

Joshua 18:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

The men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book—The obedience is immediate and thorough. **Described it by cities** (be'arim, בְּעָרִים) means they catalogued urban centers—strategic strongholds defining regions. **In a book** (sefer, סֵפֶר) indicates a formal written record, likely a scroll.

This 'book' becomes Israel's first land registry, a legal document defining inheritance boundaries. Scripture values written records—from Moses' law to John's Revelation. God works through documentation and order, not chaos. Their return **to Joshua to the host at Shiloh** completes their mission faithfully.

Historical Context

Ancient land surveys typically described boundaries by cities and natural landmarks. This 'book' may have resembled Mesopotamian boundary stones or Egyptian land records. Creating such a document required literacy and cartographic skill rare in that era.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What spiritual insights or experiences should you document for yourself and others?
2. How does faithful completion of assigned tasks demonstrate covenant obedience?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹכֵי	הָאֲנָשִׁים	וַעֲבָרוּ	בְּאֶרֶץ	וַיִּכְתֹּב וְהָ	לְעָרֵי יָם
H1980	And the men	and passed through	the land	and described	it by cities
	H582	H5674	H776	H3789	H5892
לְשִׁבְעָה	חֵלְקֵי יָם	עַל	סֵפֶר	וַיָּבֹאוּ	אֶל
into seven	parts	H5921	in a book	and came	H413
H7651	H2506		H5612	H935	
					אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
					again to Joshua
					H3091
הַמִּצְחָה	שִׁלֹּה:				
to the host	at Shiloh				
H4264	H7887				

Additional Cross-References

Acts 13:19 (Parallel theme): And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.