

Joshua 13:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri,

Analysis

God identifies remaining unconquered territory: 'all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri.' Despite Israel's victories, significant territories remain unconquered. The Philistines along the Mediterranean coast would remain Israel's persistent opponents throughout Judges and into the monarchy. Geshur (northeastern region) also remained independent. This incomplete conquest has theological significance: God promised the land but left enemies to test Israel (Judges 2:21-23, 3:1-4). The passage teaches that spiritual inheritance often comes gradually, requiring ongoing faithfulness. While positionally, believers possess 'every spiritual blessing' (Ephesians 1:3), experientially we must 'fight the good fight of faith' (1 Timothy 6:12) to lay hold of what's ours in Christ. Israel's incomplete conquest foreshadows the church's ongoing spiritual warfare—victory is assured, but battles remain.

Historical Context

The Philistines occupied the coastal plain (later called Philistia) in five major cities: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath. They were formidable opponents with iron technology and military sophistication. Their presence prevented Israel from controlling the lucrative coastal trade routes and Mediterranean ports. Geshur was an Aramean kingdom northeast of the Sea of Galilee. These unconquered territories would trouble Israel throughout their history. The Philistine threat intensified during the Judges period, requiring Samson's exploits and later prompting Israel's request for a king (1 Samuel 8:20). David finally subdued them,

though they revived later. Archaeological evidence confirms Philistine presence and culture in coastal cities during this period. The incomplete conquest wasn't military failure but divine pedagogy—God used remaining enemies to test and train each generation in faithfulness and dependence on Him (Judges 3:1-2).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does incomplete conquest (remaining enemies) serve God's purposes in testing and training His people?
2. What 'remaining enemies' in your spiritual life require ongoing vigilance and warfare?
3. How do you balance confidence in positional victory (in Christ) with the reality of ongoing spiritual battles?

Interlinear Text

אֵת	זֶה	אֵת	בָּאֵת	בְּנֵשָׁא	רַת	כָּל	גָּלִיל	וְתַ	הַפְּלִשְׁתִּים
H2063	This is the land	H776	that yet remaineth	H7604		H3605	all the borders	H1552	of the Philistines

הַגְּשֻׁרִים
and all Geshuri

H1651

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 13:11 (Parallel theme): And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah;

Joel 3:4 (Parallel theme): Yea, and what have ye to do with me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and all the coasts of Palestine? will ye render me a recompence? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompence upon your own head;

1 Samuel 27:8 (Parallel theme): And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

Judges 3:1 (Parallel theme): Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org