

Historical Content

Judges 18

People

Danites (The Tribe of Dan)

- Descendants of Dan who was the fifth son of Jacob and was born by Rachel's maidservant, Bilhah (Ge 30:1–6)
- The name Dan means “judge” or “he that judges.”¹
- Jacob blessed and prophesied over his son Dan saying, “Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider shall fall backward” (Ge 49:16–17).
- “The tribe of Dan never controlled the territory originally assigned to them in Josh 19:40–48. No tribal boundaries are given in the passage, just a list of 18 cities along the Aijalon Valley between Manasseh and Ephraim, including Joppa on the Mediterranean coast. As early as Judg 1:34–35 the tribe of Dan struggled to secure its territory.”²
- Samson was from the tribe of Dan. (Jg 13–16)
- “We are told that the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain (Jgs 1:34), so they did not enjoy the richest part of their ideal portion, the fertile plain between the mountain and the sea. The strong hand of the house of Joseph kept the Amorites tributary, but did not drive them out. Later we find Dan oppressed by the Philistines, against whom the heroic exploits of Samson were performed (Jgs 14 ff). The expedition of the Danites recorded in Jgs 18 is referred to in Josh 19:47 ff.”³

People

Micah the Ephraimite

- Lived in the hill country of Ephraim (Jg 17:1)
- Stole silver from his mother and after returning it to her and confessing, she had some of the silver melted and made into carved images which Micah kept in a shrine in his home. (Jg 17:2–6)
- He hired a Levite to be his priest (Jg 17:7–13)

Micah's Priest

- A descendent of Levi from Bethlehem in (Jg 17:7)
- Was hired by Micah the Ephraimite to be a priest in his home (Jg 17:7–13)

Jonathan the Priest

- A priest of the tribe of Dan as they practiced idolatry after conquering Laish (Jg 18:30)
- Son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh (Jg 18:30)

Places

Zorah (Zoreah)

- One of the towns that was allotted to the tribe of Dan as their inheritance in the promised land which neighbors Eshtaol (Jos 15:33; 19:41)
- The town where Samson's father was from and where he was born (Jg 13:2, 25; 16:31)
- The town near where the Spirit of God came upon Samson for the first time and near where he was eventually buried (Jg 13:25; 16:31)
- Danite men from Zorah were part of those who went to spy out and capture Laish. (Jg 18:2, 11)
- One of the fortified cities in the southern kingdom of Judah during the reign of Rehoboam (2 Ch 11:10)
- The people of Judah re-settled into this town upon returning from exile (Ne 11:29)

Eshtaol

- One of the towns that was allotted to the tribe of Dan as their inheritance in the promised land which neighbors Zorah (Jos 15:33; 19:41)
- The town near where the Spirit of God came upon Samson for the first time and near where he was eventually buried (Jg 13:25; 16:31)
- Danite men from Eshtaol were part of those who went to spy out and capture Laish. (Jg 18:2, 11)

Places

Mountains of Ephraim

- "The mountainous area of the territory of Ephraim, located above the territory of Benjamin. Also: Ephraim; Hill Country Of Ephraim; Mount Ephraim; Mountains of Ephraim; Mountains of Ephraim."⁴

Laish

- A Canaanite city where the people had a reputation for dwelling "safely... quiet and secure" (like the Sidonians) until the Danites spied out and conquered it as a place to settle and live (Jg 18)
- After being conquered by the Danites, Laish was rebuilt and inhabited by the Danites who renamed the city "Dan" (Jg 18:27–29)

Territory of Judah

- The land that was allotted to the tribe of Judah as their inheritance (Jos 15:5–11; 59–61)

Places

Kirjath Jearim in Judah (Mahaneh Dan)

- “Also called Kiriath-Baal, Baalah, and Baale-Judah.”⁵
- One the four Gibeonite cities that is mentioned in Joshua 9 when the Gibeonites deceived the Israelites into forming an alliance with them (Jos 9:17)
- “The best-known references to Kiriath-Jearim are in relation to the ark of the covenant. After the Philistines capture the ark, its presence leads to immense suffering in their cities (1 Sam 5:6–12). They send the ark back to Israel via Beth-Shemesh (1 Sam 6:11–13), whose residents send it deeper into Israel, to Kiriath-Jearim (1 Sam 6:20–21). Twenty years later (1 Sam 7:1–2), David retrieves the ark from Kiriath-Jearim (called “Baale-Judah” in 2 Sam 6:2 and “Baalah” in 1 Chr 13:6) and brings it to Jerusalem.”⁶

Places

Sidon

- “The city of Sidon receives its name from Sidon, the firstborn of Canaan and the grandson of Noah, who founded it (Gen 10:15, 19; 49:13; 1 Chr 1:13)...
- Sidon was also the first home of the Phoenicians, and thanks to its extensive commercial relations became a “great city” (Josh 11:8; 18:28). When Joshua divided Canaan among the tribes, Sidon fell into the lot of Asher, on the northern boundary of Canaan, but it was never subdued and oppressed Israel for years (Judg 1:31; 3:3; 10:12)...
- The inhabitants of Sidon contributed cedar for the first temple, and Solomon entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Sidonians (thus allowing their forms of idolatrous worship to enter the land of Israel; see 1 Kgs 11:1, 33)...
- Sidon is mentioned several times in the New Testament, where it appears as a well-known place of sophistication and wealth. Jesus is depicted as traveling in the district of Tyre and Sidon (Mark 7:24, 31; Matt 15:21), as is Paul (Acts 27:3).”⁷

Places

Beth Rehob

- The name of Beth Rehob means “house of the market,” and “Rehob was the father of Hadadezer, the Syrian king of Zobah (2 Sam. 8:3). Beth-rehob may have been their hometown. When the Ammonites made David angry by humiliating his officials, Ammon sent to Beth-rehob for Syrian soldiers, evidently indicating that Syria controlled the city. The town lay at the southern foot of Mount Hermon.”⁸

Shiloh

- A city in the hill country of Ephraim located “north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem.” (Jg 21:19)
- Joshua and the tribes of Israel camped in Shiloh after the settlement in the land. (Jos 18:1)
- Home of the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle during the time of Joshua to Samuel. (Jg 21:19)

Key Dates / Timelines

- **1446 B.C.** The Exodus: Israelites are Delivered from Egypt
- **1250 B.C.** Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan
- **1220-1051 B.C.** The period of the Judges over Israel
- **1051 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel Anoints Saul to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **1051–1011 B.C.** The reign of King Saul
- **1020 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel anoints David to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **1011–971 B.C.** The reign of King David
- **971 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel anoints Solomon to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **971–931 B.C.** The reign of King Solomon
- **922 B.C.** The United Kingdom of Israel divides into two Kingdoms: Israel (north) and Juda (south)
- **722 B.C.** The Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians
- **605 B.C.** Battle of Carchemish (Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Egyptians on the Euphrates River)
- **605 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar invades Jerusalem and takes exiles to Babylon (including Daniel and his companions)
- **597 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem and takes King Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) as prisoner
- **588 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar begins his final siege of Jerusalem
- **586 B.C.** Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon; Judah in exile in Babylon

911 - 609 B.C. Assyrian Empire | 626 – 539 B.C. Babylonian Empire | 539 – 358 B.C. Persian Empire

Cross References

Key References:

- **Joshua 19:47–48** | “And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.”
- **Judges 13:25** | “And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.”
- **Judges 17:5–6** | The man Micah had a shrine, and made an ephod and household idols; and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
- **Judges 19:40–48** | The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jethlah, Elon, Timnah, Ekron, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, Me Jarkon, and Rakkon, with the region near Joppa. And the border of the children of Dan went beyond these, because the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem and took it; and they struck it with the edge of the sword, took possession of it, and dwelt in it. They called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.”

Cross References

Full List:

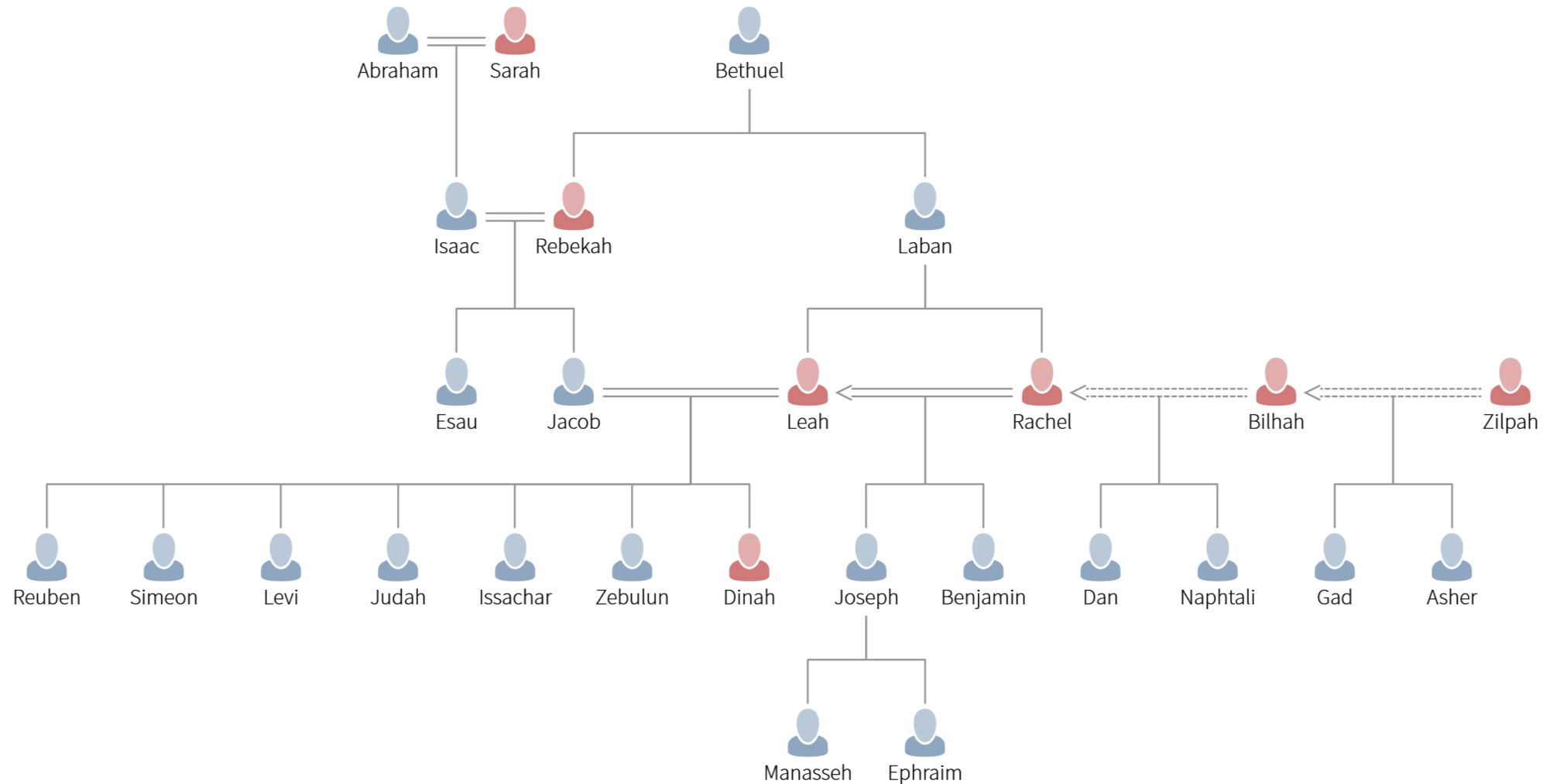
- **Genesis** 10:19; 14:14; 25:22; 30:6; 31:19, 30; 34:25; 43:27; 49:17
- **Exodus** 2:22; 3:1; 18:3, 15; 23:2
- **Numbers** 13:17, 20–21, 30; 21:32; 26:42; 27:21; 31:10
- **Deuteronomy** 3:18; 8:9; 12:1–32; 13:16; 26:5; 27:14; 33:22; 34:1
- **Joshua** 2:1, 23–24; 6:24; 9:17; 11:8; 15:33, 60; 18:1, 3, 8; 19:28, 40–51; 24:33
- **Judges** 1:1, 8, 23, 25, 34; 4:15–16; 8:11, 27; 10:12; 13:1–2, 25; 16:31–17:1, 3–8, 10, 12; 19:1, 6, 18–19; 20:1, 18, 23, 26–27, 31; 21:2, 12, 19, 25; 1 Sa 1:3, 7, 17; 3:21; 4:2–3, 10–11; 9:9, 17; 10:22; 14:18, 28, 37, 52; 17:22; 18:17; 22:10; 23:2; 28:6; 30:3; 2 Sa 2:7; 3:39; 5:19; 10:6; 13:28; 17:10
- **1 Kings** 1:52; 12:29–30; 15:20; 22:3, 5–6
- **2 Kings** 1:2; 2:16; 6:28; 8:8; 15:29; 17:1–6
- **1 Chronicles** 4:40; 13:5–6
- **2 Chronicles** 1:4
- **Job** 3:2; 5:4; 13:5; 21:5; 29:9; 40:4
- **Psalms** 7:2; 18:17; 35:10; 50:22; 71:11; 78:60–64
- **Proverbs** 30:32
- **Song of Solomon** 2:10
- **Isaiah** 5:29; 10:28; 14:10; 30:1; 41:29; 42:22; 46:2; 52:15
- **Jeremiah** 7:12, 14; 26:6, 9, 20; 32:29; 34:2; 43:11; 48:7; 49:3
- **Daniel** 8:4
- **Hosea** 4:12; 5:14; 10:5
- **Micah** 5:8, 13; 7:16
- **Zechariah** 3:4
- **Acts** 10:46; 21:15

Images / Maps / Graphs

The Hill Country of Ephraim



The Family Tree of Jacob



THE TRIBAL ALLOTMENTS OF ISRAEL
 JOSH 13:8-19:49

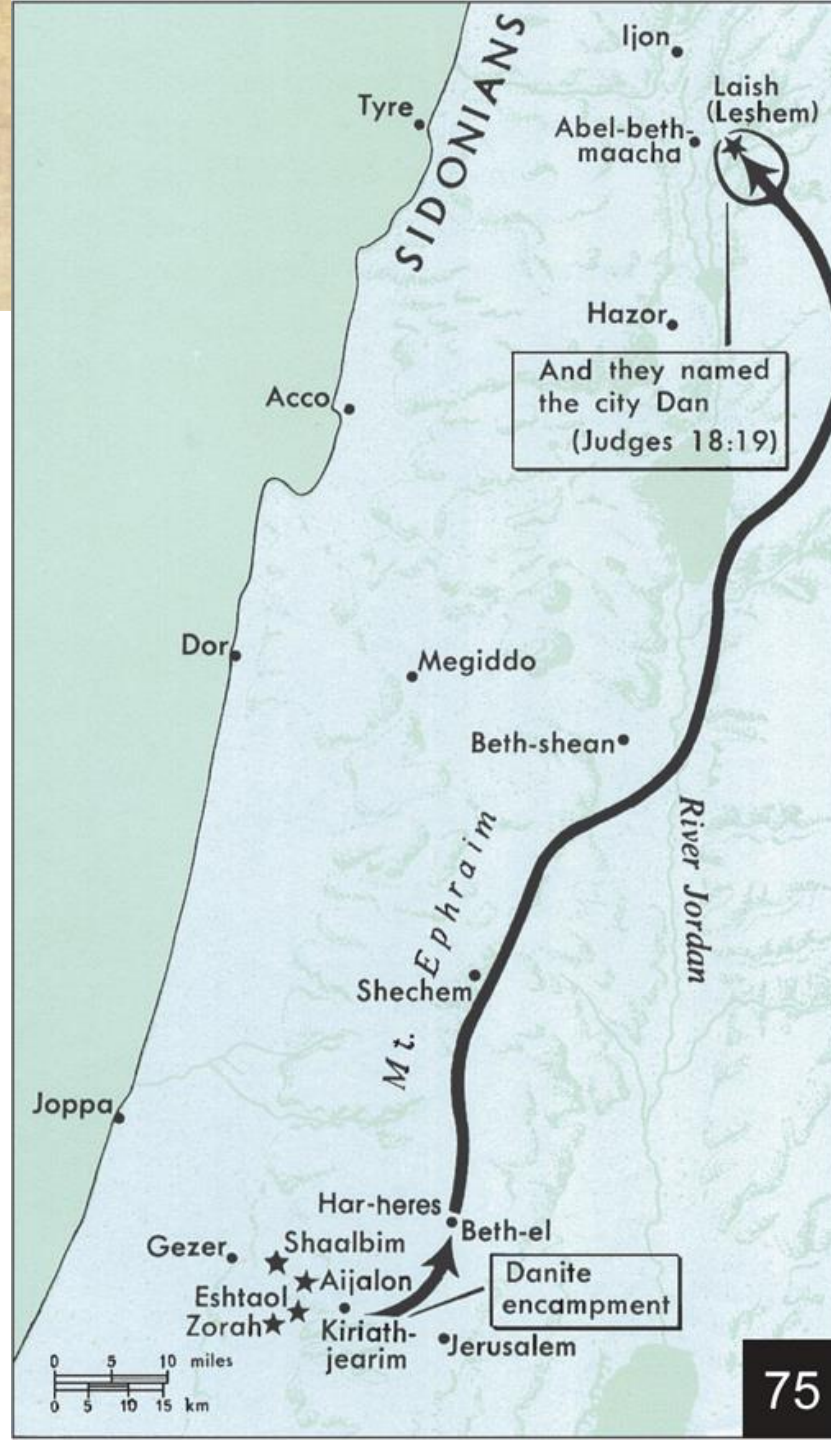
- City
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak



The Tribal Allotments of Israel



Judges According to Their Tribes



The Migration of The Tribe of Dan

WORKS CITED

1. Smith, Stelman, and Judson Cornwall. *The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names*. North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos, 1998.
2. Long, Phillip J. "Dan, Tribe of." In *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, edited by John D. Barry, David Bomar, Derek R. Brown, Rachel Klippenstein, Douglas Mangum, Carrie Sinclair Wolcott, Lazarus Wentz, Elliot Ritzema, and Wendy Widder. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016.
3. Ewing, W. "Dan." In *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, edited by James Orr, John L. Nuelsen, Edgar Y. Mullins, and Morris O. Evans. Vol. 1–5. Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915.
4. Faithlife, LLC. "Hill Country of Ephraim." Logos Bible Software, Computer software. *Logos Bible Software Factbook*. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, LLC, July 26, 2022. <https://ref.ly/logos4/Factbook?ref=bk.%40HillCountryOfEphraim>.
5. Bosserman, Christina. 2016. "Kiriath-Jearim." In *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, edited by John D. Barry, David Bomar, Derek R. Brown, Rachel Klippenstein, Douglas Mangum, Carrie Sinclair Wolcott, Lazarus Wentz, Elliot Ritzema, and Wendy Widder. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
6. Bosserman, Christina. 2016. "Kiriath-Jearim." In *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, edited by John D. Barry, David Bomar, Derek R. Brown, Rachel Klippenstein, Douglas Mangum, Carrie Sinclair Wolcott, Lazarus Wentz, Elliot Ritzema, and Wendy Widder. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
7. Maura Sala, "Sidon," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).
8. Brand, Chad, Charles Draper, Archie England, Steve Bond, E. Ray Clendenen, and Trent C. Butler, eds. "Beth-Rehob." In *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003.