

Lesson 8

## Dividing the Land— Deciding about the Lord



**Theme:** Obedience – Deciding to serve God

### Sunday Morning Lesson

#### Pre-Class Activity

**Bible Facts:** Operation Bible Facts

**Memory Verse:** Give each student an opportunity to say the Memory Verse for the class. When each one completes it, the students may show their approval as directed by the teacher. Help students who struggle with the memory work to be successful. Continue the display begun in Lesson 4 of this Guide, as shown on page 9. Print the names of the students on starbursts to be placed around the Memory Verse display when each has recited it.

#### Prayer

#### Teaching Today's Lesson

1. For non-reading students, read Joshua 23:6-8, 24:14-15. Have reading students find and mark Joshua 23:6 in the classroom Bibles.
2. Ask students to bring the Bibles and move to the Bible Story Bunker.
3. Establish the setting of the lesson by asking a student to point to the place on the time line when today's events took place.
4. Further establish the setting by asking a student to show the area of Canaan between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River on a map.
5. Introduce *Lesson Graphics* using the Lord's Army Ammo Box.
6. Use a map showing the twelve tribes of Israel. This map is available in the *Shaping Hearts for God Old Testament Map Set*, which may be purchased separately. Ask the students to tell you something about the twelve tribes. Talk about each tribe's location including those tribes which had already chosen their lands and settled there. Also mention the fact that the tribe of Levi was not given a land.
7. Tell the story and teach the lesson emphasizing the following scenes and points, tailored to the students' ages:
  - Joshua had led Israel to take the land of Canaan; now it was time to divide the land among the tribes.

### Things to Get or Do for Sunday Morning

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

- God showed where each tribe should live. God appointed certain cities for the Levites and cities of refuge to be used for people's protection.
- Joshua grew old and knew he would not lead Israel much longer. He spoke to the people about clinging to the Lord. He talked to them about driving all the Canaanites out of the land. He warned them that if they did not obey God, they would be removed from the land.
- Within the hearing of all the people, Joshua reviewed Israel's history. He explained that each person must decide whether or not to serve the Lord. Joshua said that he had decided that he and his family would serve the Lord.

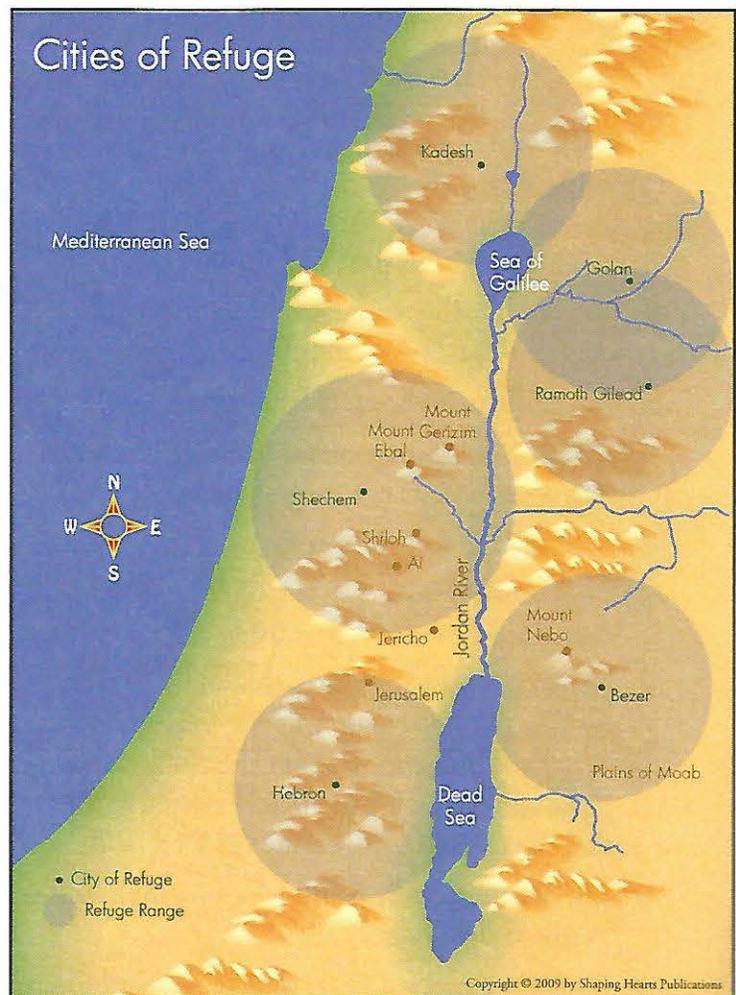
8. Create a blank map showing the territory given to each tribe. Allow the students to locate and label each tribe. A large blank map, and a black and white reproducible map are found in *Shaping Hearts for God Old Testament Map Set*, which may be purchased separately.
9. Read Joshua 23:6-8, 24:14-15.

#### Cities of Refuge

"Refuge" means protection. God appointed six cities scattered throughout Canaan to provide people protection and justice. God gave Moses instructions about the cities of refuge in Numbers 35:9-34. Also see Deuteronomy 19:4-10. If someone accidentally killed another person, he could go to a city of refuge for protection until the case could be decided. This was a way to respect human life and be fair with everyone.

#### Cities of the Levites

People from the tribe of Levi did not receive a part of the land as did other tribes. The people of Israel were to share parts of their land with the Levites. God gave instructions about this in Numbers 35:1-5, and Joshua 21 presents details of how the instructions were carried out. Levites were not priests, but helped in caring for the tabernacle and teaching the people. They needed land to provide for their families and thus be in a position to fulfill their responsibilities. The cities were assigned by lot, so God was involved in the process. The sons of Israel gave the Levites forty-eight cities "according to the command of the Lord" (Joshua 21:3, 8).



*A full page version of this map can be found on page 70.*

Lesson 8

## Dividing the Land— Deciding about the Lord



**Theme:** Obedience – Deciding to serve God

### Wednesday Evening Lesson

#### Pre-Class Activity

**Bible Facts:** Operation Bible Facts

**Memory Verse:** Repeat the Sunday morning memory work activity for any students who were not present. Talk with the students about what the Memory Verse tells us about God.

#### Prayer

#### Starter

Toby's Mom took him to a store to pick out school clothes. They looked at shirts, pants, socks, and shoes. Toby liked pullover shirts with collars, but he also liked shirts that button down the front. He liked khaki pants, but he also liked jeans. Toby decided to look at the socks, and he found many colors he wanted. He first thought he wanted tennis shoes, and then decided he wanted hiking boots.

Mom became frustrated with Toby because he wouldn't make up his mind. She was planning to buy two outfits, but Toby couldn't settle on what he wanted. For a moment, he thought he'd get jeans with a red striped shirt. Then he saw a denim shirt and really liked it. For two hours, Toby looked and thought, but he couldn't decide. Finally, his Mom decided they would leave and she would come later to make the choices by herself.

Have you ever been in a situation in which you couldn't decide? Maybe you were choosing ice cream or candy, or maybe which clothes you would wear one day. Did you know some people have not really decided about God? Some days they try to do God's will, but some days other things get in the way. It is best to make a clear, firm decision about God and never turn back from it. Israel needed to decide about living in the land received from God.

Briefly review the lesson from Sunday morning and read Joshua 23:6-8, 24:14-15.

## Illustrations and Applications



1. *Objective: Using a map, show the students the division of the land.*

Use a map featuring the division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. Make each tribe's land allotment a different color, but leave off the tribes' names. A map like this is included in the *Shaping Hearts for God Old Testament Map Set*, which may be purchased separately. Print the names on strips, laminate them, and attach a Velcro dot to the back of each piece. Review the division of the land between the tribes of Israel and let students label each section of land with the correct name.

2. *Objective: Help students understand why the Levites shared in the good produce of the land.*

Divide the class into three groups. Assign two groups to describe several events on the time line. While the two groups work with the time line, assign the third group to sharpen some pencils or straighten a stack of books. Once the first two groups do the time line work, give them several stickers as a reward. Give the two groups instructions to share some stickers with the third group because they did work that will benefit everyone. Discuss how God made provisions for the Levites.

3. *Objective: Demonstrate the importance of making decisions and especially deciding to serve the Lord.*

In the course of the class period, demonstrate being indecisive by saying such things as, "Now we'll do this ... but no, let's do this" and "It's time to do our Memory Verse ... but, no, let's do our Bible reading." Make it obvious that you can't make up your mind. Talk with the students about the problems this causes. Apply the principle of making a decision to serving God. Joshua said that each person must decide (Joshua 24:15).

4. *Objective: Teach and reinforce the process of making right decisions.*

Ask students to help you make a list on the marker board of what it takes to make a decision. The list may include getting information, seeking advice or counsel, thinking and praying, and deciding. To illustrate this, ask the students to help you make a decision such as what activity you will do next. Help them identify the parts of making a decision. Apply these principles to making decisions about God.

### Things to Get or Do for Wednesday Night

- 
- 
- 
- 
-