

## Conquering the Land (1400 – 1100 BCE) – “Division of the Promised Land”

**Readings:** *Joshua 13:1-17:18*

### ***Reflections:***

- In fact, all of the land was not fully conquered and problems will remain for Israel because they did not fully obey God. Yet they are most of the way there. God takes responsibility to continue to fight for Israel even though Joshua is advanced in years now. “I myself will drive them out before the Israelites.”
- The Levites, the closest parallel to the church, have no land or inheritance but “the offerings made by fire to the Lord, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as he promised them.” They are given towns to live in within all the tribes but no land for themselves. This is repeated over and over in the text and it shows the symbolic importance of this. In other words, their ministry of reconciliation between Israel and God is their inheritance. Christ-followers have been given the ministry of reconciliation to the world as their inheritance. (2 Corinthians 5:11-19)
- The story of Caleb’s restoration is one of the indications of grace within the story of Israel. Wholehearted or fully surrendered hearts can be redeemed and restored. This tracks with God “opposing the proud but giving grace to the humble.” (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5)
- Note that in Joshua 17:3-6 that daughters receive an inheritance in the land. This again is revolutionary for that time.
- Remember Joseph’s tribe is so significantly blessed that it grows to be very powerful. Therefore the most powerful of all the tribes becomes two smaller tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh. Here is the strange thing. The land is therefore divided into twelve allotments even though only eleven of the twelve inherit land. In God’s mind is having twelve lots of land an important part of the symbolism? Anyway, the land is divided into twelve tracks. Ten tribes take ten plots. Joseph’s tribe takes two plots. The Levite tribe spreads out and intermingles with all the other tribes.