



# THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

**Group Bible Study**

**Chapters 20-24**

# Background

## ■ Key Historical Perspective

- In Genesis, Israel was born as a nation in the call and promises of God to Abraham (Election of the nation).
- In Exodus, the nation was delivered out of bondage in Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, and was given God's Holy Law (Redemption of the nation).
- In Leviticus, the nation was taught how to worship in view of God's holiness (Sanctification of the nation).

# Background

## ■ Key Historical Perspective

- In **Numbers**, they were tested and numbered as a nation (Direction and Wandering of the nation).
- In **Deuteronomy**, the law was reviewed and reiterated and closed with the assurance that Israel would possess the land (Instruction of the nation).
- In **Joshua**, the nation crossed over Jordan and took possession of the land (Possession by the nation). If Moses is the symbol of deliverance, then Joshua is the symbol of victory. Joshua teaches us that faith “is the victory that overcomes the world” (1 John 5:4).

# Background

## ■ Authorship and Date

- **Traditional View**: Jewish tradition holds that Joshua, Eleazar, the priest and Phinehas, his son.
  - Usage of “we” and “us” in 5:1,6
  - Evidence of writing shortly, after some events were recorded in the book (6:25)
  - Statements that Joshua did some of the writing (8:32 and 24:26)
  - Use of “he” in 15:13-17 and 24:29-31
- **Critical View**: Scholars believe the book was not written until the end of the kings of Israel and the House of Judah of in Babylonian captivity.
  - The Deuteronomist wrote Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel and I & II Kings were written in exile to demonstrate that Israel deserved the captivity (sin).

# Background

## Victorious Conquest 1-12



# Background

## Tribal Inheritances 13–22

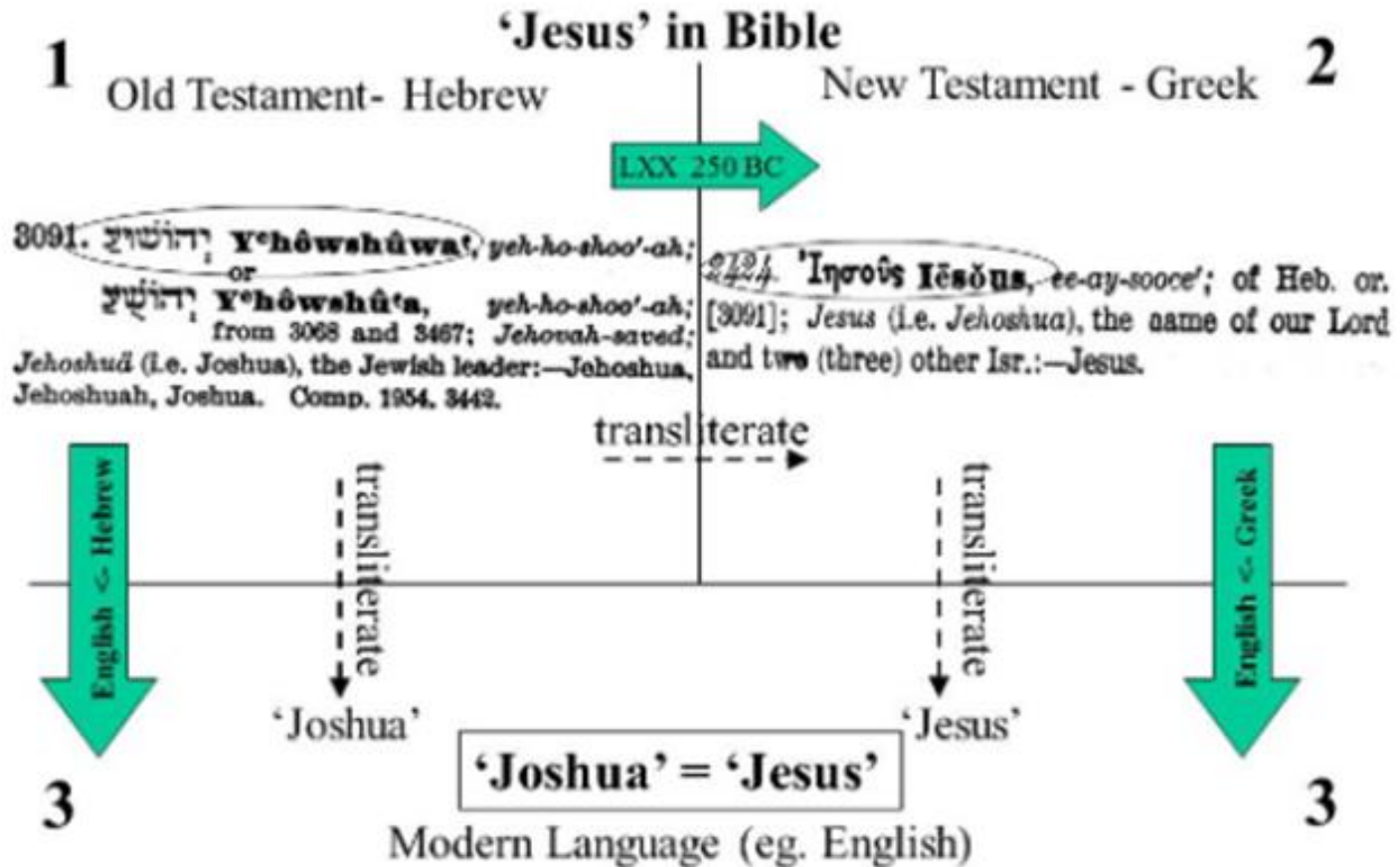


# Background

## Covenant Loyalty 23–24



# Background



*'Joshua' = 'Jesus'. Both come from the Hebrew name 'Yhowshuwa'*



# Joshua 20

## Outline of Contents

### . 20

- o Cities of refuge (1-9)

### Joshua 20:3

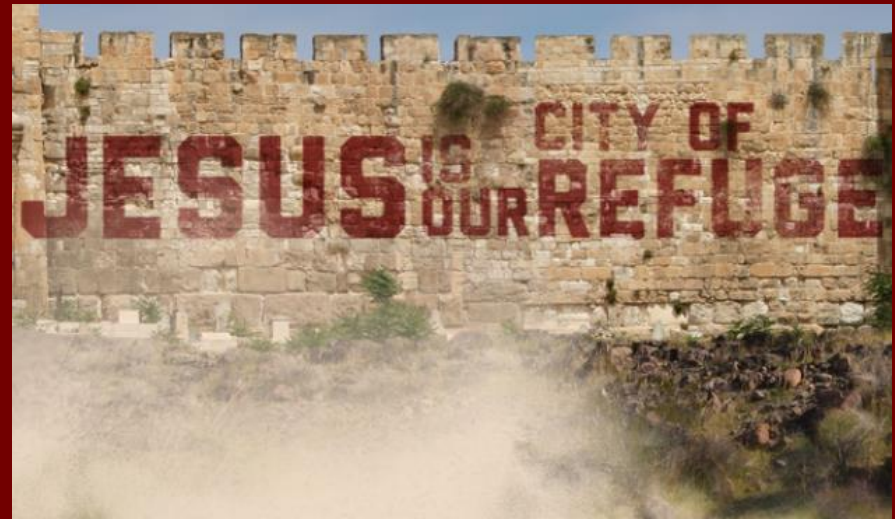
King James Version

That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

### Joshua 20:9

King James Version

These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.



# Joshua 20

## ■ System of Government

- System of regional courts to deal with capital offenses having to do to manslaughter
- Removal of local jurisdiction, as a safeguard from miscarriage of justice and possible retribution by family members (vigilantism).
- Cities of refuge were chosen among the cities assigned to the Levites, where ideally the law of God would be especially known and honored.

# Joshua 20

## ■ System of Government

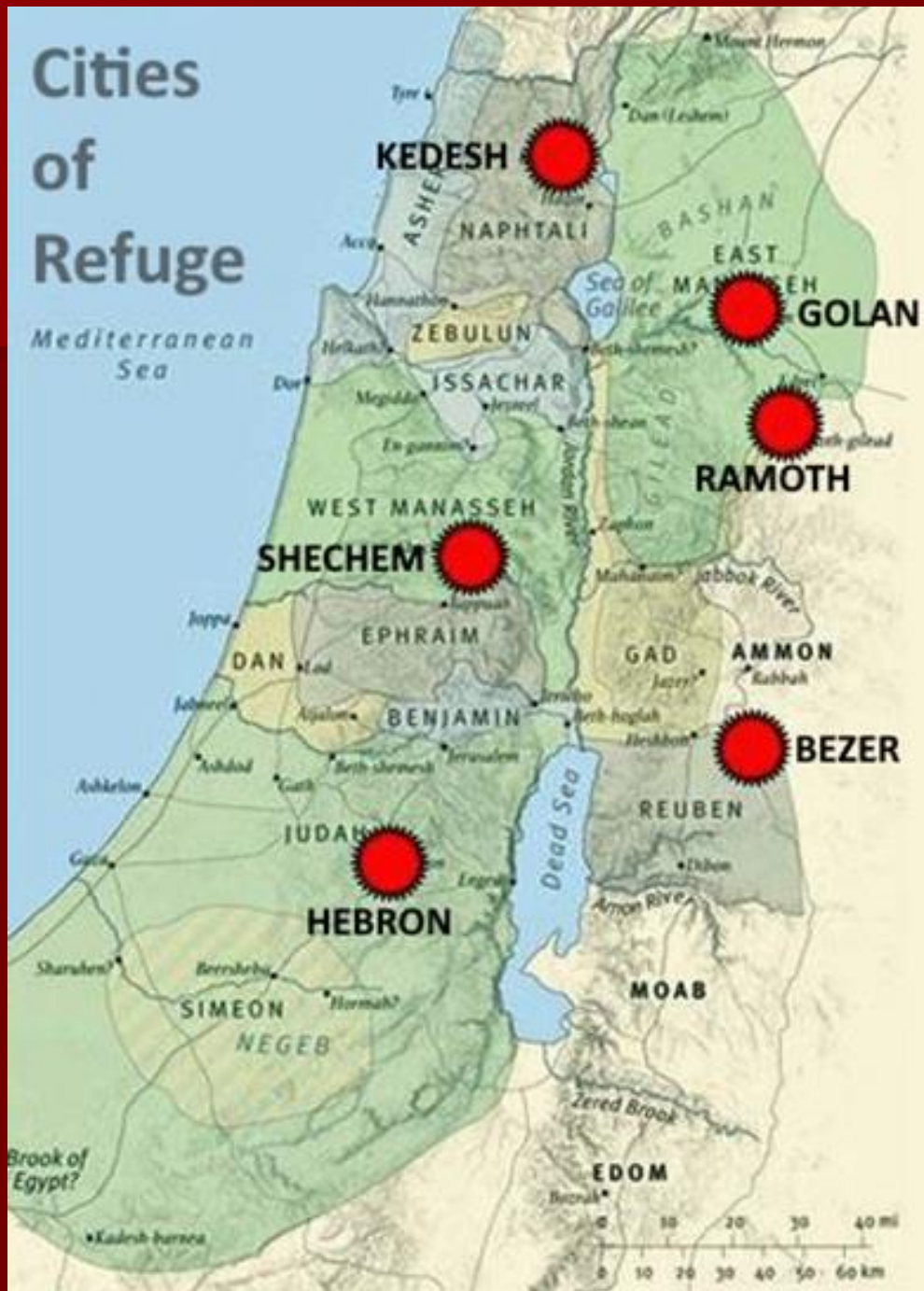
- **“...from the avenger of blood.”** – Also translated **“close relative”** (Ruth 3:9) or **“Redeemer”** (Psalm 19:14). The closest relative obligation of ensuring justice (Leviticus 24:17; Numbers 35:16-18).
- **“gate of the city”** and **“before the congregation”** – Traditional location of trials, where the elders held court (Ruth 4:1). / The congregation’s function appears to be a witness of the fairness of judgment.

# Joshua 20

## ■ System of Government

- **“...sons of Israel and for the stranger”** – Evidence of the equal protection granted to the foreigners living in Israel (Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 10:18-19)
- **“...death of the one who is the high priest...”** – Speculated to be a possible foreshadow of an atoning effect or a kind of amnesty was achieved by the high priest’s death.

# Cities of Refuge



**Three Cities of Refuge On Each Side of the Jordan River**

# Joshua 20

City and Meaning	Spiritual Application
<b>Kedesh</b> 'Sanctuary'	<p>Kedesh is the sanctuary, the refuge and place of rest. Rest, safe from fear, guilt, punishment, daily worry and the burden of continually not measuring up. The Old Testament speaks of God as a refuge and rest and this was offered to us by the Lord in the New Testament:</p> <p><i>He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." (Psa 91:1-2)</i></p> <p><i>Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Mat 11:28-30)</i></p>
<b>Golan</b> 'Rejoicing'	<p>In the city of Golan there is joy. Who doesn't want joy? Often the troubles of this life get us down. But we have joy in the Lord and should always remember what is to come for it is joy overwhelming!</p> <p><i>You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psa 16:11)</i></p> <p><i>Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, (Jud 1:24)</i></p>
<b>Ramoth</b> 'Heights, Uplifted'	<p>In Ramoth we find that those who were guilty and low, are raised and lifted up in the Lord. Like Mephibosheth of old, even spiritual cripples can be invited up to feed and dine with the King! He has lifted up to heights unimagined (even if we don't see it!)</p> <p><i>He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (Psa 40:2)</i></p> <p><i>And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:6-7)</i></p>

# Joshua 20

City and Meaning	Spiritual Application
<b>Shechem</b> 'Shoulder'	<p>In Shechem we find the strength of the Lord and that He is able to carry a lot on His shoulders! Both people and the whole world if needed. He is caring enough to go out and find one lost sheep and put it on His shoulder and carry it home. And strong enough to rule the entire world in the coming kingdom where the whole government will be upon His shoulders.</p> <p><i>And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. (Luk 15:5-7)</i></p> <p><i>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6)</i></p>
<b>Bezer</b> 'Fortress (defence)'	<p>In Bezer we find that Christ is the strongest of all fortresses. No enemy can thwart Him or ultimately defeat those that are His. Believers are hidden 'in Christ' - they are in the most impenetrable fortress! It is the safest place to be. In fact, it is the only safe place to be.</p> <p><i>The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. (Psa 18:2)</i></p>
<b>Hebron</b> 'Communion, fellowship, friendship'	<p>In Hebron, the city of refuge, we find fellowship and even friendship... with God! Crazy thought! And not only that, we find that there are a whole lot of others dwelling in that city that have seen their guilt and fled for forgiveness and safety as well. We find fellowship and friendship with them too!</p> <p><i>May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2Co 13:14)</i></p> <p><i>They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Act 2:42)</i></p>

# Joshua 21

## Outline of Contents

### • 21

- Cities for the Levites (1-42)
  - For Aaron's descendants (9-19)
  - For the rest of the Kohathites (20-26)
  - For the Gershonites (27-33)
  - For the Merarites (34-40)
- God's promises fulfilled (43-45)



Not one of all the  
Lord's good promises  
to Israel failed;  
every one was fulfilled.  
Joshua 21:45

Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give  
to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they

settled there.

Joshua 21:43

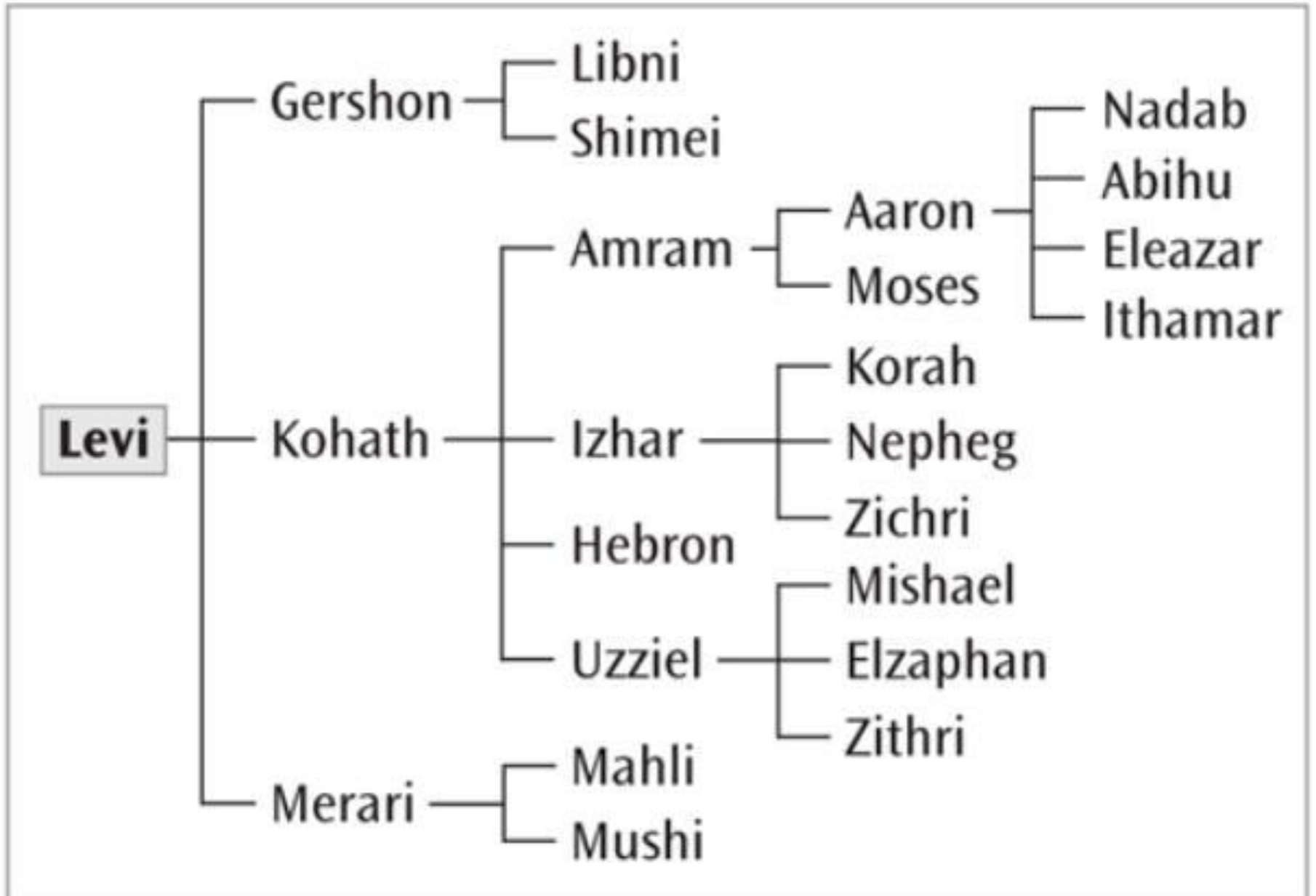
## Joshua 21:44

King James Version

And the LORD gave them rest round about,  
according to all that he sware unto their  
fathers: and there stood not a man of all  
their enemies before them; the LORD  
delivered all their enemies into their hand.



## Descendants of Levi



# Towns for the Levites

*Joshua 21*

The Levites do not inherit a portion of the land of Israel; instead they receive cities throughout the other tribes' portions

Towns Assigned ●

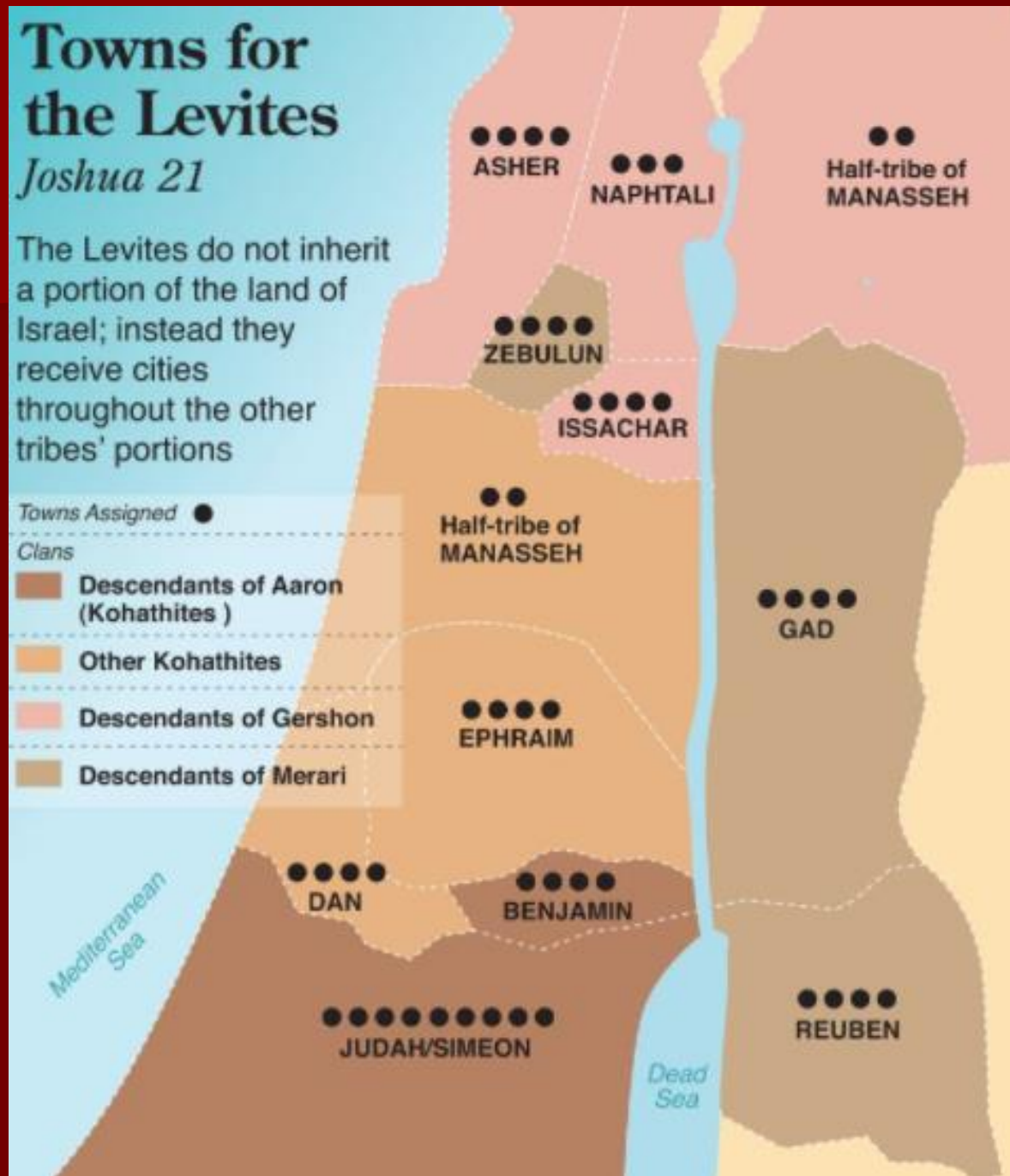
Clans

Descendants of Aaron (Kohathites)

Other Kohathites

Descendants of Gershon

Descendants of Merari



# The Distribution of Levitical cities

Joshua 20-21

Mediterranean Sea  
(Great Sea)

(21:9-19) 13 KEBIATHITE CITIES  
(21:20-26) 10 KEBIATHITE CITIES (OTHER)  
(21:27-33) 13 GERSONITE CITIES  
(21:34-40) 12 MERARITE CITIES  

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A TOTAL OF 48 LEVITICAL CITIES.

- CITIES OF REFUGE
  - OTHER LEVITICAL CITIES
- EXACT LOCATION OF MANY NOT KNOWN

"I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel" (Genesis 49:7).



# GROUP DISCUSSION



# Joshua 22

## Outline of Contents

### • 22

- Eastern tribes return home (1-8)
- Altar built at the Jordan (9-12)
- Meaning of the altar explained (13-29)
- Conflict settled (30-34)

## Joshua 22:5

King James Version

But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.



Joshua 22:1-6

# The Offensive Altar

# Joshua 22

## ■ The Problem

- **Israelite tribes hear of a large alter being built by the 2 ½ tribes by the Jordan River, as they were returning to their land.**
- **Israelite tribes experienced anxiety about apostasy and it led to a hasty conclusion. They thought it had been set up as a rival to the true alter at Shiloh.**
- **Israelites were ready to apply Deuteronomy 13:12-15.**

# Joshua 22

## ■ The Resolution

- Phinehas and a delegation of leaders asked questions and sought understanding.
- Love for brotherhood
- Focus is on God
- Focus is on future generations
- Be obedient to God
- Willing to take a stand for what is right

# GROUP DISCUSSION





# Joshua 23 -24

## Outline of Contents

- **23**
  - Joshua's farewell to Israel's leaders (1-16)
    - None of God's words failed (14)
- **24**
  - Joshua reviews Israel's history (1-13)
  - Exhortation to serve God (14-24)
    - "As for me and my household, we will serve God" (15)
  - Joshua's covenant with Israel (25-28)
  - Joshua's death and burial (29-31)
  - Joseph's bones buried at Shechem (32)
  - Eleazar's death and burial (33)

After A Long Time Had Passed And The Lord Had Given Israel Rest From All Their Enemies Around Them, Joshua, By Then Old And Well Advanced In Years,

[Joshua 23-1](#)

**FAITH**

*To Serve*

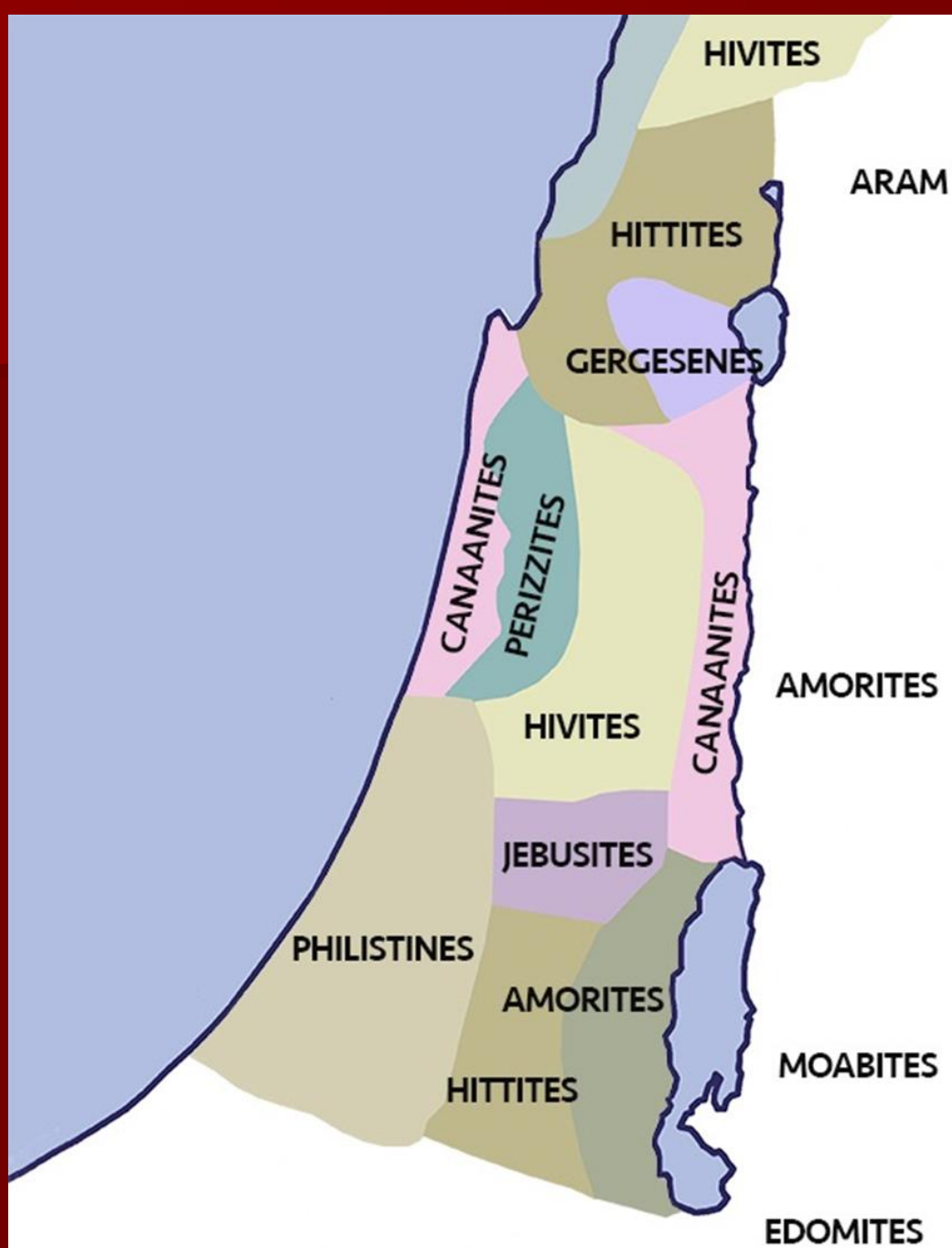
**JOSHUA 23-24**

“Be Very Strong; Be Careful To Obey All That Is Written In The Book Of The Law Of Moses, Without Turning Aside To The Right Or To The Left.

[Joshua 23-6](#)

# CANAAN

PRIOR TO JOSHUA





Joshua 1-13:  
exploring and conquering  
the Promised Land

Joshua 14-22:  
division of the land among  
the Twelve Tribes

Joshua 23-24:  
Joshua's farewell speech.

# Joshua 23-24

## Life Lessons from Joshua

- Faithfulness is a requirement for service.
- Serving others prepares you to lead others.
- Victory occurs when you let God fight your battles.
- Guidance from God for daily living comes from His Word, the Bible.
- At times you must make a stand for your beliefs.
- Living for God requires ongoing obedience.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

