

Joshua 07-09-14a

This is Friday the 14th of September 2007. We continue tonight our study in the book of Joshua. We pick up in chapter 15, verse 20.

We'll take a moment as always to go to the Lord in prayer. It's a reminder and an opportunity to recognize the role of God's Holy Spirit in the teaching and the hearing and the understanding and the remembering and the applying virtually every aspect of God's word in our lives. Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for this opportunity to spend time together in the study of your word and fellowship and seeking to improve our understanding and our remembrance of the things that you have given to us by way of spiritual truth.

We thank you for the passage that is before us and we pray that as we study it that each one of us will find in it the truth that will transform our thinking and renew our minds and thoroughly equip us for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We saw last time that we entered the phase in the book of Joshua where the initial strategic battle is over and the land is being divided. As a pop quiz, when you come to chapter 15, how many tribes have received their inheritance already? How many tribes have been given their assignment? Remember there were some tribes who said, we are content to stay on the east side of the Jordan and inherit Gilead and Bashan. What are those tribes? Who are they? Somebody tell me out loud.

Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. So we've got two and a half tribes or three depending on how you want to count them. They usually call Manasseh the half-tribe because it's half of what would have been the tribe of Joseph.

Joseph gets the double portion so he's got Ephraim and Manasseh. So Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh already have an assignment on the east side of the Jordan. So then in chapter 15, the lot that is cast for Judah is under discussion and we've seen the re-occurrence or the repetition of the story of Caleb because he had a prior claim and we've gone through that.

Most recently we looked at the story of Hebron and Davir, Kiriath-sephir and Kiriath-arba, the city of four and the city of the book, both given other names. And then finally we ended up with Othniel and Ahsa and the willingness of Othniel to go perform the Father's will and the Father's command and be rewarded with a bride, a theme which occurs more than once in the Scripture. And there are certainly spiritual overtones there.

We saw what a great man Othniel was not only in taking Kiriath-sephir and in becoming the husband for Caleb's daughter Ahsa, but also in judges he is going to rule Israel and be a blessing for 40 years. Well this brings us now to verse 20 and let's read a little bit of this so we see what we're getting into. Joshua chapter 15 verse 20 This was the

inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families.

The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the border of Edom in the south were Karzil, Eder, Jagur, Kinah, Dimona, Adadah, Kadesh, Hathor, Ithnon, Ziph, Telum, Bealot, Hathor, Aditah, Keriot, Hezron, which is Hathor, Amam, Shema, Moladah, Hazar-gadah, Heshmon, Beth-peleth, Hazar-shuol, Birsheba, Bizjodah, Balalah, Ejim, Ezem, El-tolad, Kesil, Hormat, Ziklag, Madmana, Sansana, Lebaoth, Shilhin, Ayin, and Rimmon. All the cities are 29 with their villages. Then in verse 33 and following we have similar town lists and it's a challenge if you think it's hard to read these in English it's doubly a challenge to have read them in Hebrew and then go back and read the transliterations in English which don't always match the Hebrew.

But it gives the towns in the lowland beginning with Eshtaol and going all the way down to Naama and Makedah, 16 cities with their villages. Then in verse 42 you have Libna, Ether, Ashan, Jitha, Ashna, Nazib, and so on, all the way down. Then in verse 48 you have in the mountain country Shemir, Jetir, etc.

All the way down to verse 57 you have Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah, 10 cities with their villages, etc. All the way down to the end of verse 60 with Rabah being mentioned. And then verse 61 gives wilderness cities of Beth-Arabah, Medin, Sekhah, and so on.

So, it's just a big list of cities. And we say, well, this is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families. Well, what can we possibly do with this? If you were a Sunday school teacher and the Lord Jesus Christ came down and said, I want you to teach Joshua chapter 15 verses 20-63 to your Sunday school class day after tomorrow.

And I'll give you all day tomorrow to study. What approach would you take? In other words, the real question I'm asking is, what is the value of this section of scripture for a believer? How would we benefit from it? What spiritual truth would we derive from it? What application can we make of it when it is basically on the surface, sort of like reading the phone book or the index to your Masco. And it's a challenge because obviously you can go to any paragraph in the book of Romans and find stuff to preach on for weeks.

But when you get a list of cities, you think, well, probably the first thing I would do is get a concordance and look at the meaning of all of these names. And there's certainly something to that. But you look at how many cities there are and how many meanings and stringing them together.

And one means, you know, city of jars. And another one means valley. And another one means, you know, there's just one means daughter.

And another one means they've got all these different meanings. And you would have to

start becoming perhaps allegorical in trying to invent a story that would account for all of these meanings. And you might be suspicious that it would be similar.

What would happen if you took the names of towns in America and translated those? What does Philadelphia mean? It means brotherly love. You could take various city names. As I was looking at the suburbs of Dallas here in the metroplex, many of these are named after people.

Richardson is named after a person. Allen is named after Zebulon Allen or Zedekiah Allen. I think his name starts with a Z. He founded a railroad, and the town of Allen was named for him.

Garland is named after a famous guy. Dallas is named after a guy. Houston is named after Sam Houston.

Austin is named after Stephen F. Austin. And so then you'd say, well, if I'm going to list these, what is the meaning? Well, that's not the approach that we're going to take, although I think you could probably find a lot of fruitful study in that. But the first thing we want to do is note that the introduction in verse 20 says this.

This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to what? According to their families. We've already been given the perimeter. We've been given the border.

And there were few enough cities and a significance to the border that tells us the boundary of your inheritance is probably important. And the name of each of those landmarks did have a significance, as we saw. But now, within that border, we are being given all of these towns.

Well, what sort of sense can we make out of this? Well, let me first of all give a little bit of structure. There is, in fact, a structure to this which you can discern. Notice in verse 21 it says, The cities at the limits of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the border of Edom in the south.

What's the Hebrew word that translates to south? Do you remember? Negev. So, this is toward the Negev. Which direction is Edom from Judah? Is it to the north? Is it to the west? Is it to the south? Or is it to the east? Edom is basically east.

East and somewhat south. But it's pretty much east of the territory of Judah. So, these are going to be cities that are all sort of in the eastern portion.

But specifically, they are identified as being in the south. And it's basically sort of south and southeast. That's toward Edom from Judah.

So, verses 21 through 32 are all cities that are in the Negev. In the south or southeast. There's going to be a total of 29 towns listed there.

Actually, there's going to be a few more, but I'll talk about that later. So, basically 29 towns that are identified as these are the Negev towns toward Edom. So, there are four big districts.

The first one is the Negev. The second one is given in verse 33. And this is the lowland.

Notice in verse 33 it says, in the lowland colon. Do you remember the Hebrew? This is a little tougher to remember. What's the Hebrew word that's translated lowland? Shefala.

You will hear these words used today if you watch news reports talking about Israel and the Palestinian question and one thing and another. They'll talk about the Shefala. S-H-E-P-H-E-L-A-H.

S-H-E-P-H-E-L-A-H. Shefala. And that's the lowlands.

This is the second district. It's verses 33 through 47. So, you can either make a note of that or you can just draw a line between these sections.

The first section begins in verse 21 and stops in verse 32. So, you can just draw a line between verses 32 and 33. That's section one.

Section two is verses 33 through 47. These are all the lowland towns. There's 42 towns.

29 towns in the first section. 42 towns in the second section. The third section begins, obviously, in verse 48.

It says, and in the mountain country. These are going to be the mountain towns. And there are going to be 49 towns in the mountains.

And that's going to go from verse 48 through verse 60. And the fourth big district, or the fourth category here, is going to be in the wilderness. Verse 61 and 62.

Bait Araba, Medin, Sekaka, Nishan, the City of Salt, and Engedi. Six cities with their villages. That's the wilderness.

So, you've got four districts. Everybody still with me so far? The structure is going to help us. It breaks it into smaller pieces.

Anytime you have a big confusing thing, like my garage, you have to break it into smaller sections. You're going to clean out my garage. You can't just clean the whole thing out.

You're going to have to take one spot. Deal with that. Here's all of the computer stuff in this spot.

Here's all the girls' craft materials in this spot. Here's my car in this spot. Here's the refrigerator and the spare sodas in this spot.

Here's all of the tools and buckets of gloves and odds and ends and the shelves in this spot. Break it into smaller sections, and then deal with each section, and it simplifies. If you ever play chess, you've got a nice, neat, orderly row of 16 pieces for black and 16 pieces for white.

And you think, well, 16 pieces, that's a lot of things to remember. Well, the front row there of your pieces is all pawns. They all move the same and act the same, and they're all of equal value.

So, that's easy, that front row of eight. And then behind there, you've got your king and your queen. And if you look at it, they're symmetrical.

After you get past the king and queen, you've got a bishop and then a knight and then a rook. So, you break it into smaller things, and you say, okay, how does a bishop move? How does a knight move? How does a rook move? What are the unique things about a queen? How do the pawns, what are the rules for en passant, and so on? But then you start playing, and white begins, and he'll move e2 to e4. Or he'll move his king's pawn up or whatever.

And then black will respond. And so far, so good. You move a pawn here and a pawn there.

Move a knight here and a knight there. Bring out your bishop. You're doing the only opening I know is the Ruy Lopez.

And so I set my little guys up and get castled. And then people start moving their bigger pieces out. The pawns have opened up a few diagonals.

And so your bishops and your knights come jumping out. And pretty soon, the board gets really complex. And you think, well, how many different squares is this knight attacking? And how far can this bishop project his power? And what's that queen doing down there? Oh, I notice he's sacrificed a pawn, but now he's controlling half of a file there, half of a column down the board.

And it starts getting really complex. Well, hack players like me say this is too complex. I can't think three or four moves down the board with all of these pieces.

So you know what I do? At every opportunity where I can make an even trade, I do it. If somebody says, well, I'm going to put my bishop here, and I've got a knight, and he's protecting his bishop with a pawn, I'll kill the bishop. He'll kill my knight.

Each of us has lost three points. But now the board is simpler. And Uncle Matt knows this.

This is why he beats me every time. He knows my strategy is very simple. Get my pawns

out of the way.

Get my guys out there and start trading as fast as I can to simplify the board, make it simpler, so that you can see further ahead. So when things get complex in our lives, when our situation, our circumstances, our decisions get complex, one useful tool is see if you can simplify. Same thing in algebra.

You know how you get very complex equations, and you think, well, can I combine my x's? Can I cross-multiply and get these division things out of the way and get it to be all multiplication? Can I combine terms? Can I get a common denominator here and get rid of some fractions? That's how we solve equations, isn't it? They're very complex. We reduce. We simplify.

We get down to something we can manage. Well, when you get to a passage like this, I think you would probably agree with me that on the surface when you read these verses, it's complicated. I don't see an immediate believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved or thou shalt not or something like that.

It's just this big town list. So we simplify. Our first level of simplification is to notice that these towns are broken into four big sections.

So that's what we've done so far. What are the four sections? The South, the Lowlands, the Shephelah, the Mountains, and the Desert, the Wilderness. Now, let's go back to our first section, the Negev, the South.

That was verses 21 through 32. We said there were 29 towns. Well, what is not so apparent in the English translation that you have before you but is apparent in the Hebrew by the use of the conjunction waw.

It's the W or the waw if you're German and you can't say W. By looking at which words are connected, we find that inside this section, there are four subsections, four subsections inside that first section. So, group one is verses 21 through 23. So we take a look at that.

You've got these towns, the limits, the border of Edom to the South. You've got Qadziel, Eder, Jagur, Kina, Dimona, Adada, Kadesh, Hatzor, Ithnon, Zif, and then see where it switches over to verse 24 there. You can't see it in English, but there's a dividing line there.

Those first nine towns make up a section. So that's group one. The second group is verses 24 and 25.

Those five towns that are listed, that's a separate group. The third group is verses 26 through 28. There's nine towns.

And the fourth group is verses 29 through 32, and there's 13 towns. Okay? So, 21 through 23, 24 and 25, 26 through 28, and 29 through 32. Now, my whole point in breaking this down is, think about this.

This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families. How many families are there in the tribe of Judah? There's a lot. So, if I'm in a particular family, I'm descended from Perez and on down through whoever, where is my spot? Where is my place? Where are my people? Where is my inheritance? Where am I going to live? Well, this is the detailed breakdown.

What I would suggest to you is, this is sort of like the perimeter that we've already received for Judah. That's like the borders of the United States. Well, actually, the promised land is like the United States.

Each tribal assignment is like a state. So, this tribe of Judah perimeter, that's like the state boundary, the state border. That tribe is going to have its own tribal justice.

There's going to be, it's like the state supreme court. The elders of the tribe of Judah, that's where you go for your justice. That's who you're going to go see if there's a dispute or a problem.

You're going to go to the elders of the tribe. They are the state supreme court. And the only thing higher than that would be in the days of Moses or Joshua.

You could go to sort of the federal leader. But pretty soon, Joshua is going to be gone. Who is the national leader of Israel once Joshua dies? There's not any.

It's decentralized government at that point. And each state is going to sort of manage itself, each tribe. So, we're looking at our first example of a state in the nation of Israel here.

And this is what you might think of as the state of Judah. Now, what about our state of Texas? Or any other state that you're familiar with. Oklahoma, Virginia, whatever, California.

What's the next lowest division within a state? You've got counties, right? Well, these big areas that are described here. The south, the lowland, the mountains, and the wilderness. That's not really a political description, is it? You know, when you take geography and you take civics and all that, they talk about the difference between a... It's like looking at a topographical map.

You're going to see topography. Mountains, valleys, rivers, terrain features. When you look at a political map, you're going to see boundaries.

State boundaries, county boundaries. If you zoom in far enough, the city limits and

things like that, right? So, these four descriptive sections are basically just saying, well, it's kind of like we talk about the Texas panhandle or the Oklahoma panhandle. That's not a hard and fast description.

Or you can talk about... In Arkansas, you can say, well, in the Ozarks or here or there. So, these four big divisions that we've talked about are just in this direction, in this direction. We might say North Texas, East Texas, West Texas, or the Gulf Coast.

That would be our four big descriptions of the state of Texas. We know what we're talking about when we say West Texas. We're talking about, that's like the desert.

That's where the wind blows and the soil goes. You've got North Texas, North Central Texas where we live. You've got the Gulf Coast area, Houston and Beaumont and that whole region down there.

And then you've got East Texas, which is green and hilly and generally fertile and much different than the other parts of the state. Well, same thing here. So, what do you think these groups are? When he says in the South, you've got these four groups.

Those are basically going to be counties. So, in verses 21 through 23, these nine towns, they're all in this sort of county area. That's going to be sort of a clan area within the tribe of Judah.

We have a nation with states and counties and then townships, right? In Israel, they had tribes, clans, and then families. Same general thing. So, these are going to be clan areas.

Verses 21 through 23, these nine towns, there's going to be one particular clan of the tribe of Judah that's going to populate that area. And same thing with verses 24 through 25, those five towns. Verses 26 through 28, those nine towns.

And then verses 29 through 32, 13 towns. It's kind of irregular because, hey, the makeup of the clans is irregular. Some are bigger, some are smaller.

Some need more room and more towns and more facilities. Some need less. Some are more business types that want to live in the city.

Others want to have more open territory where they can pasture and graze their flocks. And they'll get together and work this stuff out and decide kind of where their boundaries are. But these are the town assignments that sort of define those areas.

Well, you get to the second topographical description, which is the Shephelah, the lowlands. This is where your clans who like to do a lot of pasturing of flocks and so on are going to want to dwell. And, again, if you look at this in Hebrew, there are markers that indicate that there are four clan areas within this set of 42 towns.

The first group is verses 33 through 36. So you could just make a little line there. There's

14 towns there.

The second group is 37 through 41. Verses 37 through 41, there's 16 towns there. The third group is verses 42 through 44.

There's nine towns. And then the fourth group is verses 45 through 47. There's only three towns there.

And we'll go back and look at why in a moment. But let me just finish this out. For those of you who are taking detailed notes, I'll give you this real quick.

The third gray area, the mountains, in the mountain areas, it's verses 48 through 60. There are six clan areas or six districts. Six what we would call counties in there.

If you think of each clan in Judah living in its own county. So verses 48 through 51, there's 11 towns listed there. And then the second group is verses 52 through 54.

There's nine towns. And the third group, verses 55 through 57, there's 10 towns. And the fourth group, verses 58 through 59, there's six towns.

And then in verse 60, there are two towns. And that's only five groups, right? And there are actually six. And unfortunately, what has happened here.

Now if you're glazed over, and I don't blame you. Talking about how many towns, how many districts, it's kind of dull. But hang with me.

But just be aware in your Bible, if you don't note anything else, you need to note this. You have got a couple of missing verses between verse 59 and verse 60. An entire clan area has been, has dropped out through a scribal error.

Thankfully, it was still in the text at the time that the Septuagint was translated. Remember what the Septuagint is? Greek translation of the Old Testament. Well, the Septuagint, the Syriac, and a bunch of other witnesses have these verses.

But the Masoretic text, preserved by the Jews, it dropped out. And there's a reason for it. You know how repetitive this is.

It's the same reason some of y'all are struggling to not drop out from my discussion here. They get down this far in the list, and they saw a phrase, and then they looked away, and took a sip of their coffee, and they looked back, and they saw that phrase again. It's what we call, technically, homoia teluton.

It's a big, long Greek word that means, there's the same phrase here, and the same phrase here, and I skipped from one to the other, and omitted the intervening text. So, an entire clan group has been omitted between verses 59 and 60. Now, why would this be important? Well, I'll tell you.

It's because this particular clan group contains 11 cities. And let me tell you what the cities are. Let me get my Septuagint up here.

Here are the cities. You see that in your copy of Joshua, you get down there to verse 59, and it says, Ma'arath and Beit Anokh and El Tikon, six cities with their villages. Well, after that, there should be, pardon me, I'm struggling with switching from Hebrew to Greek here, Theko, which is better known as Tekoa.

Remember the woman of Tekoa? That's in this district. It's also the home of the prophet Amos. They have found the remains of it there.

Ephrathah, better known as Bethlehem. It's only the most important district in Judah, and it got left out of the text. Tekoa is there.

Bethlehem, Ephrathah, is there. The birthplace of the Lord Jesus Christ is there. You have some others that are less well known, such as Phagor, P-H-A-G-O-R, and Kulon, K-U-L-O-N.

There is Tatam, T-A-T-A-M, S-O-R-E-S, Sores, which survives today as Saris, S-A-R-I-S. Kerem, which is Ein Kareem, Galem, Bethar, and so on. But the main ones, each of these districts, there's one or two prominent cities, and in that particular missing district, between 59 and 60, is Tekoa and Bethlehem, the area of David.

So that makes a total of six districts in the mountain areas. That's the mountains and the hills, including the area around Bethlehem. And then the final group is the desert, which is verses 61 and 62.

And the only other, well, I'm sorry, I left out the lowlands, the Shephelah, in verses 33 through 47. Let me just point out that in the fourth group there, it lists only three towns in verses 45 through 47. Just look at that right quick.

1545, you should recognize some of these names. Ekron, with its towns and villages, from Ekron to the sea, and all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages. What do you remember about Ekron and Ashdod? Philistine.

How many cities of the Philistines were there? There were five. What are the ones that are not listed here? How about Gath and Ashkelon? Remember those? The important cities seem to get left out. Bethlehem, the city of David, and Gath, the city of Goliath, aren't mentioned here.

But they are in this district that is defined by Ashdod and Ekron and Gaza. The other two missing towns there are Gath and Ashkelon. That makes the total of five Philistine cities.

And one of the reasons that that district gets short shrift in verses 45-47 is that Judah never really conquered this and held it for any length of time. They never really

controlled these cities. And so it's almost an afterthought.

And it's kind of like they didn't even really want to mention all of the towns because the men of Judah never lived in Ashkelon. They never lived in Gath. They never lived in Ashdod and Ekron and so forth.

They were supposed to take those, but they never did. Well, this breaks these down into smaller sections. What conclusion do we draw now that we've kind of seen the structure of this a little bit? Four geographical areas, four topographical areas.

Within those, we have clan areas. There's four clan areas in the Negev. There are four clan areas in the Shephelah.

There are six clan areas in the mountains. Are you keeping count? Four plus four plus six is how many? Fourteen. And then in the desert, that's just one area because it's only a couple of towns, six towns and one district.

So how many total clan areas are there? Four plus four plus six plus one. How many is that? Fifteen. And we don't have time to do it, but if we did, you could go to Chronicles and look at the number of grandsons of Judah.

Remember he started out with Ur and Onan and bad things happened and those guys died and Tamar was involved and Tamar got pregnant with Judah so Judah ended up having Perez and Zerah. Remember that? And then Perez and Zerah themselves had sons. And if you count up the sons of Perez and Zerah, you end up with seven grandsons of Judah through Tamar.

And when you go to 1 Chronicles, it's real interesting because those seven grandsons are detailed and then a bunch of descendants from them because that leads down to David. David is descended from Judah through Perez. And so you have that.

You have that sketch of the tribe of Judah and their descendants. I believe it's in 1 Chronicles 2. But then it goes down into families and after talking about those clans, the grandsons kind of make the clans. And then after that you've got families.

And after the families, you've got individuals. It has the family of Caleb and then it gives the family of David, the family of Solomon, the family of Jeconiah. Then in chapter 4 of 1 Chronicles, it returns and it says the sons of Judah.

And it picks up again. It says Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Her and Shoval. And you pick up and you're going to end up with eight more grandsons making these great big clans.

And so you're going to end up with 15 major clans in the tribe of Judah. Seven of them are given before the sort of digression to trace David out because he's the famous member of the tribe. And then it goes back and picks up and gets the other eight clans.

But they're divided. There's seven and then there's eight. And it's the same thing that you have here in Joshua, where you have in the Negev and in the lowland, you have eight, which is four plus four.

And then in the mountains and in the desert, you have six plus one making seven. And so you have essentially the first eight and then you have the last ones there. And so these numbers keep cropping up and we know the number seven is significant.

We know the number four is significant. You've got four geographical areas in the tribe of Judah. And then each of the first two have got four divisions under them.

And then you've got six plus one. And this is interesting to ponder. And without giving a specific interpretation of that, let me just suggest to you this.

Nothing is random. Nothing is just arbitrary without purpose in God's plan. The tribe of Judah has been assigned a specific area and each landmark in the boundary is meaningful.

Within that territory, each of the clans has been assigned a specific place with specific cities in it. And they are supposed to know that. This is how the justice system works.

Where is your first court if you've got a border dispute or you've got an issue with a neighbor or somebody scooped all the water out of your well or filled in your well or stole your cattle or did a wrong to your daughter or whatever. Where do you go for justice? It is organized. God has assigned areas.

And there is a clan justice. You go to the leader of the clan through your family. You go to your patriarch of your family and if he can't figure it out, you go to the clan.

If the clan can't figure it out, you go to the elders of your tribe. You take it up to the state supreme court. Just like here, we've got county courts.

And then we've got state courts. Same thing in Israel. So the people in Israel, God is giving them structure.

He is giving them organization. He is giving them specific assignments. And different people in the tribe, even though the tribe has an overall destiny, the tribe of Judah, you remember the things that Jacob said about Judah with the white teeth and the donkey tied to the vine and laying down with the lion and so on.

That's the tribal destiny. But within the tribal destiny, there are sub-destinies. Just as there are sub-assignments of the land.

And every member of the tribe of Judah, every male in that tribe, should know, this is my assignment. This is where I live. This is my legal system.

This is my place of opportunity. This is my place of responsibility. And what it tells us, by way of application, we as body and bride of Christ, as church-age believers, have an overall destiny.

There are certain things that are true of all of us. But within the plan and purpose of God, we have individual assignments that differ. We are in a particular kind of church.

And we say, well, I think this kind of church is the best. Well, I do too. However, it's the best for you and me.

There are other believers, it's kind of like they're in a different clan. What business is it of mine to look three clan areas over within my tribal allotment and say, I don't think they're running that clan very well. Their towns aren't as good as our towns.

And they've got too much of this and not enough of that. And I don't think their elders in the clan and elders in the families are really running things right. Hey, none of my business.

I am here. This is my assignment. This is my place of opportunity.

This is my place of possession and inheritance. I don't have possession and inheritance. Even within the same tribal area, those guys, that's their deal.

Those are their towns. They've got to drive the enemies out. They've got to rebuild the gates and the walls.

They've got to make sure there's water. They've got to handle their people and their dependents, their stocks and their flocks and their things that God has given them. My place is here.

My assignment is here. And God in great detail says, look, here are the towns that are assigned in your particular district of the tribal area. That's where to concentrate your effort and your focus and your judgment and your sense of responsibility.

Let other people hold their own rope and take care of their assignment. We have this reiterated in the New Testament time and time again. We are to be quiet and work with our hands.

Not be poking our nose into other people's business. Let our light shine before men. Don't let our good be spoken of as evil.

And not be looking over the fence and saying, well, how come I didn't get... Boy, you know, that town of Nibshan has got the neatest looking house in it. I so love that house. I was really hoping I'd get the town of Nibshan.

But I didn't. I got Medin. And Medin is just a bunch of old big Canaanites who lived in

Medin and were lazy.

I'm going to have to rebuild this entire house. Well, look, that's your assignment. That's what you've got to do.

You didn't get Nibshan. And quit looking over the valley at Medin and saying, well, how come I didn't get to live over there? God makes the assignment. This is what strikes me out of this.

It's careful. It's thought out. It is specific.

It is detailed. And it is personally applicable. Every member of the tribe of Judah would need to know this list.

And need to know which clan goes where. Where is my place? Where is my territory? Where will my fences and my flocks be? And it's the same with us. Let each of us... Remember our memory verse.

Consider others better than himself. Look out not only for our own interests but also for the interests of others. One of the ways to look out for the interests of others is, don't go meddling.

Don't go judging. Don't go analyzing and Monday morning quarterbacking and backseat driving for somebody across the valley in their town, their clan area, with their elders that God had grow up in that part of the family to make those decisions and you say, oh, they've got such great judges over there, I can't catch a break over here, our elders are all old fuddy-duddies, they don't know, they can't judge right. Hey, this is where God put us.

You and I have a set of circumstances and this is what we are accountable for and responsible for. And that's what you see in this carefully detailed, carefully structured, very specific and comprehensive assignment. And it's a tragedy that the one little section got left out in the Masoretic text, but we can paste it back in.

It's an important district. But you can imagine, if Satan was going to try to trouble the text here, which clan would he want to subtract out? Well, let's get rid of the wise woman of Tekoa, let's get rid of Bethlehem. Let's just subtract that right out.

Let's try to make sure nobody remembers that they're responsible for that area. The judgment and righteousness and accountability need to take place in that area. So, it concludes in verse 63, after all of those sections, As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah, could not drive them out.

So the Jebusites lived with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day. Well, this is kind of a strange notation. We'll pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll see why this final verse is so significant.