

# **Joshua 13-19**

## **“Possessing the Land – part one”**

### **Introduction**

- Tonight we going to continue our study in the book of Joshua - And as you remember from last week this book is divided into three sections

### **The Book of Joshua**

#### **Entering the promise land – Joshua 1-5**

#### **Conquering the promise land – Joshua 6-12**

#### **Possessing the promise land – Joshua 13-24**

- God told Abraham hundreds of years before – I will give your descendants this land
  - And the book of Joshua is the story of how God keeps His promises

### **Now the last few weeks we have been looking at the first two parts of the book**

- as the children of Israel “entered the land” by crossing the Jordan by faith, dealing first with the spiritual priorities of the Feasts and the spiritual significant of the rite of circumcision
  - then once in the land we have been looking at the conquering of the land with the battles of the southern campaign of Jericho, and Ai
  - and then the Northern Campaign around Galilee and the main city of Hazor

### **Well as we get to chapter 13 tonight the major victories have been won**

- it has been 7 years they have been in battle, but God still has one more thing for Joshua to do
  - notice chapter 13 verse one – I love the honesty of God – but he has one more thing for Joshua
  - it is time to possess the land God has given them

### **And there is really a spiritual parallel here for us as well**

- remember this story actually happened
  - there was a real Joshua who led battles in Canaan

### **But this is also a great picture of walking in the Spirit, of walking in all that God has for us in the Spirit filled life**

- Remember what I mean?
  - Leaving Egypt was a picture of being saved, being delivered from bondage
  - Passing through the red sea was a picture of baptism
- The children of Israel then went thorough a legitimate wilderness experience – it took a year to camp at Mount Sinai and then walk to the boarder of the promise land
  - And this parallels our experience – we are saved from bondage, we are baptized, we have a time when we are young in the Lord and don’t know anything – and that is okay
- Bu then comes a time to enter into maturity in Christ
  - The children of Israel turned away and spend 40 years in an illegitimate wilderness experience
  - And maybe that is where you have been

### **Well like the children of Israel, it is time to enter in, to be baptized not with water, but by the Spirit and start to see each of those walled cities in the promise land as promises God has made to you**

- that He loves you
  - that He will give you victory over besetting sins
- and like the children of Israel as God begins to give you victory, now it is time to possess it – not time to fall back, but make this life your own, for good
  - that is what is before the children of Israel

**And we will see over the next few chapters, those who get it, those who do it, those who possess the land and those who just set themselves up for a later fall**

- much to learn from these chapters tonight
  - but here is how we are going to cover them

**Chapter 13-19 is the distribution of the land, which land God gives to each tribe**

- so we could go through this section slowly over the next few weeks, painting a picture with words and your notes
  - or I could hand you a map as I have done on the back of your study guide and we could cover this all in one night – **Map of the 12 tribes land**

**They say that a picture is worth a thousand words**

- and you can see what all the verses over these 7 chapters tell us about the borders of each tribe as they were given by the Lord
  - a picture is worth a thousand words

**The problem with that is there is about 5,000 words in these 7 chapters**

- so there are some things in these seven chapters that our map just doesn't cover
  - so with map in hand, I want us to fly over these seven chapters and hit some highlight lessons that are important from these chapters

**Overview and Highlights of Joshua 13-19**

**#1 – Ruben, Gad and ½ of Manasseh – Joshua 13**

- The major victories have been won, but there were still little pockets of resistance, and the way the Lord wanted Israel to deal with this is to divide up the land and your tribe would go into your land and deal with the small pockets of people still left in your land

**And the first tribes to get their land were the tribes that had asked Moses, a little more than 7 years before this day if they could have the land on the other side of the Jordan River**

- the tribes of Ruben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh liked the land on the other side of the Jordan river and they asked to stay there

**Moses if you remember at first has a fit, because he remembered 40 years before that when the first generation did not want to go into the land and God sent them wondering through the wilderness for 40 years**

- He is worried this is going to happen again
  - But the tribe of Gad, Ruben and half the tribe of Manasseh assure Moses – we will go into the land and fight for our brothers land, but after we fight, can we have a possession on the other side of the Jordan

**The whole thing seemed reasonable to Moses, and so he allowed it to be so**

- so now, again fast forward just over seven years to after the major battles have been fought and land is being given out
  - the tribe of Gad, Reuben, and ½ of the tribe of Manasseh says, we want to stay on the other side of the Jordan

**And we see them now on your map, there located east of the Jordan**

- and everything would be fine, if that was the end of the story
  - but its not
- You see in 723 BC, many years after this event, the Assyrians are going to come to invade Israel

**And though tribes of Israel would fight them off for a while, and Judah and Benjamin and the south would never fall to the Assyrians, the tribes of Gad, Reuben and the ½ Tribe of Manasseh were the first to go**

- They were easily picked off – but consider why because I think the lesson is important for us

## **I propose to you because they were not where God wanted them to be**

- God has given the children of Israel the promise land
  - But instead of entering into all that God had for them, they were content to stay where they were comfortable

## **In effect they are saying to God and to Moses, 7 years before Joshua chapter 13, “We know it would be best to be where God has us, we know it would be better to obey fully the Lord’s commands**

- But we are comfortable on the other side of the Jordan
  - We can stretch our legs a little bit more over there, spread out a little more
  - I know what God has said, but we are fine to just stay here – so they did
- but because they did not enter into all that God had for them, they ended up being the first tribes to be picked off by the enemy
  - and more than that, their entire existence was marked with battle after battle
  - because there wasn’t much separating them between them and the world

## **And I mention that to you and me so we can let the Holy Spirit search our hearts**

- Lord am I fully where you want me to be, or am I satisfied with being comfortable

## **Are you in a place in your life where there is little to separate you from the world**

- As opposed to going deep into the things of God
  - You may be comfortable, but beware
  - It leads to trouble

## **It reminds me of the great fall of King David**

- David is a man after God’s own heart and God did much through Him
  - But you bible students know there is always a caveat - Then David fell
  - He commits adultery with Bathsheba
  - And God forgives and restores, but his effectiveness in life and ministry is never the same
- And every time I study that it amazes me that David, the man after God’s heart, fell so greatly
  - But we need to understand that David’s fall was not without reason

## **We read in II Samuel chapter 11:1 – “That at the time when Kings go out to Battle, David sent Joab to war, but David remained in Jerusalem” – II Samuel 11:1**

- and I want us to consider that because before David was on the roof top watching
  - Before David gave into temptation
  - Before David committed murder trying to cover it up
  - David remained in Jerusalem
- David was not where he was suppose to be
  - And when the enemy wanted to take him down, he was an easy target
- He must have had every excuse in the book, I’m getting older, I have fought battles before, let the younger guys take over, I’m comfortable – but because He was not where he was suppose to be, he was vulnerable

## **I mention that to you and to me, because it illustrates well what we see happen with Gad, Reuben and the ½ tribe of Manasseh**

- They were not where they were suppose to be
  - They did not enter the land
  - And when the enemy wanted them, they were an easy target
- Don’t be an easy target
  - Keep following, keep pursuing
  - Don’t give into being comfortable
  - Keep fighting the enemy
- We see this so clearly with Caleb in just a minute

## **Overview and Highlights of Joshua 13-19**

## #1 – Ruben, Gad and ½ of Manasseh – Joshua 13

## #2 – The Different Number of tribes – Joshua 14:1-5

- Up on the screen is a list of Jacob's son, Jacob had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel

### Jacob's 12 Sons

Simeon

Reuben

Levi

Judah

Dan

Naphtali

Gad

Asher

Issachar

Zebulun

Joseph

Benjamin

- but if you look at those 12 names and then look at your map on the back of your study guide you may notice that there are 12 pieces of land given out, but 2 of Jacob's sons are not mentioned and two extra names are on the list – so what happened?

**Jacob had 12 sons, and but toward the end of his life in Genesis chapter 48, he called Joseph before him and said, you will be doubly blessed over your brothers, for I am adopting your two sons Ephraim and Manasseh and essentially making them tribes of Israel as well.**

- so if you look at your map, there is not land given to the tribe of Joseph, but that is because his family gets all kinds of land, through the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh
  - so one name – Joseph's name is missing but is replaced by 2 names, Ephraim and Manasseh, but there are still only 12 plots of land, not 13, so what other name is missing?
  - Any body – Levi

### The tribe of Levi does not get any land

- now do you remember why
  - because they were the priests
  - and God wanted them focused on ministering to Him and the people and not consumed with planting crops and operating farms
- but the Levites still needed to eat and live
  - so God gave them cities all throughout Israel, that we will look at and study next week
  - and they were fed, by the tithes of the rest of the tribes – 10 percent would go to the Levities so they could live and survive while ministering to the Lord and to the people, not to fields and cows

### Overview and Highlights of Joshua 13-19

## #1 – Ruben, Gad and ½ of Manasseh – Joshua 13

## #2 – The Different Number of tribes – Joshua 14:1-5

## #3 – The Request of Caleb – Joshua 14:6-15

- this is great – look along with me as I read

### As Joshua is handing out the land, his old buddy Caleb comes to offer up a request

- if you remember when we studied the book of Numbers, Moses sent 12 spies into the promise land
  - 10 of them, came back with a bad report
  - there are giants in the land – the sons of Anak, these freaks of nature guys who were 8 to 9 feet tall
- And they will crush us, we can not go in
  - And they turned the heart of the people of Israel away from trusting the Lord

**But Joshua and Caleb said to the children of Israel, no, we can win a great victory**

- yes there are troubles, yes there are problems

- but Caleb said

**“do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread.” – Numbers 14:9**

- Caleb says, let's go, let's take on the giants, they will be bread for us
  - And the indication of the text is Caleb was saying – it will be good for us, healthy for us to take these guys on
  - It will keep us dependant on the Lord and growing in Him – they will be bread for us

**Now what is amazing is 45 years later, Caleb hasn't changed his mind**

- He comes to Joshua now at 85 years old and says, I want the mountain, because I have heard that the Anakim are there

**Now if I was him, I would say, hey give me a condo on the Mediterranean Sea, or a cabin on the Sea of Galilee**

- I want to retire and kick back, relax
  - Come on buddy, hook a brother up
  - That would be my heart

**But that was not what Caleb said**

- He said, I want the Mountains – why?
  - Because I've heard there are Anakim there

**Anakin??? – as in Skywalker – no, not as in Skywalker, for you star wars fans**

- the Anakim, which is plural for the children of Anak, they were those who through some genetic malfunction were 8 and 9 feet tall, they were giants – Goliath, most likely was a descendant of one of these guys
  - and Caleb hears that there are giants, there are Anakim in the Mountains and so he says, hey, that is where I want to go

**Why - I am really confused, I'm with you Pastor Jason, I would want the condo on the beach, I would want the cabin by the sea**

- why would Caleb, at 85 desire such a thing
  - why instead of retirement, instead of kicking back, why would Caleb want Anakim to deal with for the little years he had left

**Well I think Caleb realized something we must**

- he tells Joshua in chapter 14

**“Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said.” – Joshua 14:12**

- Caleb says, I want to keep fighting, I want to keep taking on challenges, because I know as I do, the Lord will be with me
  - So often – I hear you – I want times of ease, I want to kick back and just take it easy and let the next generation fight the battle

**But what I forget is the enemy so often attacks when I let my guard down, when I step it back a little bit**

- And more than that – in times of trials, in times of difficulty, it is then that I am closest to the Lord
  - I think of that classic story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
- The 3 Hebrew young men, friends of Daniel, who when King Nebuchadnezzar made a statue of himself and made everyone bow down, they would not even at the threat of things getting rather hot in their life
  - They choose to follow the Lord and while they were in the fire, Nebuchadnezzar says, How many people did we throw in there, we threw in 3 sir, and Nebuchadnezzar says,

**“Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.” – Daniel 3:25**

- Jesus was with the 3 Hebrew young men in the fire, in fact the reality is, God was closer to them then, in the fire, than He ever was previously in their lives

**And Caleb somehow knows this**

- So he tells his buddy Joshua - I don't want to kick back, I want the mountains, because the children of Anak are up there, and I know they will be bread and strength for me, because I will cling to the Lord and He will be with me
  - Jesus said to His disciples

**“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” – Matthew 7:13-14**

- The board way is easy, the road that says, just give in, it's easy – but it leads to death

**The Narrow road is hard**

- it requires you to trust the Lord, to deal with difficulties
  - but it leads to life

**So let's be like Caleb**

- not always choosing the easy road, giving in to sin and rebellion
  - let's be like Caleb and say, Lord lead me
  - I am okay with the narrow road
  - I am okay with difficulties
- In fact – give me the Mountains, I know there are giants up there, but they will be bread for me, they will be strength for me, because I know, you will be with me

**This was important for Caleb, but don't miss this, it was also important for many others He was around**

- His willingness to trust the Lord for big things – it changed His community – how so
  - They named the place he went to as Kirjath Arba

**Kirjath Arba – “Place of difficulty”**

- but after Caleb is done, it become Hebron
  - which means fellowship

**Hebron – “Fellowship”**

- and God changed this community, to a place of difficulty and hardship and turned it, into a place of fellowship because one man, Caleb trusted the Lord

**But beyond his community being changed, when we get into the book of Judges in just a few weeks, we will see the family of Caleb still doing great things for the Lord**

- Caleb's son-in-law is a man by the name of Othniel, and he will become the first judge over Israel
  - Caleb not only changed his community, but he changed his family because he was willing to trust the Lord and the same will be true of you

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**#4 – Judah, Ephraim, & ½ Manasseh – Joshua 15:1-17:11**

- In these 3 chapters that we will not read much of tonight, you have the distribution of the land given the tribe of Judah in Joshua chapter 15 and you can see that on your map before you – there in the south
  - Then in chapter 16 you have the land given to the tribe of Ephraim, right there in the middle of Israel as you can see on your map

- And then finally in the first part of chapter 17 we have the land given to the other ½ of Manasseh
- Remember, half their tribe wanted to settle on the other side of the Jordan, the other wanted land in the promise land
  - You put all of that with the land given to Ephraim and you see what Jacob told Joseph was true, your family will be double blessed as you see how much land they were given

**But before we move on I do want to point out something that bible says over and over again as the land is handed out**

- remember the plan was Joshua and the army won all the major battles
  - but each tribe was suppose to deal with the small pockets of resistance in its own territory
  - but as you read this section carefully, you realize they never did

**As for the land given to Judah it says...**

**“As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.” – Joshua 15:63**

**As for the land given to Ephraim it says...**

**“And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.” – Joshua 16:10**

**Concerning the land given to Manasseh it says...**

**“Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out *the inhabitants* of those cities, but the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. <sup>13</sup>And it happened, when the children of Israel grew strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.” – Joshua 17:12-13**

- Now they made these nations slaves, they put them under their control
  - But they did not do what God had called them to do, in utterly destroying them
  - Now we don't know why they didn't
- I mean it serves to reason if you can make a people your slaves, you could have destroyed them
  - So for whatever reason they did not

**And why that is important to note, is because in the next book we are going to study, the book of Judges, the roles get reserved**

- many of the tribes of Israel become the slaves of these groups of people and God has to raise up a judge, a deliverer to save them
  - the tribes think they have these people under their thumb, but it turns out not to be so

**And I point that out to you, because so often God tells us to deal radically with an issue in our lives**

- and for whatever reason, normally because we love our sin, we love that issue, we don't fully obey
  - and we think – Lord I have this under control
  - this issue is my slave

**Yet, so often what happens with these issues that the Lord tells us to destroy and we talk ourselves into thinking we have a handle on**

- is well, they come back to bite us, and eventually we find the roles reversed
  - it is we who are in bondage, it is the sin that has control over us
- That is why we need to learn from the tribes of Israel and fully follow the Lord our God
  - Fully obey Him

- Fully deal with the issue He puts on our hearts
- Well, we will pick this topic up in a couple weeks when we get to the Book of Judges
- The children of Israel don't fully take possession of the land and that is what makes the request of Manasseh so crazy to me, let's look at it together

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**#5 – The Request of Manasseh – Joshua 17:12-18**

- Look at these verses with me
  - Now this is amazing to me

### **First we see the great pride of Manasseh and Ephraim**

- why did we only get a little land to share
  - Now look at your map, is that accurate?
  - No way, they have like 1/3 of the nation
- And what do you mean you don't have enough land, you haven't fully possessed the land, you do have
  - There are still people there, and yet you say, I want more
  - Such great pride

### **Now after great pride, comes a great principal from Joshua**

- He says, okay, if you are a great people, then go out and do something great
  - There is a lot of land to clear, a lot of foreign people still in your land
  - Do something great if you are so great

### **And I love this**

- so often I want more to do from the Lord and I haven't even completed the little He gave me to do in the first place
  - and I think the Lord's heart toward us is not – what a loser
  - it is – you say you are great – then go do something great – go finish what I gave you to do, go take steps of faith and try me on this
  - if you are great, do something great

### **And they offer excuses, well we would but the Mountains are enough for us and the valley, well those guys down there are too hard**

- It cracks me up, and then it makes me cry because is so much like me - I need something great to do God
  - Okay – you haven't finished what I gave you to do, but get after it, do something great
  - Well I would but this option is too small and that option is too hard

### **I find this so funny – but if I was Joshua, the next thing I would say is, “you cats are ridiculous, I am too busy to deal with your whining”**

- but that is not what Joshua does, notice verse 17
  - you are a great people, and you are going to do great things – He prophesied over them and no doubt encourages them – just like our Jesus does for us – you are great, you will do great things

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## #6 – The land for the rest – Joshua 18-19

- I will leave these closing chapters for you to read on your own
  - Land is given to the 7 remaining tribes of Israel
  - And you can see on your map where the borders of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun, Issachar, Benjamin, Simeon and Dan are located

### **But there is one more highlight we need to pick up before we go our way, and that is what happened to Dan**

- they were given the sea coast, east of Ephraim as an inheritance
  - it is where the modern city of Tel Aviv is located, and I mention that because it is a beautiful spot
  - **Pictures of Tel Aviv**
  - This is where my in-laws, Christy's parents have a church that they pastor and lead

### **This is where God gave them to live**

- but if you know your Bible, the tribe of Dan will eventually be located in the far North of Israel
  - **map of the nation of Israel later in history (divided kingdom)**
- What happened to Dan? Why did they move?
  - Well again we will get more into this in the book Judges, which is really part two of the book of Joshua

### **But basically if you notice the map on the back of your study guide – they were given the land that was right next to the Philistines**

- And it was difficult, there were many battles to fight
  - And, Dan got tired of that, they wanted peace and safety
  - It was the opposite of Caleb's story
- And so unfortunately was the end result
  - Caleb changed his family and his community as He wholly followed the Lord

### **But Dan up in the North, was the first to get into idolatry**

- they were first to be defeated by enemies invading from the North
  - and eventually they will fade from History because they didn't stay where God wanted them to be

### **You see sometimes God wants you to go – like I believe He did for the tribe of Reuben, Gad and ½ of Manasseh**

- but they stayed where they were comfortable, and they suffered because of it
  - God wanted them to go into the promise land, but they refused

### **Well for the tribe of Dan, God wanted them to stay**

- and yes it meant fighting battles, but that was where God had them
  - but they left and again suffered the consequences

### **Sometimes God wants us to go, sometimes He wants us to stay**

- how do I know what time it is – seek Him, seek Him with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind
  - I have found I don't get in trouble when my heart says – Lord what do you want
  - When I get in trouble is when I am determined to do something – and I will do it no matter what – danger!
  - Trust the Lord, obey the Lord, and follow Him fully!