

JOSHUA CHAPTERS 13-24

Last month we began looking at the book of Joshua. A new leader was introduced to us. As the book began, they were preparing to enter the promised land. We saw them enter into numerous battles after they crossed the Jordan River. They marched around the city of Jericho in Chap. 6. They were defeated in Chap. 7 by Ai because of the sins of Achan. In chapter 10, the Israelites conquered the southern part of Canaan and in chap. 11, the northern part was conquered. Finally in 11:23, Joshua stated “and the land rested from war.” Chapter 12 is a summary of what had taken place in the first eleven chapters.

The second half of the book of Joshua will deal with the dividing of the land and the farewell address of Joshua.

I. The land divided (13-22)

A. Division of the land east of the Jordan (13)

1. Joshua was old and advanced in years (13:1), but it was imperative that he continue his leadership over the nation and guide in the allotment of tribal territories.
2. The land discussed in first seven verses was to be divided among the 9 ½ tribes.
3. The remainder of the chapter tells of the division of the land east of the Jordan (Reuben, Gad, ½ tribe of Manasseh).
4. The land of Levi.
 - a. Levi was given no land, as God himself would be their portion (13:33).
 - (1) The possession of the priests and Levites did not consist in the revenues assigned to them by God, but in the possession of Jehovah, the God of Israel. In the same sense in which the tribe of Levi was the peculiar possession of Jehovah out of the whole of the people of possession, was Jehovah also the peculiar possession of Levi;
 - (2) Certainly the offerings, including the tithes and first-fruits, were to be its inheritance; so that the God of Israel himself is called the inheritance of Levi (comp. 13:14).
 - b. They were given 48 special cities from the remaining tribes.
5. The tribe of Joseph (Manasseh & Ephraim) would receive the birthright, or a double-portion.

B. Chapter 14 – inheritance of Caleb.

1. Caleb is one of the two spies who brought back a favorable report (14:7)
2. He was rewarded for his faithfulness (14:14).
 - a. Moses, when at Kadesh-Barnea, had made commitments to Caleb and Joshua as to specific portions of the land, which they individually would receive (14:12-14).
 - b. Caleb was of tribe of Judah (Num. 13:6).

C. Chap. 15 – inheritance of Judah.

1. Judah was first tribe to receive an inheritance on west side of Jordan.
2. Because of their size, a considerable portion of land was given.
3. Caleb’s land was in the midst of Judah’s
4. Keep in mind, the statement found in Joshua 15:63 compartmented to Duet. 20:17.

D. Chapters. 16 & 17 – the lot of the children of Joseph.

1. Ephraim and Manasseh
2. Ephraimites failed to drive out the Canaanites (16:10)
3. Same held true for Manasseh (17:12f).
4. The policy of coalition had disastrous consequences in the years to come.
5. Many times we do the same today.
 - a. It is difficult sometimes, to cut out of our life all that offends when we become Christians.
 - b. It leaves us unable to be wholly given to the cause for which He gives His all.
 - c. A more miserable life cannot be imagined than to try to live with one foot in the church and one foot in the world.

6. More land was given.
- E. Chapters 18 & 19 – give us the assignment of the rest of the tribes west of Jordan.
 1. The tribal allotments up to this point were conducted in the central camp area of Gilgal. Now, it was moved to Shiloh (18:1).
 2. Joshua rebuked them (18:3).
 3. Sent out three men from each tribe to survey the land and divide it.
 4. Joshua divided the land (v.10).
 5. Benjamin's land assigned. Not very large, but centrally located.
 6. Simeon's lot was determined (19:1-9). His land was taken out of Judah's portion (19:7)
 7. The children of Zebulun are settled (19:10-16)
 8. Issachar's inheritance determined (19:17-23).
 9. Tribe of Asher located (19:24-31)
 10. Territory of Naphtali (19:32-39)
 11. The inheritance of Dan (19:40-48)
 12. Joshua was given his inheritance (19:49-51).
 13. So they made an end of dividing the land! (19:51).
- F. Cities of Refuge (20:1-9)
 1. God had instructed them to set up cities where the unintentional man-slayer might flee (Exod. 21:13).
 - a. If a man unintentionally killed another there was divine protection and a trial.
 - b. He was permitted to flee to one of the six cities. There he would be presented at the gate before the ancient law court (Deut. 21:19; 22:15).
 - c. Later, he was brought to stand trial before the congregation of the community nearest the scene of the crime.
 - d. If he was deemed innocent of pre-meditated murder, he was returned to the city of refuge until the death of the high priest.
 - e. Then he could return home.
- G. Cities appointed for the priests and Levites.
 1. The Levites were not given any special allotments of territory.
 2. It was God's purpose that they should be scattered through-out the tribes of Israel to act as a spiritual influence and to teach the law.
 3. Forty-eight cities were assigned (21:41)
 4. God kept his promise in the land division (21:43-45).
- H. The eastern tribes are allowed to return home. (22:1-34)
 1. Joshua commended them for their faithfulness (22:2)
 2. While their military commitments had been fulfilled, Joshua reminded them that they had spiritual commitments which would continue (22:4-6).
 3. As they journeyed home, they built an altar, on the banks of the Jordan (22:9-10)
 4. Their motives and actions were pure; they intended it to be a witness for their ancestors that they and those in Canaan were all servants of Jehovah.
 5. But the Israelites who dwelt on the west side didn't see it that way.
 6. They assumed apostasy. They envisioned the worst. (22:11-12).
 7. They gathered to make war against them.
 8. Fortunately, they investigated before they took any action.
 9. It was simply a misunderstanding. From building a simple altar, the rumors had developed into a full scale apostasy. That is the way rumors develop.
 10. Joshua 22:26-29
- II. Farewell Address of Joshua and His death (23-24)
 - A. His last message to the nation (23).
 1. Joshua reminded them that their successful conquest of the land was dependent upon God's

- work on their behalf. (23:3).
2. As in the first chapter of this book, so we are again reminded of the authority of the written word of God (23:5-6).
 3. The second qualification for prosperity of the land involved separation (vss.7-16).
 - a. Separate from the gods of the land (v.7).
 - b. Cleave to Jehovah (v.8).
 - c. Warning against going back to apostasy (23:11-16).
- B. Last Words of Joshua
1. He rehearsed the nation's ancestral past (24:2-13, esp. v.13)
 - a. The hornet seems to be figurative, referring to the panic-producing power of God.
 - b. Exod. 23:27f; Deut. 2:25; 7:20; Josh. 2:9, 11; 5:1)
 2. He exhorts them to faithful service (24:14-18).
 - a. In order to serve God acceptably, it must be sincere and it must be founded on truth (v.14). (Comp. with John 4:24 and Matt. 15:8,9)
 - b. "As for me and my house..." (V.15)
 - c. He warned against idolatry (24:19-28).
 - d. The death of Joshua (24:29-31)
 - e. Bones of Joseph buried (24:32)
 - f. Eleazor died (24:33).

Con: The Lord told Joshua what he should have COURAGE. He told him what he must do OBSERVE THE LAW AND TAKE THE LAND.. He told him of what to be assured GOD'S CONSTANT AND SUPPORTING PRESENCE AND POWER. These are the great essentials of leadership in the Lord's work. During the lifetime of Joshua, the people remained faithful to God. A fitting conclusion to the story of Joshua would be the words of Psa. 44:1-3. God kept his promises. He gave them their land. he also demanded that they remain faithful to Him, which they didn't do. God wants us to be faithful, to serve him sincerely and according to truth. He doesn't expect us to do the impossible, therefore it is possible for us to carry out that request. We must choose. . . What choice have you made? God. . . or world? Choose God!