

Joshua 18:1 ¶ And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

We are not told how the location was chosen, but it is noted that the people gathered together at Shiloh (15-20 miles north of Jerusalem) to set up the tabernacle since they had now been established as the ruling people of the land.

Though we are not told the process, we know it was of the LORD's choosing.

*Deuteronomy 12:10–11 “But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; Then **there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD....”***

Although the LORD eventually chose to establish Jerusalem as the place of His presence among the people...

2 Chronicles 6:4–6 “And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying, Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.”

...the tabernacle stayed in Shiloh for over 300 years—from this point at least until Samuel's lifetime. The New Bible Commentary notes, “Shiloh was in the centre of the promised land and its landscape includes a natural amphitheatre.”

Joshua 18:2 ¶ And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

Joshua 18:3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long *are* ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

Joshua 18:4 Give out from among you three men for *each* tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come *again* to me.

Joshua 18:5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

Joshua 18:6 Ye shall therefore describe the land *into* seven parts, and bring *the description* hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.

Joshua 18:7 But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which

Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

There were yet seven tribes to receive their inheritance. It seems that Joshua was holding the people accountable for not yet taking possession of the rest of the land. He appointed three men from each of these tribes to go out and survey the land and make a recommendation as to how to divide it. They were not to include the land already assigned to Judah or the sons of Joseph. These instructions imply the necessity of drawing of a map and providing a written description of the territory surveyed.

Once again they are minded that the Levites will not be included in the division of inheritances and that 2.5 tribes had already received their inheritances east of Jordan.

Joshua 18:8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh.

Joshua 18:9 And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came *again* to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.

Joshua 18:10 And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

The survey party set out to do as Joshua had commanded. He reminded them once again that he wanted them to walk through the land and describe it. They did so and made a written record to take back to Joshua. When they returned, Joshua cast lots before the LORD at Shiloh to determine the land inheritances for the remaining seven tribes.

Joshua 18:11 ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

Joshua 18:12 And their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Bethaven.

Joshua 18:13 And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, which *is* Bethel, southward; and the border descended to Atarothadar, near the hill that *lieth* on the south side of the nether Bethhoron.

Joshua 18:14 And the border was drawn *thence*, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that *lieth* before Bethhoron southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kirjathbaal, which *is* Kirjathjearim, a city of the children of Judah: this *was* the west quarter.

Joshua 18:15 And the south quarter *was* from the end of Kirjathjearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoah:

Joshua 18:16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lieth* before the valley of the son of Hinnom, *and* which *is* in the valley of the giants

on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to Enrogel,
Joshua 18:17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to Enshemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which *is* over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben,
Joshua 18:18 And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah:
Joshua 18:19 And the border passed along to the side of Bethhoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the north bay of the salt sea at the south end of Jordan: this *was* the south coast.
Joshua 18:20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This *was* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

The land inheritance of Benjamin was between Judah and Ephraim. The northern border of Benjamin was the southern border of Ephraim; the southern border of Benjamin was the northern border of Judah. Its eastern border was the Jordan River, and the tribe of Dan was on its western border.

Joshua 18:21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Bethhoglah, and the valley of Keziz,
Joshua 18:22 And Betharabah, and Zemaraim, and Bethel,
Joshua 18:23 And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah,
Joshua 18:24 And Chepharhaammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages:
Joshua 18:25 Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth,
Joshua 18:26 And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah,
Joshua 18:27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah,
Joshua 18:28 And Zelah, Eleph, and Jebusi, which *is* Jerusalem, Gibeath, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This *is* the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

- Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, is buried near Bethel (v22).
- Bethel was also one of two places that Jeroboam established a sanctuary for the northern tribes when the kingdom divided.
- Deborah judged Israel from a place designated as between Ramah (v25) and Bethel.