

Joshua 18 & 19

Week 30

Survey the Land

We are going to do the same thing this week that we did last week, we are going to gulp down two chapters, focusing in on a couple of key points. Once again, extra credit if you read both of the chapters in their entirety, on your own!! Double extra credit if you learn to pronounce the names.

Last week we zoomed in on being bold to claim the promises God has given us, like the daughters of Zelophehed, but not with entitlement like the Josephites! This week we are going to survey the land and divvy it up between the seven remaining tribes.

The tribes that will get their inheritance are as follows:

Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan. At the end of our two chapters, we will also take a look at the final distribution of land, Joshua takes his inheritance last, of course!

The beginning is a good place to start:

Joshua 18:1,2 Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. ² But there remained among the children of

Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance.

Focus in on verse 1, why was the tabernacle of meeting was set up in Shiloh. I love how Walvoord & Zuck explain why they set the Tabernacle up there:

18:1-3. Before the final divisions of the land were made the Israelites moved en masse from Gilgal to **Shiloh**, about 20 miles northwest, from the Jordan Valley to the hill country. Why? Probably because Shiloh, located in the center of the land, was a convenient location where the tabernacle (**the Tent of Meeting**) could remind the people that **the key to prosperity and blessing in the land was worshiping and serving Yahweh**. The dissatisfaction of the sons of Joseph with their allotment (17:14-18) was an ominous foreshadowing of the future disintegration of the nation because of self-interest. To counteract this tendency the tabernacle was **set up** in Shiloh to promote a sense of national unity. Walvoord & Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary

That last part about the disintegration of the nation because of self-interest is a HUGE red flag for us today! This is as true for us today as it was for them. We have to put Him at the center to worship and serve! Our own self-interest as a nation is destroying us.

Note: remember that when the Word tells us in verse 1 of our text that the land was subdued before them, He is not telling us that the land is cleared completely, but rather that they have military advantage, the Lord has repeatedly proven

that He is going to fight for the Israelites and prevail, and the land is ready to be cleared.

Just like we saw in Joshua 17:17&18, verse 3 of our text gives us another prodding/encouragement from Joshua,

Joshua:3 Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: “How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you?”

Look at what Walvoord and Zuck say about the need for Joshua to give the Israelites another prod towards obeying God:

Further, when the Israelites were thus assembled for erecting the tabernacle and celebrating the new worship center Joshua sensed that a feeling of war-weariness had overtaken them. They were exhausted in the struggle for the conquest of Canaan, so they stopped in the middle of the task of allocating the **tribes...**Their listlessness provoked **Joshua** who took steps to prod them into action. He reproached them sharply: **How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you?** Apparently the tribes were to initiate matters relating to territorial allocations. **Joshua probably viewed every passing day as a day lost in the program of completely occupying the land, a day in which the enemy could return or become more firmly entrenched.**

War-weariness.

Are we war-weary? We need to fight the good fight until the end and instead of becoming discouraged, we should be

coming alive watching God do what only He can do! What is the opposite of fighting on? Quitting, or as Walvoord and Zuck put it: **Every passing day as a day lost in the program of completely occupying the land, a day in which the enemy could return or become more firmly entrenched.**

May it never be, we don't want to lose ground to the enemy, and we definitely don't want to allow him to become more firmly entrenched.

1st Praise God for those who have gone before us and not given up. Praise God for those cheerleaders who prod us, encourage us, sometimes even rebuke us to carry on. Praise God that He has given us His Holy Spirit to be the kerosene to our waning embers.

2nd I have several Scriptures that pop in my head and that I pray when I get weary or discouraged.

Psalm 51:12 ¹²Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Hebrews 12:12-13 (Isaiah 35:3) ¹²Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

2 Corinthians 12:8-9 ⁸Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." **Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

There is such a beautiful principal here, we need to take a pause and examine it. Is weakness prized in our world? No. We are taught from the earliest possible age, survival of the fittest, we are taught to scorn the 97-pound weakling. We look to supplements, gyms and diets to make us strong and healthy; illness is scorned, we should be able to alleviate it and we should never have to suffer symptoms of anything ever. There is a pill, a diet, a surgery for every form of weakness. But listen again to what Paul says at the end of **2 Corinthians 12:9**, **Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

Ladies, it is an upside-down kingdom, where we serve a God who washed the feet of His disciples, and we are to be as different from the world as He was!

Isaiah 53:2-3 ²**For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.** ³**He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

That doesn't mean that I am going to purposely make myself weak, I actually don't need any help in that area, but like Paul, to be able to recognize that weakness as a blessing, that is power, right there.

When I feel war-weary, I think on those who have gone before me, and I particularly treasure those who faced great trial in the battle.

Fanny Crosby – born blind, her baby died, wrote 383 hymns, including Blessed Assurance right after she lost her baby.

Adoniram Judson – first missionary sent from America, sent to Burma where he lost two wives and a child (or more). Translated the Bible there and his translation is still in use today.

Corrie ten Boom – Interred in a prison camp in Germany, lost her father and sister, spent the rest of her life preaching Jesus!

Amy Carmichael – Missionary to India, stole or bought babies from temple prostitution. Suffered from Neuralgia and migraines from an early age, fell in a hole 20 years into her India ministry and spent the next 20 years in bed, wrote all of her books from bed, some still in print today.

Charles Spurgeon – suffered from depression, still one of the most powerful preachers ever to have lived. Watch his biography, Spurgeon, The Peoples Preacher, have tissue ready!

John Newton – Slaver who after he came to Christ wrote Amazing Grace

You. You are all living lives that are making a difference for Christ, no matter how big or small your circumstances are, you are pressing on and loving others for Jesus!

Those are just a few that come to mind. Now, with the Lord and His Holy Spirit strengthening us, with the cheerleaders He has placed all around us, and with the Hebrews hall of faith to encourage us, as well as the list of amazing saints that have gone before us, it's time to survey the land ladies.

What hasn't been conquered? We talked briefly about this last week when we talked about Joshua chiding the Josephites to take the land that was before them, here we are again!

Finally, we are going to focus in on the last person to take his inheritance. We have seen his character played out since he was a boy in Egypt, he has been faithful to God throughout and here we see him again, putting others first.

Again ladies, Joshua teaches us a vital Christian characteristic.

I can remember all of the etiquette that I was taught growing up, I love reading old etiquette books! Stand when an elderly person enters the room, give up your seat, look someone in the eye when you speak to them, take your hat off at meals, don't push in front of others; but I will never forget seeing the principle of *others first* played out in the Christian realm. Actually, I think it was Tommy who first pointed it out.

Ricky Ryan would always go last, he would always park the furthest away, he would give everything away, loan out all of his things. What a beautiful role-model he has been for us. Tommy and I were both taught etiquette as kids, we both took cotillion here in Santa Barbara, but to see the others-

first mentality played out by Ricky Ryan had a greater impact than I could ever explain.

Here we see the others-first mentality played out in front of the Israelites, Joshua takes his land last.

Joshua 19:49-50 ⁴⁹***When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun.*** ⁵⁰***According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it.***

Philippians 2:1-4 ¹***Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,*** ²***fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*** ³***Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*** ⁴***Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.***

How quickly we forget.

Oh beautiful ladies, it is such an upside down kingdom, we are called to fight the good fight until the end, not take our leisure, we are called to boast in our infirmities (note: not whine about them!), we are called to love others and serve them before ourselves, what a beautiful world to live in!