

Joshua 17:1 ¶ There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he *was* the firstborn of Joseph; *to wit*, for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.
Joshua 17:2 There was also *a lot* for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hopher, and for the children of Shemida: these *were* the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.

Manasseh was the firstborn son of Manasseh, but Jacob gave the greater portion to Ephraim when he adopted them as his own and blessed them.

Genesis 48:13–20 “And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn....And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father’s hand, to remove it from Ephraim’s head unto Manasseh’s head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.”

We are reminded that half of the tribe of Manasseh had received their inheritance east of the Jordan River that included the land of Gilead and Bashan.

Joshua 17:3 But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.
Joshua 17:4 And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.
Joshua 17:5 And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side Jordan;
Joshua 17:6 Because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh’s sons had the land of Gilead.

We are reminded that the daughters of Zelophehad, descendants of Manasseh that had no brothers, were also given an inheritance in the land as commanded by the LORD through Moses (see Numbers 27). It sounds like they had to remind Eleazar and Joshua of that fact.

Adam Clarke notes the following regarding the “ten portions” = “As there were six sons and five daughters, among whom this division was to be made, there

should be eleven portions; but Zelophehad, son of Hopher, having left five daughters in his place, neither he nor Hopher is reckoned. The lot of Manasseh therefore was divided into ten parts; five for the five sons of Gilead, who were Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, and Shemida; and five for the five daughters of Zelophehad, viz., Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Calmet."

Joshua 17:7 ¶ And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lieth before Shechem; and the border went along on the right hand unto the inhabitants of Entappuah.

Joshua 17:8 Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim;

Joshua 17:9 And the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river: these cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh: the coast of Manasseh also was on the north side of the river, and the outgoings of it were at the sea:

Joshua 17:10 Southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea is his border; and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.

Joshua 17:11 And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Bethshean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.

Matthew Henry summarizes the inheritance west of Jordan as follows: "It reached from Jordan on the east to the great sea on the west on the south it lay all along contiguous to Ephraim, but on the north it abutted upon Asher and Issachar."

Megiddo stands out to me because of my interest in the study of prophecy and end times. It is there where the armies of Antichrist will gather for battle against God's people and Jesus will return as King of kings to defeat them and establish His kingdom.

Joshua 17:12 Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

Joshua 17:13 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

Once again we read that the people could not drive out the Canaanites in the land. We know that is not true because the LORD had said He would give them the victory if they followed Him in faith and obedience. Obviously, as noted by Guzik in the previous chapter regarding Ephraim, if they had the power to put them to tribute, they had the power to drive them out.

Joshua 17:14 ¶ And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?

Joshua 17:15 And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get

thee up to the wood *country*, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.

Joshua 17:16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, *both they who are* of Bethshean and her towns, and *they who are* of the valley of Jezreel.

Joshua 17:17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, *even* to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou *art* a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot *only*:

Joshua 17:18 But the mountain shall be thine; for it *is* a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, *and* though they *be* strong.

The tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim complained to Joshua that they were not given enough land considering their great numbers. Joshua basically told them that they were strong enough to take over the land of the Perizzites as well as the hill country. They made the excuse that the Canaanites in that area had chariots of iron and couldn't be defeated. Joshua stood firm and told them that they could overcome the Canaanites in spite of their iron chariots. Joshua knew that the LORD could give them the victory despite the odds against them; he basically told them that they needed to have faith in God.

Guzik makes a good observation: "How different is their attitude than Caleb's attitude (Joshua 14:11-12)! They want "easy land" given to them, instead of taking God's promises and going out and taking what God has given them."