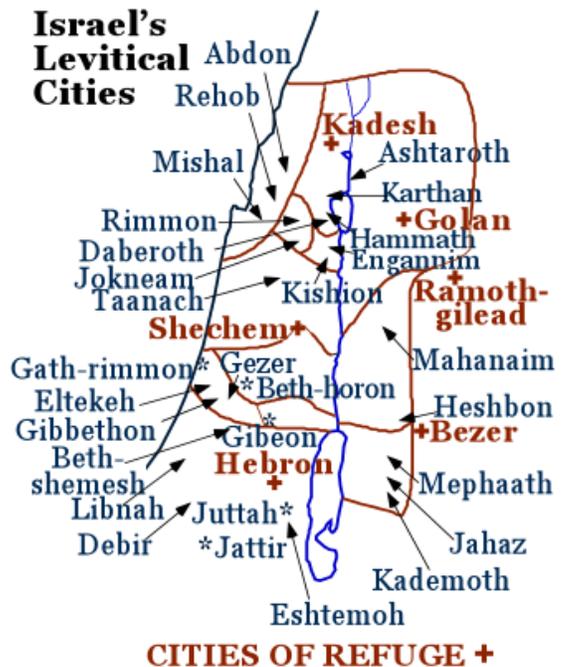


“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
April 29, 2016

- ✓ **Joshua 21:1-22:9.** The city of the Levites.
- ✓ **2 Corinthians 13:1-10.** Love: the root, hinge, and fruit of all virtue.
- ✓ **Psalms 59:1-17.** The assured judgment of the wicked.

COMMENTS:

Joshua 21:1-22:9. This is the last and crowning act of distribution. The scattering of the tribe of Levi is a fulfillment of Jacob’s curse on Levi as well as Simeon (Gen. 49:5, 7) for their senseless murder of the Shechemites (Gen. 34). We also see that at the time of the assignment many of the Levites’ towns were under Canaanite control and had to be conquered (21:41-42). The potential for good in the dispersion of Levites among the other tribes was almost unlimited. Moses, in his final blessing of the tribes, said of Levi, “He teaches Your precepts to Jacob and Your Law to Israel” (Deut. 33:10). The solemn responsibility and high privilege of the Levites was to instruct Israel in the Law of the Lord, to maintain the knowledge of His Word among the people. Especially in the north and east the Levites ought to have been barriers against the idolatry of Tyre and Sidon, as well as against the heathen practices of the desert tribes. It has been estimated that no one in Israel lived more than 10 miles from 1 of the 48 Levite towns. Thus every Israelite had nearby a man well-versed in the Law of Moses who could give advice and counsel on the many problems of religious, family, and political life. *God always provides teachers of God’s Word!* It was essential that Israel obey the Word of God in all areas of life because without this their prosperity would cease and their privileges would be forfeited. But the final word is a sad one. The Levites did not live up to their potential; they did not fulfill their mission. If they had, idolatry and its corrupting influence might never have spread over the land of Israel.



2 Corinthians 13:1-10. When it comes to “love” modern Christianity is all over the place. On the one end it is all about feelings (physiological rushes) and on the other end of the spectrum there are those who say that love has nothing to do with feelings. The former measures love by emotional highs and the latter by such things as actions and faithfulness. Let us consider the latter. If love has absolutely nothing to do with one’s desires (which is not the same as emotions), then how do you make sense of 1 Cor. 13:4, which describes actions in terms of giving up all of one’s possessions to the poor or giving body to be burned. This passage stands as a contradiction to those who teach that love is only about self-sacrifice for someone else and has nothing to do with desires for that person. Or to use another illustration, consider the case of a husband in the midst of a frank talk with his wife telling her that he has always been faithful to her and will always be faithful to her and is fully committed to provide for her no matter, but that he really does not love her. Do you think she will think that since he is faithful that that automatically means that he loves her? Is there not something missing? Will she not rightfully understand that something is missing? Does she rightly understand there is more to love than mere faithfulness and sacrifice?

Psalms 59:1-17. This is a prayer by David for protection against bloodthirsty men: “they lie in wait for my life,” “growl like a dog and go all around the city,” “belch with their mouth,” have “swords in their lips,” and ‘howl as they are not satisfied.’ In this psalm David asks God to “scatter them,” but not to slay them just yet, so they can remain as examples for the people of God of what happens to the wicked. Crime really does not pay and neither does immorality. Untold numbers of people have died of disease, retribution from fellow malefactors, alcoholism, drugs, and the like. The wicked may get away with their evil deeds for a while. However, sooner or later it catches up with them. Note the difference in the lifestyle of God’s people in verse 16-17: Instead of walking the streets like mongrels who grunt and howl out of dissatisfaction, the people of God live in celebration of life because they celebrate the Giver of life.

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don