

Joshua 07-09-21b

Let's pick up our study now again in Joshua chapter 17. We're looking at the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh, the lot that has been cast from Manasseh. And keep in mind that these descriptions of what happens to the tribes and to the clans are representative.

There could have been individual believers in any of these tribes, individual Israelites who by faith and by obedience were richly blessed. It doesn't matter what tribe they're in. It doesn't matter what their overall allotment was.

Just as in modern days, Christians find themselves all over the world, born into different families, different cultures, different countries, different situations in terms of oppression or harassment. But God is fully able to bless anyone. Stop and think about it.

Is there somebody that God just can't bless? Oh, well, I'm sorry. If I'd have known you were going to be down there in West Java with all these militant extremists coming after you, and if I'd known you were going to be down there in South America in the Andes with the Shining Path coming after you, well, I wouldn't have made that promise. Is there any human being, is there any organization, is there any set of circumstances that's just too much for God? Oh, well, I'm sorry, but that's too much.

I mean, there's not. It's really absurd when you think about it. But we let ourselves get convinced that there are problems that are just unsolvable.

We can't be happy. We can't be blessed. We can't make progress.

We can't have peace. We can't have security. We can't rest.

Because this is just too much. And we're doing what the tribe of Judah did when they got to Jerusalem. It's the prize.

It's going to be the crown jewel. It's going to be the capital city. It's going to be the dwelling place of God himself one day.

But they didn't have the faith to take it. And they're going to live without it for 400 years. It isn't until David comes along, the same man who slew the giant, is going to take that city.

He and his nephew, Joab, are going to take that city. And if you want a list of the great women of the Bible, don't forget Zeruiah, the sister of David. Because the sons of Zeruiah are perhaps the greatest warriors that ever fought in Israel's army.

And you've got Asahel and Joab. And those men were mighty, mighty men and distinguished themselves in a lot of ways. They also had some flaws.

And Joab ends up living a wonderful life of faithfulness and obedience. And then he

craters out right at the end and embarrasses himself and shames himself right at the end because he let his passions get the better of him. And he was mad at Abner, Saul's right-hand man and general, because Abner killed Joab's brother.

Joab's brother was stupid and foolish. He was going to try to grab fame and glory by killing Abner. And Abner was ten times more experienced and superiorly skilled.

Abner warned him off. He said, look, I don't want to hurt you. Go away.

Leave me alone. I'm fleeing the battle. I'm not fighting.

Go away. Asahel kept chasing him, kept chasing him. Abner said, turn back.

I don't want to hurt you. Asahel said, no, I'm going to get you. And so as he got close, Abner just took the butt of his spear and jammed it right through Asahel's abdomen and spilled his guts all over the road.

That's what the Bible says. Spilled his guts all over the road. So much so that when other Israelites who were further behind came up and they saw Asahel in this giant pool of goo in the road, it shocked them.

They couldn't even continue. It was gory. It was grotesque.

It was horrifying. And Asahel, by one bad decision, ended his life and is recorded in a very inglorious way in Scripture. But his brother Joab, who had lived a wonderful life of faithfulness and obedience, he's the guy that tried to tell David, do not do this foolish thing in putting Uriah in the front of the battle so that you can take his wife.

Joab sent a message back to David. He disobeyed the initial order and said, look, are you sure you want to do this? David said, stop asking questions and do what I said. And that's how Uriah got murdered.

Joab resisted that thing. Joab is the one who arranged for the wise woman to come and talk to David and get him back on track. Joab was a wonderful, faithful assistant and general for David for years and years and years.

But he ended badly because his anger got the better of him and he murdered Abner after David had made peace with Abner and had made a covenant of safety with him. Joab murdered him and he ended badly. The point here is, over and over and over again, it is the decisions we make that determines what happens.

You can be a woman in Israel. Everybody likes to talk about how anti-woman the Bible is and it's a patriarchal society and denigrates and oppresses and belittles and makes light of women and they were nothing more than chattel and slaves, which is nonsense if you know anything about the Bible. There are assigned roles.

That's like saying that God belittled and denigrated everybody in Israel except the Levites because they're the only ones he let into his temple precincts, into his tabernacle courtyard and so on. It's an assigned function. Priesthood didn't make the Levites better than any other Israelite.

And being assigned leadership and warfare and elder responsibilities in Israel didn't make the men any better than the women. It's an assignment. Officers aren't better than enlisted in terms of quality.

Executives aren't better than worker bees in a company just because they're fulfilling different functions or because they get paid more. It doesn't mean they're better. Some of them are the worst jerks, ne'er-do-wells, bad judgment, disasters looking for a place to happen that you ever saw.

They're running around pulling down six-figure salaries and they're horrible. As people, they stink. Their families have fallen apart.

Their marriages are long gone. They have no ethics, no integrity. Look at the Enron scandal.

That was all done by your white-collar types. It wasn't the guy down there working in the mail room faithfully sorting the mail. It was the greedy guys at the top.

Just because someone has a rank or is assigned authority, it says nothing about quality. It says nothing about worth in God's eyes. What makes worth in God's eyes? Look at this section in Joshua.

It's what you choose. Caleb believed in God with 100% of his heart and soul and strength. And God rewarded him with the choicest piece of land in all of Israel.

Caleb got his inheritance before anybody else got their assignment. He had to wait for it patiently, but God kept him alive and kept him healthy and let him go in there and take it the best way possible, which is by achievement. God didn't just hand it to him on a platter.

God said, I'm going to give you the privilege of kicking these Canaanite generals off of your land. And Caleb loved it. Caleb said, get out of my way.

I've got some Canaanites to lick. And he went up there and did it. And it was a lot more fun than somebody just saying, well, Caleb, why don't you sit here in your rocking chair while we burn this place down and then you just come rolling in in your wheelchair.

Not at all. It's a privilege. The challenges that we have are opportunities.

I don't know how many different ways to illustrate that, but you can think about it in terms of a football game. Most high schools and most colleges like to pick a real weak

sister opponent for homecoming. You know, we're going to call the Coffeyville Groundhogs in to play for homecoming because somebody, was it up there in Arkansas that the nearby high school, their mascot was the Squirrels? Winslow Squirrels.

They would play the Winslow Squirrels for homecoming. Well, think about it now. If you're going to have a homecoming game and you've got the alumni there and you want to show off your team, do you want them playing the Winslow Squirrels? I don't think so.

I say bring in a tough opponent. At Navy, the favorite game of the year is not, well, we're going to walk all over Mary Washington College or we're going to walk all over some bunch of Namby Pamby. It's the Army-Navy game.

Now we're meeting on a field of equals. Now we're going to give these guys a drugging, and actually the Army-Navy game is no fun when Army's having a bad year and they've had a losing record, and we know we're going to tromp them into the ground. Well, that's no fun.

It's the challenge of the contest. It's things hanging in the balance. You know the Theodore Roosevelt quote that hangs on my wall.

It's doing the deeds. It's getting into the arena and striving valiantly. That's what our spiritual life is.

Don't miss it. Day by day by day, our spiritual life is a great contest. We wrestle against principalities and powers and rulers, and it's an opportunity.

There are rewards to be won. There is ground to be taken. There are hills to be conquered.

There are Canaanites to be kicked out. Caleb understood that, and that's why God gave him. He's the first man in Israel to receive his inheritance because of the way that he thought, and it had nothing to do with his tribe.

Can you tell me what tribe Caleb is from? Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. What's his tribe? You probably don't even know, because it doesn't matter. It's his faith.

It's his decisions. It's his attitude. That's what God honored.

God didn't say, well, I'm sorry, but you're from the tribe of Zebulun, or you're from the tribe of Naphtali, or whatever it might be. He said, here's a man after my own heart. So that's what's going on in this section.

We've seen it in the tribe of Judah with Caleb. We saw that the tribe of Ephraim failed to kick the Canaanites out. The tribe of Manasseh, even in the tribe of Manasseh, the women in the tribe of Manasseh, you think, now, how low can you go? This is like limbo, going under the rock.

It's the tribe of Manasseh, and it's women in the tribe of Manasseh, and you think you just can't get any, in terms of standing, in terms of leverage, in terms of, well, I have a right to a thing. In Israel, being in the tribe of Manasseh doesn't get you a cup of coffee. And being a woman in the tribe of Manasseh gets you even less.

And yet, they made a case. They said, look, here's God's purpose. Here's what God has outlined in His law.

There's not a specific clause for us, but we think there ought to be one. And here's why. And God said, you're exactly right.

I'm glad you asked that question. Here's your inheritance. You're a woman in one of the lowliest tribes, and these five ladies, all of them, got an inheritance, that persisted all the way down until the northern kingdom went out, in 721 BC.

And I said before, these are the daughters of who? Zelophehad. You think, well, maybe this was sort of an honor for Zelophehad. Maybe he was a great, mighty guy in the tribe of Manasseh, and God said, well, you know, for the sake of your father, God did a lot of things for the sake of the fathers, didn't He? For the sake of your father Abraham, you know, Paul says, Israel's beloved for the sake of the fathers.

And so you think, well, maybe these gals were flighty, and partridges, and diseases, and this, that, and the other, that their names suggest, and so it was because of their death. Well, let me tell you what Zelophehad means in Hebrew. It's kind of tricky because depending on the way you divide the word, it can mean different things.

And you can look this up, and you'll get various meanings. The number one in Hebrew is echad. E-C-H-A-D.

Echad. And that's the last part of this name. Zelophehad.

So your translators and your interpreters say, well, this is something that is first. So they say, well, what is Zelophe, or Zalophe? And it's actually T-S. It's the Tzadeh in Hebrew, so it's Tzeleph, or Tzalophe.

Well, you look in the lexicon, there is no such word. The closest thing they can get to it is that it means a breach, or a rupture, or something that is broken. And so they get the idea, well, the first child to come through, that creates a new passageway that wasn't there before, so to speak.

And so they get the idea that this means firstborn. And they'll say, well, firstborn. Well, I think this is all mistaken.

I think they're off on the wrong track. Because there's a perfectly good Hebrew word, Tzalal, T-S-A-L-A-L, and the L contracts, and there's even a noun in Hebrew called Tzel.

And Tzel means shadow.

We saw this word over in Ecclesiastes. Remember the silver that was in the shadow, and that whole thing? Well, Tzel, T-S-E-L, Tzel. And in the consonantal text of Hebrew, the O isn't there.

That's something the Masoretic scribes felt like needed to be there. Tzelophehad. Well, it's not a consonant.

There's no wow there. There's no marker. They just threw that in.

They said, well, we think it ought to be pronounced this way. Tzelphehad. Pehad in Hebrew means fear, dread, trembling, woe, bad, dark, cloud attitude of great, uncomfortable darkness.

Pehad means dreadful. So, shadow of dread. That's what the name means.

It's the shadow of dread. You're a daughter of the shadow of dread. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of dread, as a woman with no prospects in Israel, I will fear no evil, because God has promised.

And these ladies, their father was nothing in Israel, evidently, with a name like that, unless it's kind of that syndrome of boy named Sue or something. But how would you like to walk around being named shadow of dread? It's not very promising. But look, they confidently went, they made their appeal, and God granted it.

So, biggest tribe in Israel, weakest, lamest, bad family, no brothers, doesn't matter. It's your faith. Now think about it.

You are one of an infinitude of people dotting this planet. I don't even have to go up in an airplane anymore. Dan and I were just riding our bikes the other day, and I kept passing house after house, and neighborhood after neighborhood, and block after block, and mile after mile, and I thought, look at all these people.

The place is swarming with people. There are people everywhere. There's just millions of them.

It's just overwhelming. I can't figure out why, what difference does it make what I think? What difference does it make what I do? God looks down at the planet. You know, He talks about it in the Psalms.

God looks down on the sons of men. And all He sees are these swarms. We're like a disturbed anthill.

Have you ever gone up to one of those things and stomped on the ground? They just come boiling out? Well, that's what this earth is like. And God keeps track of every single

one of us. Especially, it says God searches the earth looking for someone who's got some faith, looking for someone who wants to live their life for Him.

And I will tell you, it is a tiny, tiny minority. Jesus will tell you the same thing. Narrow is the way and straight is the gate that leads to life, and there's very few that find it.

So, listen, if you are one of those people, if you are like a daughter of Zelophehad, if you are like Caleb, God is paying close attention to you. God will move big chunks of the landscape around to make your path exactly what He wants it to be. Sometimes He will smooth it and make it straight.

Other times, He's going to ramp it up and make it difficult because that's what we need. That's what is most beneficial for us. We need a challenge.

If you've got a weak muscle or a weak joint, you've seen people that have had a broken, not so much anymore, they've got advances in medicine, but used to be when I was back in the Stone Age, and they put you in a plaster cast when you broke something. Somebody would walk around or swing around their arm in a plaster cast, and then when they got the cast off, have you ever seen a limb that's been in a cast for a couple of months? Oh, that is the most grotesque, nasty, skin-peeling, withered up little old shrimpy, useless appendage you ever saw in your life. It makes you wince to look at it.

Well, what does that arm need? Should you just carry it around and say, Oh, my poor little wimpy, skinny, skin-peeling, I just need to favor this and not ever try to do anything with it again. What do you have to do? You have got to exercise that thing. You have to work it.

You have to challenge it. You have to inflict some pain on it to get it to become strong and useful again. Well, look at the human soul.

Let's all look at our own human soul. We are weak. We are screwed up.

We are like the daughters of Zelophehad in some ways. I mean, the gal's name, Mala, means disease. And you've got Noah, and she's flighty and agitated and disturbed.

How would you like to have your name? Here you are, girl, you're going out. I'd like you to meet my daughter, Disturbed. Well, that's what Noach means.

It means, you know, you're kind of unstable. You're not really predictable. And, you know, Hoagla.

I mean, how would you like that? You don't even have to translate it. How would you like somebody to say, Here's my daughter, Hoagla. That's the second worst girl's name in the Bible, right behind Gomer.

Gomer and Hoagla. I guess I could have named my daughters, well, maybe not. So, but

remember this.

Listen, this is in this section of dry, dusty border assignments and clans and things. It's important. God is saying something here.

Don't think that you're a victim of fate. Don't think that your circumstances are out of God's mind and out of His control. He's looking and He's watching.

These girls are making a claim in faith, and God is honoring it. Caleb made a claim in faith, and God is honoring it. And, by the way, in case you think I'm being strange about it, we do know what tribe Caleb is from.

I mean, he was listed in chapter 15, right? Okay. So, then in verse 7, The territory of Manasseh went from Asher to Miqmathah, that lies east of Shechem, and the border went along south to the inhabitants of Entapua. Manasseh had the land of Tapu, but Tapu on the border of Manasseh belonged to... Who knows what's going on in these verses? The point is that, once again, we have the borders.

In verses 7 through 11, just like we had for Judah, just like we had for Ephraim, now we have the borders given for Manasseh. But look at verse 9. The border descended to the brook Cana, southward to the brook. These cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh.

There's some alternate assignment. And some stuff that would be in the territory of Manasseh is actually given to Ephraim. And this is not any big mystery.

Anybody who has sisters and brothers knows that you see two teenage girls heading out, and they're trying to get dressed and get ready to go do something, and, wait a minute, that's my blouse, those are my shoes, that's my shirt, what are you doing wearing that? Or, you wore my thing and it's dirty and you didn't get it washed, and now it's not here for me. They're quibbling and fighting over stuff because they share. These are two close sibling tribes.

They're the two half-tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh. And this is what they're getting into. Now, why would God put this in the Bible? Why do we need to know that Ephraim got some of Manasseh's cities? Remember that whole crossed-hand thing, the elder will serve the younger? The elder is Manasseh.

The younger is Ephraim. And when God says, Hey, Manasseh, you thought you were the older son, but Jacob crossed his hands, guess what? I'm giving your brothers some of your cities. What does this require? When God says, You're not going to get something you think you have.

I'm going to give it to somebody, the last person you want to have it, your sibling here is going to get it. You say, Oh, anybody but him. I have to live with him or her.

No, I would rather the Canaanites kept it than you give it to my near relation here. What does this remind us of? What is required to accept the will of God? Humility. God resists the proud.

God gives grace to the humble. You know how many places in the Bible that principle is stated? It's a lot more than James. It's in 1 Peter.

And both James and 1 Peter are quoting the Old Testament on that. One of our new memory verses upcoming is going to include that, quote, God resists the proud. God gives grace to the humble.

Well, there's a little hidden gotcha in that promise. Think about it. Where is the gotcha? God resists the proud.

God gives grace to the humble. What's wrong with that picture? You have to be in a position that requires humility before you can be humble, right? If you're on top of the world and you've got everything and you're driving your Maserati and you're pulling down \$250,000 a year and you've got a trophy wife and you've got businesses and investments and you're living in Hollywood and spending your weekends in Las Vegas, where's your opportunity for humility? Humility is required when things don't go your way, when you had an expectation and it's not fulfilled. If God's going to give grace to the humble, God first has to give you a circumstance that requires humility so that you can be humble so that God can give you grace.

So, it's a helpful way to think of it. When you get the short end of the stick, when you get ignored, when you get overlooked, when you get trodden upon, when you get unappreciated, when you get left out, when you get slighted, just remember, well, how's God going to give me grace if he doesn't first give me humility? Here's my opportunity to exercise humility. I'm not going to get my back up, I'm not going to say, hey, what about me? I'm going to be humble.

Now, being humble, God is going to give me grace. What would you like to have? Your pride or God's grace? Because it's a choice. If you choose your pride, God's going to resist.

If you choose humility, God is going to bless and grace. But in order for him to bless and grace, we have to be put in positions that humble us. And in that position, we have to choose humility.

And it's a choice. And sometimes it's a task and it's a challenge and it's an ongoing mental battle to remain humble and not lash out and not look for justice and, well, let me tell you a thing or two about this and that. And that's not humility.

And you're brushing away God's grace. We have to recognize that these are opportunities. So, when it says the cities of Ephraim are right there in the middle of

Manasseh's territory, how do you think Manasseh feels about this? Wait a minute.

The whole reason we had a lot over here on this side of the Jordan is we're better than our brothers that stayed over on the far side of the Jordan and now even over here you're giving our cities away. Hey, humility. Southward it was Ephraim's, northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea was its border there in verse 10.

And when you get down to verse 11, you find out that there's going to be turnabout. Manasseh has to live with Ephraim in some of their territory, but look at verse 11. In Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh had Beit She'an and its towns, Idlam and its towns, Dor and its towns, Tanakh and its towns, and Megiddo and its towns.

And I summarized there a little bit. There's some text difficulty in one thing or another that we won't go into. You see there where it says the inhabitants of Tanakh and the inhabitants of Andor? That's not right.

Why doesn't it say the inhabitants on all of these other towns? Inhabitants is a word in Hebrew and these are place names. And this is another one of those cases I mentioned in the first lesson where they translated a word that should have been left as a proper name. But don't worry about it.

The point here is there's one situation in Manasseh's own territory. Ephraim took some of their towns because God said so. But in other places, Manasseh has got towns in the territory that belongs to Asher and in the territory that belongs to Issachar.

So things have a way of evening out. Just bide your time. Somebody got some of your towns? Well, guess what? God's going to give you some towns in somebody else's territory.

So maintain your humility. And there is application in that for us. Sometimes we're the one that has to be humble.

We're the one that has to abide and be patient and absorb a loss or absorb a wrong. But at some future occasion, it may be the other way around. And we have inadvertently slighted someone or hurt someone's feelings or been insensitive or been unkind.

And somebody is going to be bearing with us just as we have borne with in our own situation. So it evens out. It's another great principle in this section.

So, when you get to the last part of this in verses 12 and 13, remember Judah couldn't kick the people out of Jerusalem. Ephraim couldn't kick the Canaanites out of their city of Gezer and so on. And now look at verses 12 and 13.

The children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities. The Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. And it happened when the children of

Israel grew strong that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not utterly drive them out.

They subdued them. They controlled them. But God didn't say subdue and control them.

God said drive them out. God said destroy them. And they didn't.

Why? What did God say? Whose power is going to drive out the Canaanites? It's God's power. God said I will send the hornets in front of you. I will drive the Canaanites out from before you.

So, if God said I will drive them out and they didn't get driven out, what happened? Think about any promise of God that you want to name that applies to you and me. What are the promises of God to us? Rest, peace, provision, grace, blessing in many different categories. If we do not receive the fulfillment of those promises from God, what happened? The very same thing has happened here.

Lack of faith. Lack of obedience. People say, Oh, that Christianity stuff.

What a waste of time. Pie in the sky, by and by. I've got a life to live here.

And they brush aside the things of God and then they wonder why life is tragic and life is unhappy and life is constantly biting an apple that turns to ashes and reaching for the next one and biting it and it turns to ashes. And you think, Well, this will make me happy. This will make me satisfied.

This will make me content. If I can just achieve this, if I can just buy that, if I can just earn this, if I can just be recognized for that, then you wind up constantly, your life is just one big long striving for something that's always over the hill. It's always around the next corner.

It's always down the road. And people have a hard time saying what the Apostle Paul said. I've learned in whatever state I find myself, I'm content.

I am happy today. I'm having a great time today. I am not waiting for that next big hill to get out of my way so that I can collect the pot at the end of the rainbow.

And the dissatisfaction that you see, this is why everything is on such a short fuse. This is why everything is so fast-paced. Entertainment has got to be fast-paced.

You've got to have a joke every nine and a half seconds. You've got to have the resolution of a problem. The most unrealistic thing in the world are these... Back in the 60s, everybody had a Western.

And in the 70s, everybody had a detective show. And on and on and on. Well, now the TV, in addition to reality shows, all this proliferation of we're going to solve these crimes.

CSI this and special victim units that and law and order this. And even the monk and a lot of the others, what do they do? Well, here's a clue. And you start and within an hour, the clues fell into place.

Mystery solved. Case closed. Criminal identified and locked up and everybody lives happily ever after.

It's never that... Very seldom is it that way in real life. Things drag on. Stuff is overlooked.

Human error. Oh, the DNA went to the wrong test tube and the results from the lab came back wrong. They're always releasing somebody from jail that, oh, well, DNA testing, I guess you didn't do it after all.

Sorry about that. You know, 18 years later, see if they would execute. They wouldn't have this problem.

Because nobody would be going back and checking the evidence. I'm being facetious. But there is a difference in living for tomorrow and living for today.

And there is a difference in constantly being dissatisfied and constantly hungering for something. This is what modern society fills with stimulation. This is why you've got the Internet.

And not just the Internet, but broadband Internet. Because it's faster. And you've got cable TV that's higher resolution.

And you've got more channels. You've got more of this and more of that. And our society and people who live in it shovel things at the soul as fast as they can.

Because if you have to stop and sit, and if you don't have the earbuds in, and if you don't have something playing and something going, and if you're just sitting there in the company of your own soul, there's not peace. There's not contentment. There's not rest.

God says, I will give you rest. I will give you peace. And don't get me wrong.

I listen to stuff like everybody else. I love music. I live on the Internet.

My job is on the Internet. But all of us have to examine the balance that's in our lives. Am I happy now? Am I focused now? Do I understand who I am and why I'm here? Does each day of my life have meaning and purpose? Is it well defined? Am I working toward the goal that is set out for Christians in the Word of God? And did I make any progress toward that goal today? Or did I shovel stuff into my soul and throw stuff all over my windshield and I can't even see down the straight road that goes through the narrow gate? Because I'm too busy wiping my windshield to see through it and beyond it.

Well, these tribes were all excited about getting into the land. Forty years we've been traipsing around. Our fathers have dropped in the wilderness.

We've buried them. Our sandals held up. And we've crossed the Jordan.

And here we are. Joshua's won all these victories. Now we're going to get the land.

And they're so interested in getting the land and fighting over the land. And who got what city? Where are my borders? And they've lost sight of the fact that the reason God brought them to the land was to judge the inhabitants. This is God's mission.

Go in there in faith and I will drive these nations out before you. I will give you victory. You can destroy them.

You can eliminate them. And you can live in a sanctified, peaceful land. By taking the inheritance too quickly and doing an incomplete, sloppy, half-baked job of the mission that God assigned, there are all of these nests and pockets and towns and villages full of unregenerate, godless, pagan Canaanites.

And they are going to be like little gangrene spots. And they're going to fester. And they're going to grow.

And they're going to spread the infection of their idolatry and their godlessness until they rot the entire nation. And God has to destroy Israel from off the face of the land when He told them, I want you to destroy the godless, evil Canaanites off the land. God is going to have to take His own people out using the scourge of Babylon and the scourge of Assyria when they were supposed to be the cleansing agent.

They were supposed to be the light that shined in a dark place. And instead of being the judgment, they become judged. That's what's going to happen over the next few hundred years.

And here's where it starts. When they first come in, they don't keep their mind on their business. Listen, you and I as believers have got to keep our mind on our business.

This is not just a life to live like the world lives it, like unbelievers live it. Well, they go to school. I go to school.

They drive a car. I drive a car. They have a job.

I have a job. They have families. I have a family.

They have entertainment. I have entertainment. What's the difference? What's the difference between you and me, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, destined for an eternal future, and the godless pagan Canaanites amongst whom we live? What's the difference? Well, if there's not a difference, we're going to end up sharing their fate.

We're going to be judged. We're going to be eliminated from blessing and eliminated from possession. It makes a difference what we choose.

It makes a difference what we think. Look at these tribes. There's a reason why the record of their inheritance is given to us in detail, and why their failure is given to us in detail.

Each tribe that has been named so far has almost gotten there, but they're kind of like Joab. They do well up to a point, but the later history in Israel, when you read Kings and Chronicles, so-and-so was a king and he did this and the other, but he did not fully follow the Lord. He did not fully obey.

He was diseased in his feet. He was this. He was that.

He was the other. There's failure, failure, failure. And this is why the trend of Israel is ever downward.

Well, look, that's why God set them aside. God said, the elder son isn't going to inherit, and we are the younger son. We are supposed to be the Jacob.

We are supposed to be the Isaac. We are supposed to be the son of promise. We're supposed to be Seth, who rises up in the place of Abel and is the line of promise.

That's our assignment. That's our mission. It's not evangelism, although evangelism is great.

It's not having great fellowship, although fellowship is great. It is individually winning the war in our soul, claiming the territory that God has given us, as He has done to these tribes here. Well, in verse 14, as this continues, you have an epilogue.

After giving the history of Judah, after giving the history of Ephraim, after giving the history of Manasseh, this is the top and bottom rungs of the ladder. This is your bracket. This is your outer pieces of the chiasm.

Now you're going to get the middle. It's the top and bottom of Israel. And what does it say? The children of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, Why have you given us only one lot and one share to inherit, since we are a great people? The Lord has blessed us, and we are numerous.

So Joshua answered and said, If you are so numerous, if you are so hot as you think you are, then go up to the forest country and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the parasites and the giants. In other words, they're saying, We are great number-wise. Joshua says, If you're great, you ought to be able to be great faith-wise.

If you're as great as you say you are, it's not your numbers, it's your faith. You ought to be able to go take land from the parasites. You ought to be able to take it from the

giants.

You don't see Caleb coming in crying the blues, saying, Well, my land's not big enough. Because he's got the faith to take what he wants and to find a son-in-law who will take what he wants. These people are saying, We want a handout.

God's provision is not enough. Now, in terms of contrast, I think in the New Testament, the Gospel of John, you think about Jesus feeding the 5,000. God's provision was too much.

Disciples hand out the bread, and they're turning it back by the basket full. Here, God gives Ephraim and Manasseh an assignment. Manasseh has already got a big chunk of land over on the far side of the Jordan.

Now, they've got all of these additional sections. The daughters of Zelophehad were provided for. And you get the idea that maybe they're a little peaked.

Maybe they're not too happy about the whole Zelophehad thing, because they've got five sections in Manasseh. And so, the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, come together and say, God's provision, the lot that God has cast for us, is not good enough. We didn't get what we need.

Joshua says, why don't you go take what you need? Hasn't God given you territory? Yeah, there's some giants on it. There's some forests there that might need to be cleared. But within your allotment, there will be enough land if you go do what needs to be done.

If you kick out the Canaanites, if you kick out the giants, and if you cut down the trees and clear the land, there is enough. God has given you a rehabilitation project here. It's like buying a house that needs work, and a couple of the rooms are not livable yet.

Well, go in and fix them up, and then your house will be big enough. If you're a great people, go to the forest country and clear it. The word clear here in Hebrew is in the Peel, it's the intensive stem.

He's basically saying, if you work hard enough, your land is fine. You don't want to work. You don't want to do the clearing that is necessary to make enough cleared space to live in.

Since the mountains of Ephraim are too confined for you. This is another place where the text is troubled, because it would seem that Joshua is agreeing with him and saying, well, yeah, your territory really is too confined, so you need to go. That's not what he's saying at all.

Every other place where this verb is, where it says the mountains of Ephraim are too

confined, every other place where this verb is used in the Bible, it means to be in a big hurry. To be rushing to a thing. And what Joshua is really saying here is, you're too impatient.

You're in too big of a hurry. You're making a snap judgment on the size of the land, and you're in such a rush, you're not considering that if you clear the land, and if you do what God told you to do, which is go in there and kick out the giants, your land is fine. You're not giving this due consideration.

You're rushing. You're not meditating on it. You're not thinking.

You're making a snap judgment and crying out for more land. That's what it says in verse 15. But they keep on whining in verse 16.

Oh, the mountain country is not enough for us. The Canaanites who dwell in Atlanta, they've got chariots of iron there. You know, chariots of iron.

Beth Shean and his towns in the Valley of Jezreel. And so, this is where we're going to have to leave them. Sitting there, crying the blues to Joshua.

They want to get their inheritance by talking instead of by fighting, by manipulating and negotiating instead of by swinging an axe and clearing the land. So we'll leave them here, standing there as an example of what not to do until next week. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for these graphic illustrations in sort of an unexpected place here in this book. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister these truths to our hearts and remind us on a daily basis of the opportunities that you have given us by your grace and through the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in his name.

Amen.