

Joshua 17:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.

Analysis

And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Beth-shean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns—Despite the boundaries described above, Manasseh held certain cities within the territories nominally assigned to Issachar and Asher. Beth-shean (Beit She'an, בֵּית שֶׁאֲן, "house of security") was a major Canaanite fortress city controlling the eastern Jezreel Valley. Ibleam guarded the southern approaches to the valley. The phrase *uvnoteha* (וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ, "and her towns" or "her daughters") refers to satellite villages dependent on the main city.

And the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries—The list continues with five more strategic cities: Dor (Mediterranean port), En-dor ("spring of Dor"), Taanach and Megiddo (both commanding the Jezreel Valley). The phrase *shelosheth hanefet* (שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַנֶּפֶת, "three countries" or "three heights") likely refers to geographical districts or ridge systems. The repetition of "inhabitants" (Hebrew *yoshvei*, יוֹשְׁבֵי) foreshadows verse 12's admission that Manasseh failed to conquer these cities—Canaanites remained in occupation.

Historical Context

These cities were among Canaan's most formidable strongholds. Beth-shean has been extensively excavated, revealing massive fortifications and Egyptian presence during the Late Bronze Age. Archaeological evidence shows it remained a Canaanite/Philistine city until David's reign (the Philistines fastened Saul's body to Beth-shean's walls, 1 Samuel 31:10-12). Megiddo, with 20+ occupation layers, was one of antiquity's most important cities, controlling the critical pass through the Carmel range. Excavations reveal Solomon later fortified it as a chariot city (1 Kings 9:15). Taanach appears in Egyptian records and the Amarna Letters. Dor was a major seaport. That Manasseh received these cities but failed to conquer them (v. 12) created ongoing problems, vindicating God's earlier warning that incomplete conquest would prove a snare (Judges 2:1-3).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the assignment of strategic cities to Manasseh illustrate that God gives His people opportunities for significant kingdom impact, though we may not always fully appropriate what He offers?
2. What does the detailed naming of unconquered cities teach about the importance of honestly acknowledging our failures and incomplete obedience?
3. How might God be calling you to 'conquer' areas of influence or responsibility He has assigned to you but which you have not yet fully possessed?

Interlinear Text

וְיָהּ י	לְמַנַּשֶּׁה	בְּיִשָּׁשַׁכַּר	וּבְאָשֶׁר	בֵּית	שֶׁאֵל
H1961	And Manasseh	had in Issachar	and in Asher	H0	Bethshean
	H4519	H3485	H836		H1052
וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	וִיבְלֵאִם	וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	וְאֵת	וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם	דֹּר
and her towns	and Ibleam	and her towns	H853	and the inhabitants	of Dor
H1323	H2991	H1323		H3427	H1756
וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם	עֵין	דֹּר	וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	
and her towns	and the inhabitants	H0	of Endor	and her towns	
H1323	H3427		H5874	H1323	
וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם	תַּעֲנַח	וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם	מְגִדּוֹ	
and the inhabitants	of Taanach	and her towns	and the inhabitants	of Megiddo	
H3427	H8590	H1323	H3427	H4023	
וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ	שְׁלֹשָׁה	הַנָּפֹת:			
and her towns	even three	countries			
H1323	H7969	H5316			

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 7:29 (Parallel theme): And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.

Joshua 12:23 (Parallel theme): The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

2 Kings 9:27 (Parallel theme): But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.

Judges 1:27 (Parallel theme): Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor

and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

Judges 5:19 (Parallel theme): The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.

Psalms 83:10 (Parallel theme): Which perished at En-dor: they became as dung for the earth.

Joshua 11:2 (Parallel theme): And to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west,

1 Kings 9:15 (Parallel theme): And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer.

1 Samuel 31:10 (Parallel theme): And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

1 Samuel 28:7 (Parallel theme): Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.