

Joshua 07-09-14b

Let's pick up our study now in Joshua chapter 15. There are a couple of quick details I would like to clean up from our study, and I appreciate your patience as we look at these lists of cities. It's a little bit of a challenge, but in my experience, when a passage is challenging, there's good little nuggets of neat things inside when you take the time to figure them out.

You might have noticed, and Dinah mentioned on the break, that a couple of the counts don't seem to quite add up. I gave you the numerical totals for these different counties, if you will, and in the first section on the Negev, or the south, we said there are 29 towns, and those were divided into four groups, but if you sit and count up, and some people are so detail-oriented, they'll sit and count every single town, you'll find that there's actually more than that. There are 30-something of them, and the reason for this is there's 36 listed, but it says there's only 29, so we've got a difference of seven towns, and there have been a variety of explanations for this.

They love to throw in the editor. All of these liberal scholars say, well, the text has been edited, and an editor has monkeyed with it. Well, you'd have to be an incredibly incompetent and inept editor to add these towns in and then not change the total.

Here's what actually happened. If you look at these 36 towns that are listed, and it says that there's 29, keep your finger here and turn to Joshua chapter 19. Joshua chapter 19.

We're going to see in that chapter, when we get there, that this is the detail for the tribe of Simeon, and without taking the time to go into detail, you'll see there in that section, 19 verse 2, where it says Moladah, and then in verse 3 it says Hazar-Shual, and so forth. Basically, seven of the towns that were initially assigned to Judah ended up being given to Simeon, and the towns are Moladah, Hazar-Shual, Beersheba, Azem, El-Tolad, Horma, and Ziklag. They started out being assigned to Judah, but they ended up going to Simeon, and as I explained on the break, we've seen this kind of thing happen here in the United States as the country expanded and as borders were refined a little bit.

My great-great-great-grandfather was born in what at that time was Tennessee or Kentucky. It's right on the border between Tennessee and Kentucky, and there was a river that ran through there, and they changed the border. So, although it was Kentucky when he was originally born there, it ended up being Tennessee or vice versa.

I forget now how it went, but on the 1800s census, they took a federal census every ten years, and they say, where were you born? Well, on some of them he says, I was born in Kentucky, and others he says, I was born in Tennessee. And the truth is, both things are true, because at the time he was born, it was one state, but later on it was the other state. Same thing happened up here in the northwest corner of Texas, up close to where the Panhandle sticks up, and that border with Oklahoma, that corner, that border

changed shortly after Oklahoma became a state.

It was actually Indian Territory for a while, and part of Texas ended up getting ceded over to Oklahoma, and that's the area where Dr. Krizzle was from. And so where he and his father raised his family, they started out being in Texas, but it ended up being ceded over to the state of Oklahoma. And it was just a little border difference.

Well, the same sort of thing happened between Judah and Simeon. That accounts for the difference in 29 versus 36 towns. You will find those other seven towns, by the time you get to Joshua 19, belong to the tribe of Simeon.

And this is not without significance. Think about it. God originally said, tribe of Judah, here is your assignment.

And you are the premier tribe, the tribe of Judah, the ruling tribe. The Messiah is going to come from this tribe. The kings of Israel will come from this tribe.

Judah inherits the rulership, and he earned it back in Egypt, facing his brother Joseph and sticking up for his brother Benjamin, and where Reuben and Simeon and Levi lost the rulership, and it had gone all the way down, well, it came back and was conferred upon Judah because of his courage and because of his integrity and because of his demonstrated leadership abilities. And so this is the tribe of Judah, and they are given these seven towns, but they end up going to a different tribe. Somebody has got to conquer these towns, drive out the Canaanites, and fulfill God's plan and purpose.

And it was assigned to Judah. For whatever reason, Judah could not occupy, could not fill them, couldn't deal with them, traded them away for a mess of pottage. We don't know what happened, but for whatever reason, they ended up being listed as belonging to Simeon.

Now there is another town that is going to be in that same category, as we will soon see. There is one other little sort of counting discrepancy in verse 36, and it says that there are, at the end of verse 36, it says this is a total of 14 cities with their villages, but if you count the names in your passage, there are 15. But look at the last two.

In verse 36 it says, 14 cities with their villages. Count all the names and you get 15. Well, that very last one, is not found in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of this passage.

And if you look at it, it is a conflation of the beginning of Gedera and the last part of Adithayim or Sha'arayim. The Ayim ending and the G-D-R beginning, it's kind of like maybe these were the end of a line in what the scribe was copying, and somebody messed up and tried to correct it in the margin, and tried to make it more clear, and the next scribe to come along, that guy had died, and he said, well I can read this, it's Gedera, but it looks like he added a town out here, and it's Gederathayim, and it got stuck in. So you can just scratch out Gederathayim, there is no such place.

It's just a mistake conflated from the last two of those 14. So, the great thing is that anytime we need specific information, even though there are human errors in copying, God preserves the evidence to let us figure out what happened. And anything we need to know is knowable.

Nothing that God wants to reveal to us has been lost because of human failure. And this is another important principle. Think about it.

You are going to hear at some time in your life, that you are not doing enough as a Christian, to witness and to evangelize your friends and neighbors, your co-workers, your family, your hair stylist, and your checkout clerk at the supermarket, or whoever. What's the matter with you? Have you checked? Do you live next to your neighbor for so many years? Do you even know if they're saved or not? What's the matter with you? How come you're not going out there and finding out, and making sure everybody you see, and everybody you know, and everybody you ever exchange words with is saved? And if you don't, their blood is on your hands. That person could end up in the lake of fire for all eternity, because you did not care enough to share the gospel with them.

Now, this is absurd, in addition to being blasphemous. Don't let anybody get away with telling anybody. If you hear anybody saying this, you need, as the more knowledgeable believer, to teach them and to correct them, and give them a little bit of God's truth.

Nobody is going to go to the lake of fire because of human failure. What if you were that person? Here I am, I'm Sam Hall, and my mother is the designated person to give me the gospel. My mother gave me the gospel, and I got saved when I was a tiny young lad, before I even went to school.

And I remember the day that she sat me down in the living room, and she talked to me about sin, and about God's judgment, and about the work of Jesus Christ, and did I want to accept that and accept God's gift. And I said, yes, absolutely. It was easy.

It just made sense. I've got this big problem. Jesus fixed it.

Do you want to accept that gift from Jesus? Sure. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that. Well, suppose that my mother had gotten busy and never bothered to share the gospel with me.

Nobody else in my entire life. I was just such a rascal that nobody wanted to share the gospel with me. They were kind of hoping I'd go to the lake of fire, and they wouldn't have to look at me for all eternity or something.

So I never heard the gospel. Everybody fell down on the job. So here I am, bobbing around in the lake of fire, and I look up at God, and I could have been saved.

I could have been a member of the body of Christ. I could have been in the realms of

glory, enjoying eternal life. But it's all my mom's fault.

She didn't give me the gospel. She got distracted. She got busy.

Maybe she gave the wrong gospel, and I believed the wrong thing, and I became a Jehovah's Witness or something. A bunch of Jehovah's Witnesses tried to get her to join up right around the time she got saved. Well, what if she had made me into a flaming Jehovah's Witness, and I never got the true gospel? And it's my mother's fault.

Does that sound like the plan and purpose of God? Would God let in His justice and righteousness? Well, you know, I would have saved you, and I had told somebody to tell you the gospel, but they failed, so sorry, but you're in the lake of fire. I mean, think about how ridiculous this is. Their blood is on your hands.

Nonsense. If you fail to give someone the gospel, and you really should have, you're going to be in trouble with God for missing an opportunity just like any other opportunity that we miss. But guess what? God is not limited.

Well, I told... This is what little kids... This is what Adam and Eve did in the garden. Well, you know, if a woman gave to me and I did eat, if it wasn't for her, I would still be glowing and in the garden, and it was her fault. No.

If one person is going to fall down on the job, do you think that God couldn't have seen that in eternity past and said, well, you know what? I've got about 45 million other believers in the vicinity here. I can send any one of them to make sure this person hears the truth of God's Word. God the Holy Spirit is the evangelist in the first place, and you can get saved without talking to anybody.

Helen Keller was already a believer by the time somebody could get concepts through her deafness and blindness and establish idea communication with her, you know, the miracle worker and that whole thing. And when her teacher finally got through and started explaining the gospel to her, Helen Keller said, oh, I know there's a God. Sure.

I'm well aware of that. Never having had any contact through sight or hearing with the outside world, Helen Keller at the first communication of the gospel said, I've known there was a God since I can't remember when. I'm just glad to get the details.

God the Holy Spirit will communicate. No one is going to go to the lake of fire because you and I failed. Now, we may lose a blessing.

We may lose a reward. We may lose privileges and opportunities and experience and a lot of things. If we fail, we lose out.

Other people are not going to lose out because we fail. God will turn cursing to blessing. God will bring other people in.

Nobody that needs the gospel, no one that needs a blessing, no one that needs a provision is going to be hung out to dry because you fail. Don't get arrogant and think that somebody's eternal fate depends on you. It doesn't.

And don't let anybody else tell you that either. And so you look at this. These towns, Judah, for whatever reason, either didn't want them, couldn't hang on to them, couldn't deal with them, couldn't occupy them.

For whatever reason, they lost that assignment. Well, Simeon picks it up. Simeon has got those towns.

Those towns didn't just become a little vacuum in the middle of Israel waiting for the Palestinians to come move in. It got reassigned. Judah dropped the ball.

Okay, Simeon, take it. It's your mission now. So we see that God's plan is perfect.

God's provision is perfect. And His assignments are specific. And if somebody misses their assignment for whatever reason, God will make other arrangements.

God isn't going to be caught short. God isn't going to be taken by surprise. He wasn't sitting there in eternity past saying, well, as long as everybody does exactly what they're supposed to, my plan's going to work out great.

Sure hope those people don't fail though because if any of them fails, it doesn't do what I'm expecting. Why? My whole plan will just unravel and fall apart and people will be falling into the lake of fire right and left because of all these ne'er-do-well nabob believers who couldn't get it done. Oh my goodness.

What kind of a God is that? It's blasphemy for anybody to say anything about blood on your hands. It just sends my blood pressure up. So, we have these designations all the way down to verse 63.

This is where we left off in our previous lesson. Now, as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah could not drive them out. You remember when we were tracing the perimeter of the tribe of Judah? Their tribal border runs right down the Kidron Valley, runs right through, actually right beside, the city of Jebus, which was previously the city of Salem, which was Melchizedek's capital.

Melchizedek, king of Salem, it says over in Genesis. Well, it was taken over by the Jebusites. And the border of Judah runs right beside that town.

Well, when you think about the feudal system in England and the city-state concept, there is a town and then it's got its sort of outlying area, the acreage that surrounds the town. And if you think of these little cities, well, all of the area around them, it's like my parents live 13 miles outside of Claremore, Oklahoma. 13 miles.

But their mailing address is Claremore. They don't live in Claremore. They don't live anywhere near Claremore.

But the mailing district, the area for the purposes of mail, is called Claremore. And they're not close enough to the Chelsea Post Office or the Veneta Post Office or the Pryor Post Office or Bushy Head doesn't even have a post office. They're not close to Catoosa.

They're not close to Burdette. They're not close to any of these other towns. Some town over in the adjacent county, Claremore handles their mail.

Well, it's kind of that way in Israel. These towns are responsible for the area outside their walls. And you could live a couple of miles from some of these towns and villages and still be considered an inhabitant because that's where you would go for justice.

That's where you would go for provisions. That's where you go to partake of life and civilization and engage in transactions and contracts and get deeds signed off on and so forth. That's a little administrative.

Each town is sort of like a county seat. So, when the border of Judah runs right past Jebus, which they call Jerusalem, even though it doesn't have that name yet, the people of Judah are responsible for that. But they can't get the Jebusites out.

And when you look at that phrase, does it remind you of anything? It says, the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah, could not drive them out. Can you think of another case where there are some men of God who could not drive them out? What happened right after the Mount of Transfiguration experience? Well, Peter, James, and John are up there with the Lord. Moses and Elijah, the glory of Christ is revealed.

And then they come down. The other nine disciples have been waiting for them down below. And they say, here's this demon-possessed boy and he's full of these demons, but we could not drive them out.

And Jesus says, well, this guy can only come out in a certain way and he casts them out. And there's this whole discussion. But imagine in Aramaic, it's virtually the identical statement.

We could not drive them out. Why could we not drive them out? And Jesus says, this kind only comes out by prayer and fasting, which basically means you didn't have the spiritual maturity to exercise the authority that you have been given. There are people who are given authority, but they do not have the maturity or the judgment to exercise it.

And they will find that they will lose that authority because they mess it up. You can have an attorney who's appointed a judge, and then he runs his courtroom in a sloppy manner and he doesn't carry out that duty well, he'll be dismissed. He'll be eliminated.

Somebody will take his place. The Jebusites are supposed to be driven out. But the men of Judah cannot drive them out.

And the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day. Well, this is really a sad case. They are supposed to dispossess these people, kick them out, and take what the Jebusites are sitting on.

And they cannot do it. And as one writer says, because this casts a spell over the entire future history of Jerusalem. Because the earliest history of Jerusalem, it's a town that they can't hang on to.

What's the situation in Israel today regarding Jerusalem? As the time of national Israel began, so the time of national Israel comes to a close. Jerusalem is a city that they can't control, that they can't hang on to, that they can't drive the inhabitants out of. Isn't it symmetrical? Look at all of the individuals, look at all of the people groups that the Jews in Israel cannot drive out of Jerusalem.

They can't take control of their own temple mount. They can't take control of large areas of their country because it's occupied by people that they cannot drive out. What's the problem in Israel today? Is it a spiritually motivated nation? Is it a set of spiritually motivated people? Not yet.

Not yet. It's going to be, but not until after we leave. We are supposed to be the spiritually motivated people now.

That's just a... There's so many symmetries in God's plan. You think about how Israel was a shadow of good things to come. Ritual, foreshadowing, picturing ahead of time realities that would come later.

And now, once again, we're going to end this age as the church wraps up and gets ready to leave. There is a skeleton, there is a shadow of the coming Jerusalem and the coming Israel that will once again be the people of God and the capital city of God and the place of the presence of God. But it's in shadow form.

It's in skeletal form. It's like the body being formed out of the dust of the ground, but it doesn't have the neshama yet. God has not yet breathed into the nostrils of that nation the breath of life, spiritual life.

And it won't be until after we leave that those people, many of them, are going to wake up and you're going to have your 144,000 witnesses. And you're going to have those who turn to these very scriptures that we study and are going to quickly divine the truth and realize who they are and where they are in God's plan and what's in store for them. So, as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah, could not drive them out.

And it casts a shadow over the great victories of Joshua. And even though later on in 2 Samuel chapter 5, we'll have the account of David driving out the Jebusites. You've got the whole thing with the people yelling at the wall and the people in the blind and so forth.

And we've gone through that when we went through Samuel. We translated that thing about the tunnel and the water shaft and so on. But the government that will eventually be established in Jerusalem is always going to be limited.

It's always going to be missing a step. It's always going to be falling short. Even when they manage to take the city, David gets kicked out of the city and his son Absalom takes over and he's driven out.

Even when David kicks out the Jebusites, his own son kicks him out. And when he comes back and establishes his son Solomon on the throne and Solomon gets the temple built, very soon the nation is going to split. And Jerusalem is only going to be the capital of a small fragment of the original nation.

Judah is always going to be in the shadow of temptation. Why did God tell them to drive all these people out? What's the problem with the Jebusites? Why can't they just coexist? Do the Jebusites believe in the God of Israel? The Jebusites are idolaters. This is why they are under condemnation.

This is why they are under sentence of death from God. All of these people, men, women and children, are to be exterminated, eliminated, wiped out. Their iniquity is full.

Judah fails. They don't push. They don't persevere.

They don't fully obey. They do a lot, but they fall short. When they get right to the edge there, if they could just push that border up to where God said to put it.

But they can't. They can't drive the Jebusites out. And because of that, they are always going to be under that shadow, and they are always going to be dragged down.

It's their Achilles heel. There is always going to be this temptation to go in another direction. God had told them back in Deuteronomy chapter 7, When the Lord your God brings you into the land which you go to possess and has cast out the nations before you, and He gives the list, seven nations greater and mightier than you, when the Lord your God delivers them over to you.

What strength was the tribe of Judah supposed to use to conquer Jerusalem? Brilliant, inventive military tactics, ingenious war machines. They will invent the catapult. They will invent a super battering ram.

How were the men of Judah supposed to take Jebus? What did Moses tell them way back

in Deuteronomy chapter 7? The Lord your God will deliver them over to you. So, if there is an enemy, and God has promised to deliver them, but you can't defeat them, what's the problem? Either God couldn't manage the whole deliverance thing, or, more likely, we have disqualified ourselves from receiving that fulfillment of promise. Remember our memory verse from a while back? The Lord's arm is not shortened that He cannot save, neither is His ear heavy that He cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you so that He will not hear.

And if Judah cannot fulfill their God-given mission, and cannot receive the fulfillment of a God-given promise, where's the problem? Let me make it a little more... put a finer point on it. If we, if you and I, cannot fulfill our God-given mission, and if we cannot lay hold of our God-given promises, what's the problem? Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Your sins have hid His face from you so that He will not hear.

You don't open the door for somebody that you don't hear knocking. You don't answer the phone if you don't hear it ringing. You don't get on instant messenger if you don't hear the little tone.

And if God has become deaf to your cries and pleas, He is not going to fulfill what would otherwise be a divine promise. That's the trouble. This verse 63 is after the list of all these great things God has given, but they couldn't take everything that God gave them.

Seven of their cities are going to go to another tribe. The most important city, you get the idea that the scribes couldn't even keep all of their districts in the passage. You know, they lose Bethlehem.

They lose Tekoa. They lose the seat where all the wise people live. They lose Ephrathah, out of the text.

And they could not take Jerusalem. And the Jebusites lived with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day. Now, if you want to see something interesting, take a look over in Judges 1. Judges 1, verse 8. What does it say there? The children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it.

They struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. Okay. So, sometime after Joshua 15 was written, they went in and they took the city and they burned it with fire.

However, look at Judges 1.21. The children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem, so the Jebusites dwelled with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day. What? I thought this was all a tribe of Judah thing. Well, here's what happened.

Judah got the assignment. Judah went in, in 1.8, and they actually attacked the city, ran off the Jebusites long enough to set some stuff on fire, but they couldn't hold the city. So,

when you go back to Joshua, and you look in chapter 19, we're going to see that... I'm sorry, Joshua 18.

Joshua chapter 18, you have the land of Benjamin being spoken of in verses 11 through 28. The lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up. And it has a lot of the same type of thing that we've seen in Joshua 15.

But look down in verse 21. Joshua 18, 21 and following. Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were just like we had for the tribe of Judah.

Here's the... We're going to get the counties. Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, Beth-arabah, Zemarayim, Beth-el, Avin, Parah, Ophrah, Kephrah-ha-amoni, Ophni, and Gava. Twelve cities with their villages.

That's one district. That's one area. Gibeon, Ramah, Be-eroth, Mizpah, Kephira, Mozah, Rakem, Irpe-el, Tar-alah, Zilah, Eleph, Jebus, which is Jerusalem.

Whoa! Not only did Judah lose the seven cities that went to Simeon, but when they failed to take Jerusalem, it got assigned to Benjamin. It's right on the border between Judah and Benjamin. And it's like either... It is for him who can take it.

Remember Alexander the Great's dying words? His generals gather around him. Well, you've got this great empire, and you're dying at this young age. And whose is the empire? And mythologically speaking, Alexander the Great's dying words were, it is for him who can take it.

Whoever's got the guts, and the courage, and the brains, and the ability to take it, it's his. Well, of course, nobody had that, and so it got split four or five ways. Well, here, now Jebus gets assigned to the children of Benjamin.

Jebus, which is Jerusalem. Gibeon and Kiriath. Fourteen cities with their villages.

This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families. But it's right on the border. And so, Judah says, well, that's right on my... Our line goes right through there.

God put Jerusalem right on the border. Why don't you get together? Why don't the tribes of Judah and Benjamin pool their resources and attack the thing and take it? But neither one of them can do it. So, when you look at Judges 1.21, the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites.

You look at Joshua 15.63, the tribe of Judah didn't drive out the Jebusites. Nobody drove out the Jebusites. Two different tribes had the chance.

Neither one of them did it. Judah managed to go up and light a few things on fire and

drive a few people out, but right after that, the people of Benjamin, all the Jebusites came back, and now they're having to dwell with the Jebusites. So, this verse 63 in Joshua 15 is really a caution and a warning.

It isn't how you begin, it's how you finish. It isn't what you are given, it's what you do with what you're given. You can imagine one of those inspirational posters, you know, where they have a picture of the seagulls flying over the sea, and they've got these little inspirational sayings down below.

They use them in companies and hang them on the walls in the hallway there. And, you know, there is no I in team or whatever else they're going to say up there. Well, it is seriously and biblically true that we are given an awful lot more than we ever fulfill and attain.

God has given us many great and precious promises. And what a tragedy if we fall short. Paul says it's a horrible thing if you would seem to fall short of them.

Judah could have taken this city. Think how much sooner the temple could have been built if they had taken the ground that God intended the temple to be built on. Hypothetically speaking, it could have been there 400 years sooner.

But they didn't get the job done. They fell short. Benjamin had the chance to have Jebus, Jerusalem, as its inheritance.

Could have made the Judahite kings pay rent. Could have had the honor of having the temple of God in their tribal boundary. But they couldn't drive out the Jebusites either.

Jebusites were tough. They were wily. They were persistent.

They endured and they hung on to their city surrounded by Israelites for 400 years. And they're still there when David becomes king. So, we don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past.

When God gives us our assignment and there is a tough objective right on our border, what do we do if we attack it and we can't take it? We can't drive out the enemy. This is the one place where it says Judah failed. All of those other 40-odd towns that were listed.

In fact, more than that. There were 29 in the Negev. There were 42 in the Shephelah.

That's 71 towns. And then you've got another 49 towns. So that's 120.

And then another 6 towns. There's 126 towns specifically listed for Judah. And then there's one town that they didn't take.

And that kind of casts a pall because that was the most important one. Who cares if you've got Medin compared to Jerusalem? So they took all the easy ones and they didn't

take the one that really counted. Well, we want to look at what the right answer would have been.

Benjamin couldn't take it by themselves. Judah could not take it by themselves and hold it. So, what's the answer? Did they ever try teaming up? Did they ever try combining the armies of Judah and Benjamin? And saying, look, God told us to take this city.

Let's go take it. They settled. They said, well, it just can't be taken.

This Jebusites are too tough. You tried it. I tried it.

God can't expect us to take an untakable city. And they gave up. And 400 years, that thing sat like a big warp right in the center of Israel, unconquered.

Even though when they defeated it, the defeat was fairly meaningless. What's the point of taking it if you can't hold on to it? Well, we leave now chapter 15 and the territory of Judah on this sort of sour note kind of reminds me at the beginning we traced out their border and all of those warnings and dire episodes on the perimeter. And then we end the account of the tribe of Judah with the dot right on the border that they couldn't even take.

Then in chapter 16 it says, Then the lot for the sons of Joseph is cast. And the territory went from the Jordan at Jericho to the waters of Jericho on the east into the wilderness, going up from Jericho through the hill country to Bethel. It went from Bethel to Luz and continued to the border of the Archites at Atarot.

You'll notice first of all that it says the lot for the sons of Joseph. It's cast as a single tribe. Those two half-tribes are reunited for the purpose of this division.

You say, well now wait a minute, that's going to be a problem because who is it that's on the other side of the Jordan already? Half-tribe of Manasseh has already got some land over there. Yet here it's the lot for the sons of Joseph, which is Ephraim and Manasseh. Secondly, this allotment that is assigned to them is going to stretch from the Jordan all the way to the Mediterranean.

It's going to go clear across the breadth of the land and it's going to include some pretty significant places like Shiloh. A lot of things happen at Shiloh. Remember Eli and Samuel and the taking of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines.

It all takes place at Shiloh. The lot is cast to try to keep these two tribes together. It tells us in verse 3 that it went down through the territory of the Jafflathites to lower Beth-horon over to Gazer and ended at the sea.

Finally, the sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim received their inheritance. Well, here's the way this is going to work. Remember we talked about within a tribe you've got

what? What's the next unit down from tribe? Clans.

And what's down from clans? Families. So you could identify a man and you could say he is of the family of one man, the clan of another man, and the tribe of another man, Ephraim or Judah. Well, what ends up happening is the tribe of Manasseh is going to have territory on both sides of the Jordan.

Two of their clans are going to inhabit the territory on the east side. The remaining clans are going to be over here with Ephraim. And that's sort of where we're going there in chapter 16.

So we have this territory delineated. I won't go through these town names right now, but you go all the way down to verse 9. The cities which were set apart for the sons of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages. We'll talk about this a little bit more later, but look at verse 10.

And they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer. So the Canaanites live in the midst of Ephraim to this day, and they became forced laborers. Sort of a compromise.

They said, well, we'll do kind of like we did with Gibeon, only it's not because we got tricked into an agreement and a covenant where we're required by our integrity and our word. If we can't beat them, they'll join us. Kind of a thing.

So they made them forced laborers, but they're still there. Their influence is there. God didn't say subjugate the people and make them slaves.

He said conquer the people and wipe them out. So this is another failure, and the territory of Ephraim winds up on another sour note. Then in chapter 17, we're going to see the details about Manasseh.

This was the lot for the tribe of Manasseh. He was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir, the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan.

Now you know, because you've been paying attention, where Gilead and Bashan are. Where are they? Gilead and Bashan, that's over on the east side of the Jordan. So Machir, the firstborn of Manasseh, that's a son, that's a clan.

He's going to live over on the other side. So the lot was made for the rest of the sons of Manasseh, according to their families, which we would call clans here. The sons of Abiezer, for the sons of Helech, and the sons of Asriel, and the sons of Shechem, and the sons of Hepper, and the sons of Shemitah, these were the male descendants of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, according to their families.

Remember, grandsons typically become the clans. And so this is sort of tribe of Joseph,

through Manasseh, these grandsons. So how many are there? Can you count them? Machir is the firstborn, then you have Abiezer, Helech, Asriel, Shechem, Hepper, Shemitah.

How many sons is that? Look at verse 3 though. However, Zelophehad, the son of Hepper, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, only daughters. These are the names of his daughters.

Malah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. How many are there? How many daughters? Five. So, they came here before Eleazar the priest, and they reminded everybody of what had been said way back.

According to the command of the Lord that he gave to Moses, back in Numbers chapter 27, he gave them inheritance among their father's brothers. Thus, there fell ten portions to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is beyond the Jordan. So, you have these ten on one side, and two on the other, basically, is how it ends up.

And that is going to be followed by the account of the border of Manasseh. It goes along the brook, and the north side of the brook, and it goes to the south side of the sea, and so on. Look at verse 12.

But the sons of Manasseh could not take possession of these cities, because the Canaanites persisted in living in the land. It came about when the sons of Israel became strong, and they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely. This is going to become this tolling bell, this ringing warning.

And we have to close tonight by observing that the people of God will end up making accommodation, compromise, allowing the presence of that which God has forbidden, tolerating it, integrating it, marrying up with it, deciding that it's a pretty good deal. Well, look, we've got forced labor. That's better than killing all these people.

There are probably a lot of people in these tribes who said, you know, I think this is a better solution anyway. My way is better than God's way. This is the kind of thinking we have to watch out for and avoid, isn't it? It is the command of God.

It is the plan and purpose of God. And this is going to be the undoing of the nation of Israel, failing to fully conquer and to fulfill God's command down to the last man of these Canaanites. This is going to eventually cost them their entire inheritance.

All the tribes are going to be out of the land and gone, because they did not fully obey. Well, we'll close here and pick up next week. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the graphic depiction of the history of Israel and its pertinence as an illustration and an example and a source of instruction for us. We pray that God, the Holy

Spirit, will impress these truths on our hearts, help us to live in a way that is pleasing in your sight and fully conform to your will. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.