

JOSHUA

CHAPTER 14

The Inheritance West of the Jordan

These are the inheritances that the people of Israel received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel gave them to inherit. 2 Their inheritance was by lot, just as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. 3 For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. 4 For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. And no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands for their livestock and their substance. 5 The people of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

14:1–15 A short introductory chapter for the following section (chs. 15–19), with a special note on the Lord's faithfulness to Caleb. (CSB)

14:1 *Eleazar the priest.* Son of Aaron, Eleazar as high priest was the highest official over the casting of the lots. The Urim and Thummim may have been used. (CSB)

Third of Aaron's sons; he survived and remained faithful throughout the wilderness wanderings. (TLSB)

heads of the fathers' houses. Each tribe had one representative in the process—their chief or most prominent member. (TLSB)

14:2 *by lot.* Method to determine God's will in the distribution of lands; exact procedure is not clearly known, but the process required faith that God would indeed guide the choice, as well as a willingness to abide by the choice as being from God. Such a method would exclude favoritism. (TLSB)

14:4 *Manasseh and Ephraim.* Sons of Joseph. Since Jacob had adopted them as his own sons (Ge 48:5), they constituted two separate tribes. This made possible the 12-part nation, with the Levites serving as a nonpolitical tribe. (CSB)

Right of firstborn included a double portion; as Joseph had been given that right, each of his two sons received one portion. *no portion ... Levites.* Because Levi inherited the sacrifices of the tabernacle, he received no major portion of the land. (TLSB)

cities to dwell in, with their pasturelands. Agricultural communities frequently had common and private pasturelands surrounding the community. The Levites were assigned to live in such communities, allowing them to keep animals for their own needs. (TLSB)

14:1–5 Final preparations and explanatory remarks are given before the land is apportioned to the remaining tribes. All the tribes have a place in the Promised Land! God does not fail to bless even one member of His people in Christ. • O Lord, though I may not always have tangible rewards as a member of Your people, still I give thanks for the greater blessings, which the world cannot understand: the death and resurrection of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (TLSB)

Caleb's Request and Inheritance

6 Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. **7** I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. **8** But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God. **9** And Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.’ **10** And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. **11** I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. **12** So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.” **13** Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. **14** Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. **15** Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

14:6 *what the LORD said.* Caleb now recalls the promise from the Lord 38 years earlier at Kadesh Barnea when he brought back a good report of the land (Nu 13:30; 14:6–9; Dt 1:34–36). (CSB)

14:7 *spy.* Cf Nu 13:1–16. (TLSB)

as it was in my heart. Caleb’s positive report reflected the confidence that God would provide what was needed to conquer the land. (TLSB)

14:8 *melt.* Majority report of the spies provoked fear in the hearts of the people (Nu 14:1–4). (CSB)

14:9 *forever.* Added to the promise of Nu 14:24; Dt 1:36. Hbr phrase can mean simply “for a very long time” instead of “into eternity.” The promise would be conditioned on Caleb’s descendants continuing in the Lord’s ways. (CSB)

14:10 *forty-five years.* It had been 38 years since the spying episode and 7 years since entering the land. (TLSB)

14:11 *still as strong.* Considering the description of Moses at his death at age 120 (Dt 34:7) and that Joshua lived to age 110 (24:29), this is no exaggeration. (TLSB)

strength. Caleb counts on God being his strength in battle. (TLSB)

14:12 *this hill country.* Hebron is situated high in the Judahite hill country, about 25 miles south of Jerusalem. (CSB)

the LORD will be with me. Further example of Caleb following wholly after God (v 9), counting on His promise to help, and taking up the challenge to possess the remaining land (13:6). (TLSB)

14:13 *Joshua blessed him.* Perhaps along the lines of Ru 2:4 and Nu 6:22–27. (TLSB)

14:15 *Kiriath Arba.* Means “the town of Arba” and was named for Arba, the father of the Anakites (15:13; 21:11). It can also mean “the town of four.” Hebron means “union.” (CSB)

the land had rest from war. Since the Judahites and Caleb approached Joshua concerning their territory while he was still headquartered at Gilgal, it may be that they did so shortly before the wars fought under Joshua were ended (see 11:23). (CSB)

No further efforts take place to secure more land until after the land distribution is complete. There are no attacks on the people of Israel as they settle into their new possession. (TLSB)

14:6–15 The first allotment begins with Caleb. His story reminds us of God’s judgment on faithless Israel (the conquest was delayed) and God’s faithfulness to the faithful (His promises are completed to Caleb). Throughout, Caleb shows that the Lord is the strength of the faithful. • Lord, thank You for all that You have promised me. Keep me faithful and counting on Your help until I am able to enjoy the very last portion of Your promises, in Jesus Christ. Amen. (TLSB)