

Joshua 18:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance—Levi's 'portion' is God Himself (Numbers 18:20). The Hebrew kehunnat YHWH nachalatam (מִתְּנִתְּנָה נָחֲלָת יְהָוָה) literally reads 'the priesthood of Yahweh [is] their inheritance.' This paradox: they possess nothing geographically yet possess everything spiritually.

Gad, Reuben, and half-Manasseh already received Transjordan territory under Moses (Numbers 32). This verse clarifies the eastern tribes' exclusion from the western land division while affirming Levi's unique calling. Ministers' true reward is serving God, not earthly wealth (1 Corinthians 9:13-14).

Historical Context

Levites received 48 cities scattered throughout Israel (Joshua 21) but no contiguous tribal territory. Their dispersion enabled nationwide priestly ministry. The eastern tribes' settlement across the Jordan preceded Joshua's leadership, fulfilling Moses' allocation.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for God Himself to be your inheritance rather than material possessions?
2. How does the Levitical model challenge or affirm vocational ministry today?

Interlinear Text

אֵין	לֹא	לְקַנְתָּם	לְלִיּוֹם	בְּקָרְבָּן	מִ	כִּי	תִּהְבֹּא	תְּ
H3588	H369	have no part	But the Levites	among	H3588	you for the priesthood		
	H2506		H3881	H7130			H3550	
וְהַ	בְּ	תְּ	בְּ	תְּ	בְּ	תְּ	בְּ	תְּ
יְהֹוָה:	בְּ	מִתְּלָמָת	מִתְּלָמָת	וְרָאוּבֵן	וְרָאוּבֵן	וְרָאוּבֵן	וְרָאוּבֵן	וְרָאוּבֵן
of the LORD	is their inheritance	and Gad	and Gad	and Reuben	and Reuben	and half	the tribe	
H3068	H5159	H1410	H7205	H2677	H7626			
מִזְרָח	סָהָר	לְרִידָן	מֵעַד בָּרָן	מִתְּלָמָת	לְקַנְתָּם	וְהַ	מִזְרָח	סָהָר
of Manasseh	have received	Jordan	beyond	is their inheritance	is their inheritance	the servant	of the LORD	on the east
H4519	H3947	H3383	H5676	H5159		H5650	H3068	H4217
אָשֶׁר	לְקַנְתָּם	מִשְׁמָרָה	מִשְׁמָרָה	הַ	בְּ	בְּ	יְהֹוָה:	
gave	H0	which Moses	the servant	the servant	the servant	the servant	of the LORD	
H834	H5414	H4872	H5650					

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 13:33 (References Lord): But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

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.

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