

Joshua 21

Verses 1 - 3

Then the heads of fathers' *households* of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of fathers' *households* of the tribes of the sons of Israel. ² And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, "The Lord commanded through Moses to give us cities to live in, with their pasture lands for our cattle." ³ So the sons of Israel gave the Levites from their inheritance these cities with their pasture lands, in accordance with the command of the Lord.

Then the heads of fathers' *households* of the Levites said, The Lord commanded through Moses to give us cities to live in, with their pasture lands for our cattle.

The Levites as a tribe were not given a territory like the other tribes but they were given cities and pasture lands throughout Israel (in all 12 tribes).

Verses 4 - 5

⁴ Then the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites. And to the sons of Aaron the priest, who were of the Levites, thirteen cities were *given* by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of the Simeonites, and from the tribe of Benjamin. ⁵ And to the rest of the sons of Kohath ten cities *were given* by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.

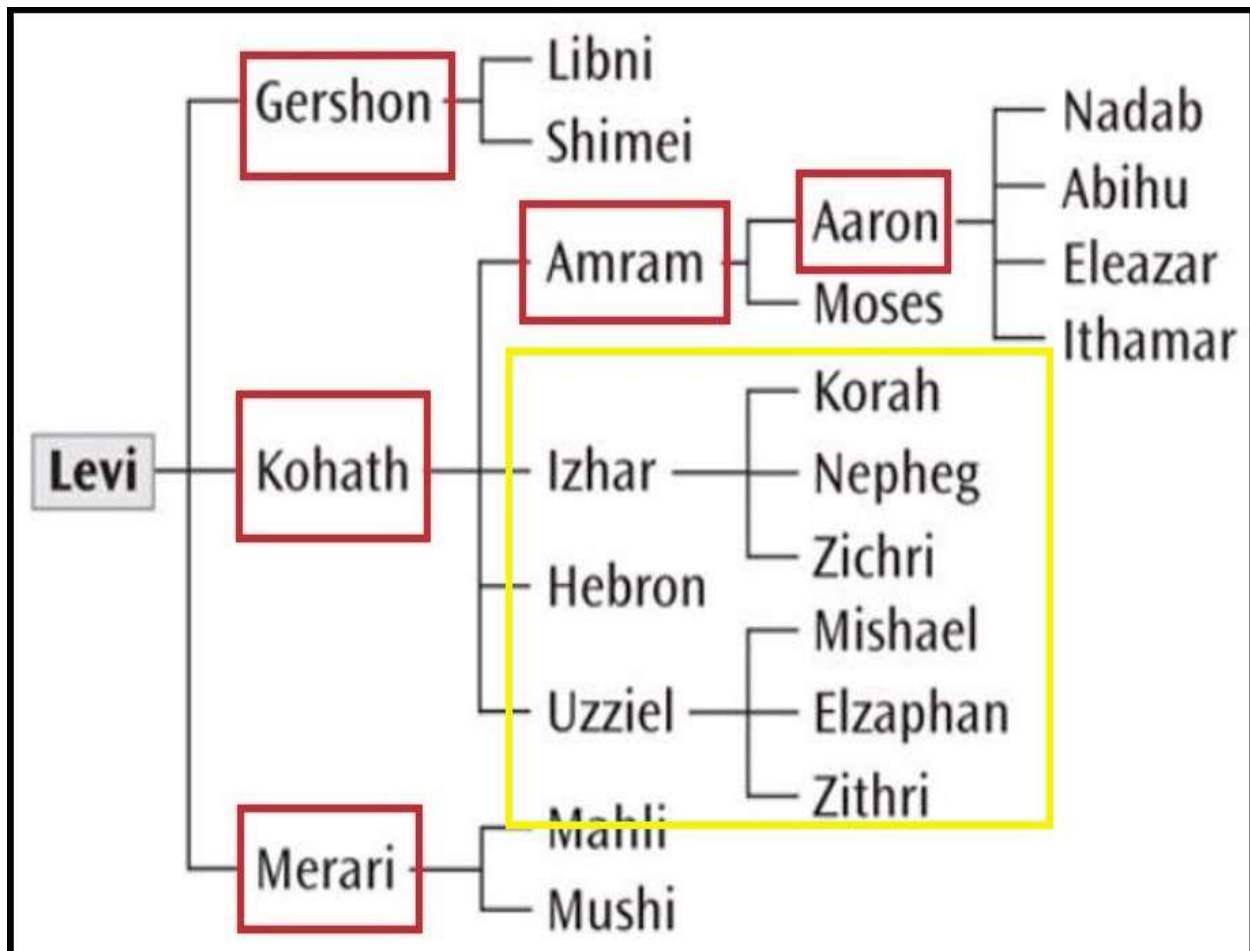
⁴ Then the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites

The Levites were made up of 3 clans, Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

The Kohathites consisted of two groups:

1. The sons of Aaron the priest.....The priestly line.
2. The rest of the sons of Kohath.....They were not priests.

See chart 2105



Kohath had 4 boys.

Aram became the father of Aaron the father of the priestly line.

Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel were not priests but they and their sons carried the most holy things of the Tabernacle (Ark, lampstand, table of showbread, etc.).

And to the sons of Aaron the priest, who were of the Levites, thirteen cities were *given* by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of the Simeonites, and from the tribe of Benjamin.

⁵ And to the rest of the sons of Kohath ten cities were *given* by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh.

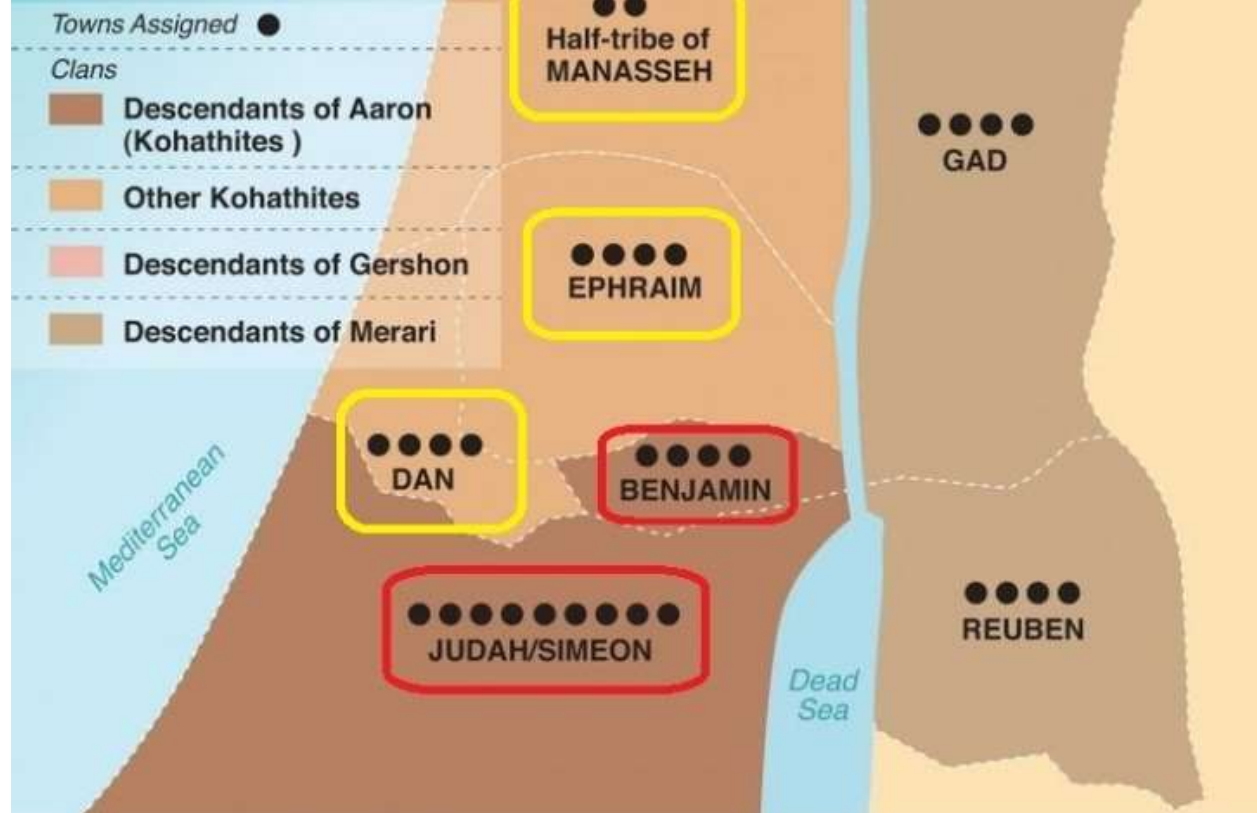
See chart 2110

The Priests are marked in red and the non-priests in yellow.

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



The Tabernacle was at Shiloh in the tribe of Ephraim for over 300 years.

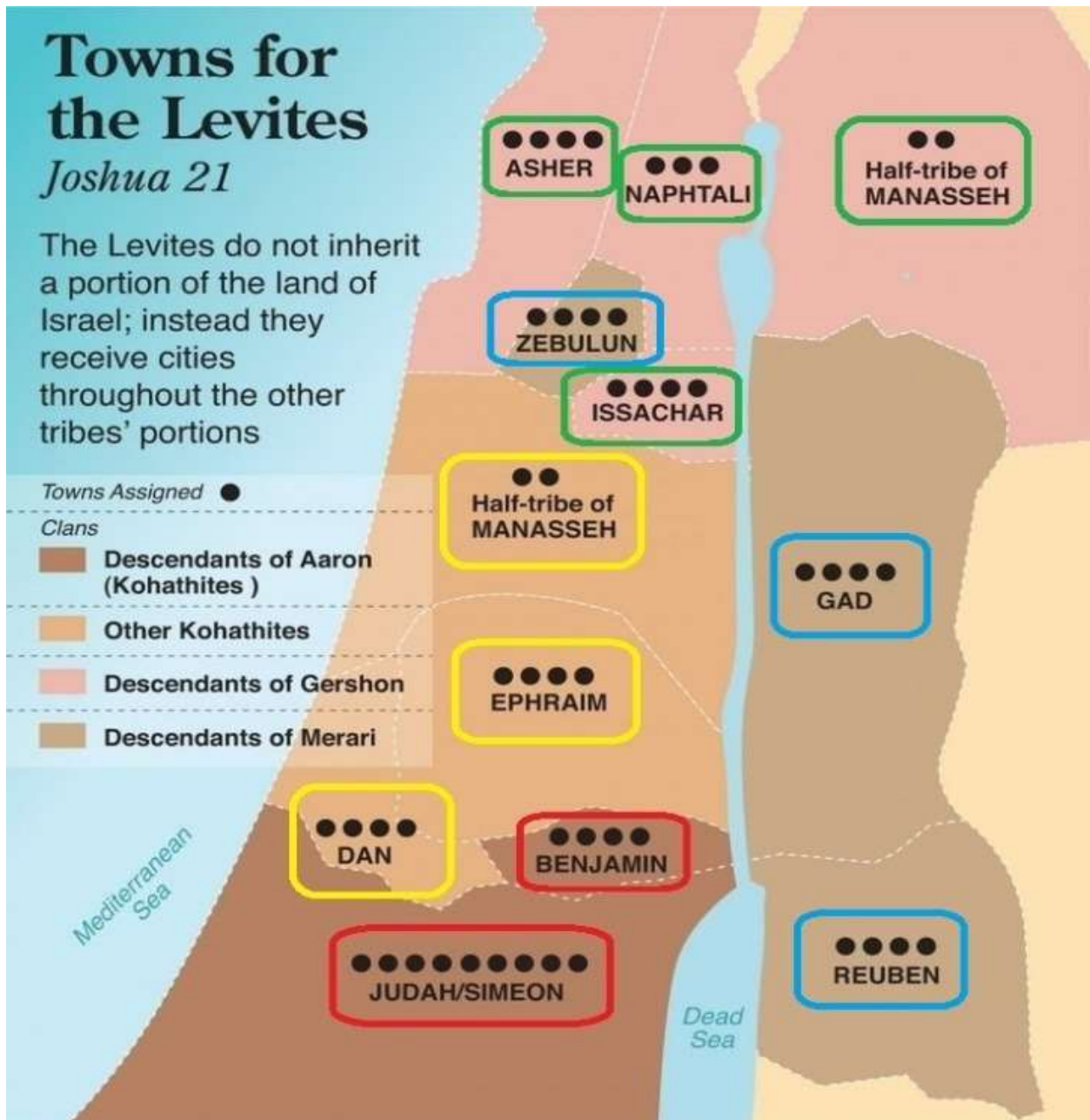
When the Temple was built by Solomon at Jerusalem it was in the tribe of Benjamin but near the border of Benjamin and Judah.

Amazing how the Kohath's just happened to be given this land. ☺

Verses 6 - 8

⁶ And to the sons of Gershon thirteen cities *were given* by lot from the families of the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁷ To the sons of Merari according to their families twelve cities *were given* from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. ⁸ Now the sons of Israel gave by lot to the Levites these cities with their pasture lands, as the Lord had commanded through Moses.

See chart 2115



The sons of Gershon are marked in green and the sons of Merari are marked in blue.

The areas were already marked by the maker of this map but hopefully the colored rectangles helped in accentuating the matter.

Verses 9 - 19

⁹ They gave these cities which are mentioned *here* by name from the tribe of the sons of Judah and from the tribe of the sons of Simeon; ¹⁰ and they were for the sons of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites, of the sons of Levi, because the lot was theirs first. ¹¹ So they gave them Kiriath-arba (*Arba being* the father of Anak), that is, Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with its surrounding pasture lands. ¹² But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession. ¹³ So to the sons of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, the city of refuge for the one who commits manslaughter, with its pasture lands, Libnah with its pasture lands, ¹⁴ Jattir with its pasture lands, Eshtemoa with its pasture lands, ¹⁵ Holon with its pasture lands, Debir with its pasture lands, ¹⁶ Ain with its pasture lands, Juttah with its pasture lands, *and* Beth-shemesh with its pasture lands; nine cities from these two tribes. ¹⁷ From the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasture lands, Geba with its pasture lands, ¹⁸ Anathoth with its pasture lands, and Almon with its pasture lands; four cities. ¹⁹ All the cities of the sons of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their pasture lands.

¹¹ So they gave the sons of Aaron, Hebron, with its surrounding pasture lands.

¹² But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

Hebron had been assigned to Caleb; but here it was given to the priests.

So Caleb got the fields of Hebron and its villages (the suburbs).

All the cities of the sons of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their pasture lands.

The priests got 13 cities, one of which was a city of refuge (Hebron)

They got 9 cities from Judah and Simeon and 4 cities from the tribe of Benjamin.

See map 2110 above

Verses 20 - 26

²⁰ Then the cities from the tribe of Ephraim were allotted to the families of the sons of Kohath, the Levites, *that is, to the rest of the sons of Kohath.* ²¹ They gave them Shechem, the city of refuge for the one who commits manslaughter, with its pasture lands, in the hill country of Ephraim, and Gezer with its pasture lands, ²² and Kibzaim with its pasture lands, and Beth-horon with its pasture lands; four cities. ²³ And from the tribe of Dan, Elteke with its pasture lands, Gibbethon with its pasture lands, ²⁴ Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands; four cities. ²⁵ From the half-tribe of Manasseh, *they allotted* Taanach with its pasture lands and Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands; two cities. ²⁶ All the cities with their pasture lands for the families of the rest of the sons of Kohath were ten.

²⁰ Then the cities from the tribe of Ephraim

²³ And from the tribe of Dan

²⁵ From the half-tribe of Manasseh

The rest of the sons of Kohath that were not priests were given 10 cities.

One of these cities, Shechem, was a city of refuge.

See map 2110 above

Verses 27 - 33

²⁷ And to the sons of Gershon, one of the families of the Levites, from the half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* Golan in Bashan, the city of refuge for the one who commits manslaughter, with its pasture lands, and Be-eshterah with its pasture lands; two cities. ²⁸ And from the tribe of Issachar *they gave* Kishion with its pasture lands, Daberath with its pasture lands, ²⁹ Jarmuth with its pasture lands, *and* En-gannim with its pasture lands; four cities. ³⁰ From the tribe of Asher, *they gave* Mishal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands, ³¹ Helkath with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands; four cities. ³² And from the tribe of Naphtali, *they gave* Kedesh in Galilee, the city of refuge for the one who commits manslaughter, with its pasture lands, Hammoth-dor with its pasture lands, and Kartan with its pasture lands; three cities. ³³ All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their pasture lands.

²⁷ And to the sons of Gershon, one of the families of the Levites

The sons of Gershon received 13 cities with their pasture lands.

One of these cities, Golan in Bashan, was a city of refuge.

They received them from the following tribes:

The half-tribe of Manasseh, the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, and from the tribe of Naphtali

See map 2115 above.

Verses 34 - 40

³⁴ And to the families of the sons of Merari, the rest of the Levites, *they gave* from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pasture lands, Kartah with its pasture lands, ³⁵ Dimnah with its pasture lands, *and* Nahalal with its pasture lands; four cities. ³⁶ From the tribe of Reuben *they gave* Bezer with its pasture lands, Jahaz with its pasture lands, ³⁷ Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands; four cities. ³⁸ And from the tribe of Gad, *they gave* Ramoth in Gilead, the city of refuge for the one who commits manslaughter, with its pasture lands, Mahanaim with its pasture lands, ³⁹ Heshbon with its pasture lands, *and* Jazer with its pasture lands; four cities in all. ⁴⁰ All *these were* the cities of the sons of Merari according to their families, the rest of the families of the Levites; and their lot was twelve cities.

And to the families of the sons of Merari

The sons of Merari were given 12 cities.

One of these cities, Ramoth in Gilead, was a city of refuge.

They received them from the following tribes:

The tribe of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad

See map 2115 above

The Levites received all 6 cities of refuge

1. The priests received Hebron
2. The rest of the Kohathites received Shechem
3. The Gershonites received Golan and Kedesh
4. The Merarites received Bezer and Ramoth-Gilead

See pic 2120



Verses 41 - 42

⁴¹ All the cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the sons of Israel were forty-eight cities with their pasture lands. ⁴² These cities individually had their surrounding pasture lands; this is how *it was* with all these cities.

The Levites received 48 cities and their pasture lands.

Since the Levites worked at the temple on a rotational basis they needed a means to support themselves when they were not working at the Tabernacle.

Verses 43 - 45

⁴³ So the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and lived in it. ⁴⁴ And the Lord gave them rest on every side, in accordance with everything that He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them; the Lord handed all their enemies over to them. ⁴⁵ Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; everything came to pass.

Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; everything came to pass.

God accomplished exactly what He intended.

He destroyed the Canaanites because of their idolatry and sinfulness and moved the nation of Israel into the Promised Land.