jehovah. Even to the tenth generation none of his may come into the congregation of Jehovah.”—De 23:2.

DECEMBER 27–JANUARY 2

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | JUDGES 13-14

“What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife”

w13 8/15 16 ¶1

Parents—Train Your Children From Their Infancy

Consider the case of the Danite named Manoah, who lived in the town of Zorah in ancient Israel. Jehovah's angel informed Manoah's barren wife that she would give birth to a son. (Judg. 13:2, 3) Faithful Manoah and his wife were no doubt overjoyed by that prospect. However, they also had serious concerns. So Manoah prayed: “Excuse me, Jehovah. The man of the true God that you just sent, let him, please, come again to us and instruct us as to what we ought to do to the child that will be born.”

(Judg. 13:8) Manoah and his wife were concerned about their child's upbringing. They undoubtedly taught their son, Samson, God's law, and their efforts evidently met with success. "In time Jehovah's spirit started to impel [Samson]," says the Bible. As a result, Samson performed many powerful works as one of Israel's judges.—Judg. 13: 25; 14:5, 6; 15:14, 15.

w05 3/15 25-26

Samson Triumphs in the Strength of Jehovah!

As Samson kept growing, "Jehovah continued to bless him." (Judges 13:24) One day Samson came to his father and mother and said: "There is a woman that I have seen in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines, and now get her for me as a wife." (Judges 14:2) Imagine their surprise. Instead of freeing Israel from the hands of the oppressors, their son wanted to form a marriage alliance with them. Taking a wife from among worshipers of pagan gods was against God's Law. (Exodus 34:11-16) Hence, the parents objected: "Is there not among the daughters of your brothers and among all my people a woman, so that you are going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" Still, Samson insisted: "Get just her for me, because she is the one just right in my eyes."—Judges 14:3.

Spiritual Gems

w05 3/15 26 ¶1

Samson Triumphs in the Strength of Jehovah!

In what way was this particular Philistine woman "just right" for Samson? Not in the sense that she was "beautiful, engaging, attractive," suggests McClintock and Strong's

Cyclopedia, "but right relative to an end, purpose, or object." Relative to what end? Judges 14:4 explains that Samson "was looking for an opportunity against the Philistines." Samson was interested in the woman for that purpose. As Samson grew to adulthood, "Jehovah's spirit started to impel him," or stir him to action. (Judges 13: 25) So the spirit of Jehovah was the driving force behind Samson's unusual request for a wife as well as his entire career as judge over Israel. Did Samson get the opportunity he was seeking? Let us first consider how Jehovah assured him of divine backing.