

Joshua

Lesson #14, Chapters 15-19

Chapters 15-19 chronicle the specifics of each tribe's inheritance. Reading the lists of boundaries and cities and villages can make anyone's eyes cross, but we must remember 2 Tim. 3:16-17, *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.* Matthew Henry commenting on these chapters in Joshua says, "*And therefore we are not to skip over these chapters of hard names as useless and not to be regarded; where God has a mouth to speak and a hand to write we should find an ear to hear and an eye to read; and God give us a heart to profit!*" Keeping those admonitions in mind read Chapters 15-19 without falling asleep!

1. Chapter 15 outlines the inheritance for the tribe of Judah. Part of this chapter records Caleb receiving his inheritance. Who does Caleb drive out of his land and why is this significant (15:13-15 and Num. 13:27-33)?

2. Caleb's zeal to conquer the land extends to the stronghold of Debir (also known as Kiriath-sepher). How does he motivate war weary men to continue to possess the land (15:16)? What happens as a result of Caleb's offer (15:17)?

3. Read Judges 3:7-11 and record more about the character of Othniel.

4. What is the special request Achsah, Caleb's daughter, makes of her father in Joshua 15:18-19? What can you learn about the *Negev* (or *south country* as the KJV translates it) that would give added insight into her petition?

5. The land allotment of Judah included Jerusalem, which was inhabited by the Jebusites. Who were these people and what happened to them? See Gen. 10:15-16; Num. 13:29; Josh. 11:1-5; 2 Sam. 24:16-18; 1 Chron. 11:4-6.

6. The daughters of Zelophehad had an unusual situation. What was it (17:3)?

7. What previous instruction had been given about their situation? See Num. 27:1-11; 36:1-12 and Josh. 17:4.

8. How did the land allotments reveal the importance of maintaining a kinship between the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh in 16:9 and 17:9?

9. In 17:14-18, the sons of Joseph are dissatisfied with their allotment. What is their complaint and what do they fear?

10. What solution does Joshua offer to them (17:15, 17-18)?

11. Compare Caleb's response in 14:10-14 with the sons of Joseph's response in 17:16.

12. Joshua and Caleb stand as beacons of faithfulness and trust in God. They persevered through the long years of the desert wandering, waiting to obtain the promises of God. They worked, fought, and endured. In sharp contrast to their example, we read of the tribes who failed to drive out the inhabitants of the land. Look up the following verses, noting what tribe is mentioned and what they failed to do (15:63; 16:10; 17:12-13).

13. Israel was to root out the Canaanites because their perversions and idolatry would be a stumbling block to Israel. The Bible Knowledge Commentary points out, *“There is a spiritual principle here. It is all too easy for a believer to tolerate and excuse some pet sin only to wake up some day to the grim realization that it has risen up to possess and drive him to spiritual defeat. It pays to deal with sin decisively and harshly.”* It is easy to see and judge the transgressions of the Israelites and the future impact it had on them, yet you need to see your own sins just as clearly. If left unchecked, the consequences of your own sins can have a serious impact upon your future as well. Please consider whether you have some “Amorites” still running around in the land or have you routed them? How can you deal with those “Amorite” sins in a decisive, and equally unmerciful manner?

14. In 18:2-7 we read that some tribes had not yet divided up the land among themselves. Which tribes hadn’t received their inheritance? See 18:11; 19:1, 10, 17, 24, 32, 40.

15. Joshua is provoked by the apathetic attitude of the remaining seven tribes. Why? See Deut. 31:7; Josh. 1:1-4; 13:1; 18:3.

16. For whatever reason the remaining seven tribes were slow about taking possession of the land. This restraint on their part was an affront to God. Consider and explain how it is an affront to God when we are slow to appropriate the promises of His word, slow to believe His love and care for us, slow to accept His forgiveness, slow to apply what we know, slow to rid our lives of a favorite sin.
 - a. If you are “slow” in an area, what steps do you need to take to deal with it, so that it won’t be an offense to God?

17. Commenting on this attitude, H. L. Ellison perceptively states, “*The slackness blamed by Joshua (verse 3) may well have been due to an unwillingness to settle down. It was fine to have a “promised land,” but the reality showed the need for learning new skills and engaging in hard work. That is for many the disappointing side of God’s gifts; they are always given that we may serve the better. Even His rest is linked with a yoke (Matt. 11:28-30).*” How does Peter explain the need for working at the good gifts God supplies to us? See 2 Pet. 1:3-7.

18. In what way was the land portioned out for the seven tribes who had not yet claimed their inheritance? See 18:3-10.

19. What else do you learn about the character of Joshua from 19:49-50?

20. As mothers and wives, we are often the last to receive our portion, like when it comes to eating dinner or possibly getting new clothes or even receiving attention. What are some ways to cultivate a patient and contented attitude like Joshua, rather than a resentful and embittered one because you are the *last one* to receive something?

21. How does 19:51 summarize the last 5 chapters of Joshua?

22. Consider how the *lists* of boundaries and towns in Chapters 15-19 would be *profitable* (2 Tim. 3:16) for Israel *then* and for us *now* to study and think on?

23. Dale Davis, commenting on Joshua, writes, “*The God of the Bible tends to be concrete, His gifts tangible and visible. The inheritance He bequeaths is not an idea but boundaries, not thoughts but towns; in a word, **real estate**.*” How does seeing God’s faithfulness in granting Israel the land as their inheritance bolster your own sense of our future inheritance? Read Is. 65:17-25 and Rev. 21-22 keeping in mind God’s concrete and tangible gifts.