

Joshua 13:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

Analysis

Were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families—Machir (מַכִּיר) was Manasseh's son, and Gilead was Machir's son (Numbers 26:29). This verse emphasizes that only half of Machir's descendants settled east of Jordan; the other half later received inheritance west of Jordan. The Machirites became renowned warriors: "Machir came down from Machir" in Judges 5:14 celebrates their military prowess, and 1 Chronicles 7:14-19 details their genealogy.

The phrase "**by their families**" (לְמִשְׁפְּחוֹתָם, l'mishpechotam) again emphasizes structured, equitable distribution. The division of Machir's descendants between Transjordan and Canaan proper created family ties spanning both sides of the Jordan, potentially serving as bridge between separated tribes. Yet it also meant families divided between territories, foreshadowing how human choices create complications even within God's overall provision. This verse completes the Transjordan allocation, documenting that Moses fulfilled his promise to give these tribes their requested inheritance before Israel's main conquest began.

Historical Context

Machir's descendants became one of the most militarily significant clans in Israel. Their territory in Bashan and Gilead required constant defense against Aramean and later Assyrian pressures. First Chronicles 5:18-22 records their victories over

Hagrites and other peoples. The family's division between Transjordan and Cisjordan territories created both opportunity (extensive holdings, diverse economic base) and challenge (maintaining unity across geographical separation).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the division of Machir's descendants between two territories illustrate the complexity that human choices introduce into divine blessing?
2. What does the military reputation of the Machirites suggest about how frontier life develops strength and courage?
3. How might families divided between territories serve as bridge-builders in maintaining unity, and what does this suggest for Christians in different contexts today?

Interlinear Text

וְלִשְׁבֶּט	הַלֵּוִי	לֹא	נָתַן	מֹשֶׁה	נַחֲלָתָם	יְהוָה
But unto the tribe	of Levi	^{H3808}	^{H5414} gave	^{H4872} Moses	^{H5159} not any inheritance	^{H3068} the LORD
^{H7626}	^{H3878}					
אֱלֹהֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל	הוּא	נַחֲלָתָם	כַּאֲשֶׁר	דָּבַר	לָהֶם:
God	of Israel	^{H1931}	^{H5159} not any inheritance	^{H834}	^{H1696} as he said	^{H0}
^{H430}	^{H3478}					

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 18:7 (References Lord): 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.

Joshua 13:14 (References God): Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

Deuteronomy 10:9 (References God): Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

Numbers 18:20 (References Lord): And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.