

Joshua 07-10-12b

Let's pick up our study now in Joshua chapter 18 and 19. We're kind of taking a quick overview before we leave these chapters behind. There's a lot of extremely fine detail here in terms of specific cities and border markers and so on.

And we're not going to do an exhaustive word by word study of that, but we should be able to remember certain very salient points from this section of Joshua. And you don't need a map. You don't need a thesaurus or a lexicon.

You don't need sophisticated knowledge of the geography of the area, should not need them, to observe, interpret, and apply from this section of scripture. That's our understanding. That's our assumption.

And so that's our approach. Joshua chastises the apathetic tribes and characterizes God as being distant. It is the God of your fathers.

Once they perform the survey and bring things back and do what they're supposed to do, now he is our God. We will do it before the Lord, our God. And that idea, I cannot emphasize too much, the idea that we often get the sense that maybe there is a distance between us and God.

God does not seem like he's involved. We don't feel an intimacy. We don't feel a sense of fellowship and closeness with God.

It is not God's fault that that separation ensues, as I've already quoted our memory verse in that regard. But there is a need for us to take an active role. Our Christianity is not passive.

It isn't casual, or it should not be. If we have casual Christianity, we will be casualty Christians. See, that's my little, I could turn that in in seminary and get a grade.

You have to take an active interest. And it doesn't matter if you're young. It doesn't matter if you're a teenager.

It doesn't matter if you're old and the vast bulk of your career is the subject of retrospectives and documentaries now. As long as we're alive, at the beginning, at the end, wherever we are in our allotment of life, whatever is allotted to us, we've got to take active measures. We can't sit around waiting for God to solve problems.

We can't just sit there and pray, oh God, please take this mosquito away. We have the wherewithal. God has given us the means, the motive, and the opportunity.

This is the situation. And that's what we see in view in these seven tribes. Now, let me finish our observation on lots, because I don't know that we've ever, in all these many

years, really taken a detailed look.

We looked at the Urim and Thummim when we were doing Exodus. But that's not everything having to do with lots or the goral. As I said, where we left off before the break, the Old Testament does not describe exactly what these are.

We don't know exactly what form they took. We do know that they were relatively small. And it could be that there were different types and different techniques, depending on the time and the occasion.

We know that Urim and Thummim were one kind of such lot. And obviously, it had to be something that would fit in the breastplate of the high priest. But the important use of the lot occurred here in the division of the land, partly done at Gilgal, 14, 15, 16, and 17 of Joshua, details how the lot was used in the division of the land.

And you notice how detailed it is in terms of getting right down to the clans. Here, you have these lots cast for the tribes. And the previous Judahite territory, for example, had not been fully surveyed when it was allocated.

This land is surveyed. Why the difference? Over and over and over again in these chapters, we see what my, they used to have a TV show called Different Strokes. People have that saying, different strokes for different folks.

Well, this is exactly right. And it is so important for us in terms of objectivity, rather than subjectivity, to not get our eyes on people, not get our eyes on circumstances, and say, why does that person have this situation? Why is my lot different than their lot? Part of the reason can be, why do these seven tribes end up with a different situation than the ones in the earlier chapters? Well, there's good reasons and bad reasons. The people on the far side of the Jordan, I would say, that was a poor choice.

God had nothing really to say about their allotment. They chose it for themselves. As I said, it reminds me of Jesus' comments about the Pharisees and the Sadducees standing on the street corners.

They have chosen the kind of glory that they want. They want the glory that is received as adulation from men. And Jesus said, these who parade their offerings and pray on the street corners and wear their sackcloth in the open and so on, they have their reward.

They've chosen it before God ever got around to allocating an inheritance. They chose that. And they have their reward.

So that would be a distinction that these seven tribes are better off than those. On the other hand, you have Judah and Caleb as the outstanding member of that tribe. And you have the situation where they were aggressive.

They were leaning forward. They went in and seized and laid hold. These tribes have kind of hung back.

They're kind of in the comfortable middle ground. Many, many, many. Hopefully not us.

But you look around in the Christian world, many, many Christians want to be in the comfortable middle. I don't want to be hammered and judged for selling short, falling down on the job, taking the quick way out. But I don't want to be the point man out there.

God might put too much pain in my life if I really live for Him. And you have a need of suffering and endurance if you're going to inherit. I don't want to do the suffering and endurance.

I just want to kind of be in the middle. I'd just like to be a nameless, faceless, sort of also ran. I want to be one of the numberless people dressed in white, waving palm branches and singing the song.

But I don't want to be somewhere where everybody knows my name, for good or for ill. I just blend me in. Just let me be in the comfortable pack.

Well, the nature of this is such that they get an inheritance, but it's going to eventually be lost. Who is left after the dust settles of the monarchy and after the kingdom splits? You've got Ephraim, and you've got Judah. Everybody else has kind of melted away.

What about the guys on the far side of the Jordan? In Saul's day, they were already in trouble, people trying to cut their thumbs off and poke their eyes out, do all kinds of weird things to them. And Saul, his big answer is, well, let me chop up my oxen and scare everybody into helping me deliver. I mean, things were on a real downhill slide.

Saul was from what tribe? Benjamin. Could have just as easily been Jerusalem, which was right on the line between which two tribes? Benjamin and Judah. Could have gone either way.

Falls to Judah. But you have this recurring emphasis. Your lot is determined by God, but it is not random.

It is not inscrutable. There's a reason why God gives Judah a particular allotment. There's a reason why God gives Ephraim a particular allotment.

There's a reason why God allows Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh to choose the other side of the Jordan. They're going to be the first tribes to lose their stuff. Anytime there's an invasion, they're the first ones to get trampled.

They're the first ones to get burned out, lose their crops, lose their cities. They disappear. When you talk about the divided kingdom, nobody talks about Transjordan

anymore.

Those people are gone. The lot is determined by God, but He determines it based on some criteria. There is a criteria.

What is the criteria? Obedience. Faithfulness. Pushing to fulfill God's mandate.

The people who do that, nothing can stop them. It doesn't matter how big the giants are and so on. So you have the fact that even the daughters of Zelophehad that we saw from over in Numbers chapter 36, they're women.

People always talk about how disenfranchised women were. Well, that doesn't apply to the daughters of Zelophehad. Why? They are proactive.

They don't sit around crying the blues waiting for somebody to come pity them. They go to Moses and say, Hey, what about this? And they come back later to Joshua and they say, Remember when we went to Moses and said, Hey, what about this? And remember Moses' answer? Well, we want our stuff. And they get it.

This sheds light, by the way, on the parable of the unjust judge. Remember the unjust judge and the woman who comes and pesters? What is the point of that parable? People say, Boy, I don't understand that, that the guy respects neither God nor man, but because the woman is called the unfortunate widow. We don't use the word unfortunate that we don't.

But the woman is what? What is the characteristic about that woman that makes stuff happen for her? She is aggressive. She says, I've got rights under the law and I want them. And I will not desist until I get them.

The law has made me a promise of justice. The law has made me a promise of fairness. The law has made a promise that will protect my land.

You, oh judge, need to fulfill that promise and that hope and that expectation. And the judge says, Well, you know, I don't have any other good reason for doing it, but this woman's persistence, I will honor that. I will act on that.

And that's the point of the parable. And it ought to really come back for us to reflect on when we look at these tribes. It is the aggressive tribes that seize and remain in possession of their inheritance.

There is one final thought here on the use of lots in scripture. I told you before that it becomes a metonymy for the result of the lot. You say, well, here's the lot.

You find this in Isaiah 17, 14, where it says, if you back up a verse, The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters, but God will rebuke them and they will flee far away and be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind, like a rolling thing before the

whirlwind. Then behold at eventide, trouble, and before the morning, he, the enemy, is no more. This is the portion of those who plunder us and the lot of those who rob us.

These enemies who seem to be so formidable, they're like the rushing of many waters, God is going to blow them away like chaff. This is their lot. Now, we're no longer talking about the actual casting of the lot, but this is going to be their portion.

Now, this informs, by the way, the understanding when you get over to Revelation 20, and it says their meros, their portion, their lot, is in the lake of fire that burns forever and ever. It doesn't mean they themselves. It means their allotment, as we've talked about many times.

In Isaiah 34, 16 and 17, talking about the faithful, the first reference was for the enemies of the people of God. Their lot is to be blown away, literally. What about the others? Search from the book of the Lord and read.

Not one of these shall fail. Not one shall lack her mate. And if you read up earlier, it's talking about the beasts and the goats and so on.

Not one of these shall fail. Not one shall lack her mate. For my mouth, God says, has commanded it, and his spirit has gathered them.

He has cast the lot for them, and his hand has divided it among them with a measuring line. They shall possess it forever and ever, from generation to generation. They shall dwell in it.

Now, this is irony. This is a mocking tone from God. If you know the context in Isaiah, remember Isaiah is like the miniature Bible.

The first 39 chapters talk about the problem, and the last 27 chapters talk about the solution, just like the Old Testament maps out the problem of sin. By the law comes the knowledge of sin. The New Testament's 27 books talk about the solution, Christ, salvation.

The new life and the spirit and so on. Well, in the same way, we're in the problem-defining section of Isaiah, and he's talking about the lack of faithfulness in Israel. And so the Lord is going to sacrifice in Basra and slaughter in the land of Egypt.

The wild oxen will come down, the young bulls with the mighty bulls. This is verse 7 of Isaiah 34. The land will be soaked with blood.

This is the judgment of God. The land is going to be soaked with blood. Their dust is saturated with their fatness, for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance.

The indignation of the Lord is against all these nations. He has utterly destroyed them. He's given them over to slaughter.

Their slain will be thrown out and so on. You find this up in the earlier part of the chapter. The streams will turn to pitch, the dust into brimstone.

The land will burn and not be quenched for generation to generation. It shall lie waste. No one shall pass through it forever and ever, but the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it, and the owl and the raven shall dwell in it.

Who's supposed to be dwelling in the land? What kind of promises did God make for the land of Israel? That the seed of Abraham, that the sons of Jacob would possess and dwell? Well, on the flip side of that, in judgment and in retribution, instead of the land flowing with milk and honey, the land is going to flow with blood. And instead of the people of God inheriting, you find the owl and the pelican and the raven inheriting and possessing forever and ever. And there is an allusion, there is a relationship between those two things.

And it is designed to make Israel stop and think. One of these days we'll do the book of Isaiah and we'll go through this in detail. So you have the same idea in Isaiah 57-6, among the smooth stones of the stream is your portion.

They, the smooth stones of the stream, are your lot. Even to them you have poured a drink offering, you have offered a grain offering, should I receive comfort in these? Same idea, the casting of the lot. There's all different kinds.

Jeremiah 13-25, discipline on Israel itself, not just nations, but Israel itself. Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then you will also do good, who are accustomed to doing evil. This is God indicting His own people now.

You are an evil people. You can't change your spots. An Ethiopian, a dark-skinned person, can't change his skin normally.

Then may you also do good, who are accustomed to do evil. Therefore, verse 24, I will scatter them like stubble that passes away by the wind of the wilderness. The same thing that God describes as the fate of the nations that have attacked Zion.

He pronounces on His own people. Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, proclaims this judgment from God. This, verse 25, is your lot.

The portion of your measures for me, says the Lord, because you have forgotten me and trusted in falsehood. The lot was supposed to be, here is your possession, here is your land, here is the fulfillment of all of the promises that were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But because they reject that through forgetting God and believing in falsehood, now a different lot falls.

And it's not random chance that they're being judged, but that the reason it is called a lot is it alludes, it hears back. What was the lot supposed to be? It is not the will of God

that any should perish. Christ did not come into the world to condemn the world, but to deliver it.

And God wants to benefit and bless His people. But if they are apathetic, if they are indifferent, if they are disobedient, if they forget Him and believe the lie, what's going to happen? Well, now there's going to be a whole different lot that is cast. And instead of portioning out the land of promise, it is going to be the portioning out of discipline.

We've talked about the scapegoat, and that's in Leviticus chapter 16 in particular. One lot for the Lord, one lot for the scapegoat. You can read about that in more detail on another occasion.

But there were many kinds of lots. If you go to Obadiah, we don't get to go there very often, but Obadiah verse 11, it talks about victors in a battle casting lots over the booty. Here's all of the plunder.

Well, who's going to get what? Well, we'll roll the dice for it. We'll have a lottery for it. So in Obadiah 11, it says, In the day that you stood on the other side, in the day that strangers carried captive his forces, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, even you were as one of them.

Foreigners cast lots. They divided up the spoils. You're just so much chattel at that point.

Nahum chapter 3 and verse 10, Carried away captive into thieves, went into captivity, where young children were dashed to pieces at the head of every street. They cast lots for her honorable men, the elders and the notables, the highfalutin guys, our booty. They cast lots to see whose slave they are going to be.

Her great men were bound in chains. So these are secular nations casting lots. And you're basically, the idea here is what? If you do not accept and maintain possession of the good allotment that comes from God, then you are going to become subject to the lots, the vagaries, the whims, the power of the enemy.

And you're going to be helpless. There are many people who feel like victims. Well, I couldn't get anywhere because my employer was against me, or my group wouldn't accept me, or my this, my that, my the other.

I am suffering under the decisions of others that are beyond my control, and it just seems like the lot is cast and here I am. I'm like the great man bound in chains. Well, we really have to stop and think about this.

Whose lot are we under? We decide that. Faithful believers, God is casting the lot, and we can have confidence that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called. And you're only the called if you answer.

If the call goes out and you don't answer, well, you didn't really get called. It's kind of like when you hear the caller ID, or you see the caller ID, somebody's calling if you don't want to talk to, and you say, oh, wait a minute. That's so-and-so's windows and siding.

I don't want to talk to them. And you just let it ring. Well, they don't go back and say, well, I called Sam.

Well, I couldn't get a hold of Sam. That wasn't really a completed call. I tried, but I didn't get an answer.

I didn't get a response. It doesn't really count as a marketing call. It doesn't count until you have some interaction, until you get a response.

Same thing with God. God calls, but if he doesn't get an answer, that's not really a call. You had the opportunity to be the called, and you turned it down.

So, you have Joel chapter 3 and verse 3. They have cast lots for my people. We read this one before. They've given a boy's payment for a harlot.

They sold a girl for wine so that they can drink. And you have the prediction in Psalm 22, 18, which is fulfilled at the crucifixion. They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

Now, these, of course, are not Roman soldiers doing oriental enthusiasm at the foot of the cross, but there are occasions where your stuff goes to others, and they apportion it out with their own lot. In Judges chapter 20, lots were cast to decide who was going to go fight against the town of Gibeah. Who's going to go, who's going to stay? Which priests are going to serve at what time in the temple? In 1 Chronicles chapter 24.

How is the order of the priestly service determined? They were divided by lot, one group as another, 1 Chronicles 24, 5. There were officials of the sanctuary and officials of the house of God from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. Who's going to do what? Well, let's put it in God's hands. We'll cast the lot.

He'll decide which clans under the sons of Aaron are going to do what. The people who were going to dwell in Jerusalem. Remember Nehemiah when everybody came back? Everybody that was captive and returns can't live in Jerusalem.

There's ten times too many people to all cram back into the town. The town is in ruins. So what did they do? Nehemiah chapter 11, the leaders of the people dwelt at Jerusalem.

The rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem. The holy city and nine-tenths had to go dwell somewhere else. Tough choice.

Even away, even pining, praying for the peace of Jerusalem, longing for Jerusalem. If I forget, you may my hand wither and my tongue cleave with my mouth and all that.

When they come back, the lots are cast.

Only ten percent of the people can actually dwell in Jerusalem. The rest have to go elsewhere. Are they going to sit around weeping and moaning and crying the blues and demanding a recount and where are my rights and so on? It's the lot.

It's determinative. You go with the hand that you're dealt with the circumstances as they are. These are believers.

These are the people of God. And that's how these things are determined. Who's going to supply wood for the altar fire when they get back? We cast lots, Nehemiah says in 10:34.

We cast lots among the priests, the Levites and the people for bringing the wood offerings to the house of our God according to our Father's houses at the appointed times year by year to burn on the altar of the Lord our God as it is written in the law. There are certain things that you have to determine. If you're going to do it fairly, you turn it over to providence.

Achan, of course, the very well-known situation we saw in Joshua chapter 7. Here's one you tend to forget. You remember when Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh but instead he decided he was going to go to Tarshish? He got on the ship. The storm comes up.

What did the sailors do to figure out what's the problem? The sailors cast lots and amazingly the lot fell. Here are a bunch of pagan godless sailors who know nothing of the God of Israel casting a lot and the lot falls squarely on the guilty man, Jonah, and they toss him overboard. Who do you think was in control of the lot that was being thrown by these godless sailors? Or at least they were godless in the sense of the God of Israel.

Each of you pray to your gods, they were saying. But the lot was ordered by the Lord, wasn't it? There is a sensibility or an awareness that God controls these things that we have to keep in our minds. Proverbs 18:18 says, casting lots causes contentions to cease and keeps the mighty apart, keeps the strong who are capable of combat and hurting each other.

You cast lots to settle this dispute and they say, well, that's the will of God. I'm not going to argue with it. So, there is a respect that's inherent in that proverb for the will of God.

Well, even the Arabs, what are they always saying? *Im shalai* is the will of God. And it's kind of a rebuke to Christians that many times we won't accept the will of God and you've got people who don't even have the right books to learn about God who respect the fact that this is God's will. Well, this brings us back now to our passage where these seven tribes are getting their allotments as Joshua determines them.

And one other thing I want to note in the tribes that we've already looked at is in chapter 19. We saw the borders that were given to Ben-Shabbat beginning in verse 11 of chapter 18. And then we went through Simeon and those towns come out of Judah's allotment.

Then Zebulun and then Issachar. And what's interesting here when you look at these and again, we're looking for clues that don't require etymology of word names and what do these place names mean. We're looking for things where we don't necessarily have to have a map in front of us.

If you just were on a desert island and one page of the Bible came floating from the ship's wreckage and it was this page and God said, okay, here's your spiritual food. What would you get from this? Well, as we look, there is a detail that is easy to miss. But if you go back and look at Simeon, for example.

Simeon is unique in that out of these tribes they are not given a border, are they? What's the nature of their inheritance? It's towns. And you say, well, that's understandable because it's basically kind of coming out of the share of the children of Judah. So, Simeon gets towns, but they don't get borders.

God says, I'm not even going to bother you with the concept of don't transgress this limit. Some tribes, their limit is very detailed, very precise. Go to this landmark, this landmark, this landmark.

Others, here's your towns. Just see if you can try to stay in your town. See if you can hold on to your town.

I'm not even going to give you towns of your own. I'm going to allocate some extra towns from somebody else's so when you can't hold on to them, they will revert. These towns given to Simeon are going to revert back to Judah, aren't they? Because God knows already Simeon's not going to be able to hold on to them.

He gives them the opportunity, though, and says, here's your towns. But it's almost a harbinger of bad things to come that these come out of Judah because they're going to evidently go back to Judah later on. So they get no borders.

So then you go to Zebulun in verse 10, and Zebulun's got borders. Okay, very good. Good for Zebulun.

Hang in there, Zebulun. You go down to Issachar. The children of Issachar, according to their families, their territory went to Jezreel and included, and now we have Kelisoth, Shunem, Hapharim, Shion, Anharath, Rabit, Kishion, Abez, Rameth, Angadin, Enhada, and Beth-Pazes.

And the border reached to Tabor, Shazima, and Beth-Shemesh. Their border ended at the Jordan, 16 cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the

children of Issachar, according to their families.

Well, that's kind of interesting because basically this is another town thing, isn't it? They're not really given a linear border. It says their territory extends to, and it says where they stop. But this is basically another city list.

So, the call here is different for different tribes. They have different capabilities. Some of them are responsible for all of the land in between.

They are given borders and everything inside the border is theirs for the taking, theirs for the using. Others, the concentration is on just the fortified towns. See if you can get a hold of that and hang on to it.

There's not the implication that there is some sort of a linear patch of ground all of which they are responsible for. Just a little city. God allocates.

This is the principle behind the parables you find in the New Testament. The parable of the talents. Five are given to one, three are given to another, one is given to another.

Things are allocated according to ability. The lots are falling according to God's will. God's controlling it and the assignment is appropriate.

This is my point. It is not random. God is not inscrutable.

God is not trying to be mysterious and sphinx-like in not letting us know why he does what he does. Many believers, you know, we'll understand it all by and by and that kind of thing. That's really not a good attitude for believers.

We have confidence that God knows what he's doing and we have in general a pretty good idea of why he does what he does. We say, well, I don't know why my family ended up with an injury or a debility of some sort. One or more of our family members is debilitated.

I've got an elderly parent who's sinking very, very slowly and there's a lot of effort involved in the care. I've got a child with something the matter with him that takes a lot of extra and here's a family that doesn't have that. Why did God allocate physical health problems or care for someone with special needs to my family and not to that family? Why have I got financial problems and these people don't? Why do I have physical problems these people don't? Why do I have job problems and these don't? It is not random.

And we don't have to say, well, I guess I'll understand it when I get to glory. Not at all. We know exactly why God does these things.

God controls the lot. What is the purpose of whatever challenge we're facing, whatever allotment we receive? What's the purpose? We know many things about this purpose.

Number one, our life is supposed to reflect God's glory.

There is no question. Whatever assignment you get, God is to be glorified. This reminds me of Marines.

I watched a documentary about the mountain warfare school and I went through the jungle environment survival training deal. Well, these guys were in the mountain warfare survival training thing and oh my, they're up there and the snow is eight feet deep. They're on the side of a mountain and they're given all these things.

To light your fire, you've got to dig all the way down through the snow and get to solid ground. If you don't, if you get lazy and only dig halfway down and build your fire on the snow, as soon as it gets hot, water will rush into that nice concave area and put your fire out. Normally, right after you go to sleep and you will freeze to death in the night.

You have to dig all the way down. Snow is eight, ten feet deep. Sorry.

Dig your way down. That's the only option you have. Well, they didn't do that.

So the instructors came the next morning and here's this little ice pond where their fire was supposed to be. Well, those Marines are given that particular assignment. There's other assignments that go to MOS school, Military Occupational Specialty School, to be all different kinds of things.

Motor transport, artillery, tanks, an infinitude of different specialties. But what's common for all Marines? These Marines, there was one guy who had been in a car accident and he had a bad back and he was kind of older. He was in his late thirties.

He was trying to hike up the mountain with his fifty pound pack and all of this stuff climbing in the rarefied air and all of that. And his back was killing him. The thing hunches you over.

You try carrying fifty pounds uphill in the mountain altitudes for six hours. Well, the guy, he was all attitude, but his body just would not obey him. He was trying to make his legs move, but he had the Marine Corps attitude.

I'm a Marine and this is doable. I wouldn't be here if I couldn't do this. I'm going to do it.

And he made it. He was the last guy there. He ended up staggering up, you know, using his snowshoe as a cane.

And once he got there, he eventually collapsed and couldn't even stand up and couldn't move his legs and they had to medivac him out. But he didn't quit because he's a Marine and that's the Marine ethos. That's the way you do it when you're a Marine.

You never, never, never, never quit. Well, there was another guy who was a PFC who got

picked to go to the school. Didn't volunteer.

Well, he got a tummy ache and he couldn't do anything. Well, you know, I just can't do that. I can't make my bowl.

They had certain requirements. You got to make tools. He couldn't do it.

He had no interest in reflecting the reputation and the traditions and the expectations of the Marine Corps in his assignment. He got assigned to Mountain Warfare School. He didn't want to be there.

And he flaked out. And my fervent hope is that they gave him a quick discharge into some other line of work because here this is on national TV. Here's a Marine who flakes out and gets a bad attitude and just kind of goes sullen.

He won't talk. He won't answer questions. The instructors are trying to encourage him and coax him along.

And he's just sitting there like, oh, you know, my pain. They were saying, you know, drink the charcoal. They made some charcoal in a tin cup.

Drink this. You'll get rid of your belly ache. Didn't want to do that.

Horrifying. But think about it. Believers ought to have that same attitude in common, regardless of what school we get assigned to, what MOS specialty we're supposed to assimilate and become, whatever it may be.

It isn't even whether you become a brilliant, shining example of a great pastor or a great administrator or a great any other name, your spiritual gift. What matters is, do you have that burning desire to reflect the glory of God, to reflect the plan and purpose of God, the character of Christ, who being in the form of God, did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped, self-interest, but emptied himself, took on the form of a servant, came in the likeness of man, being obedient, was obedient even to the point of death, the death of the cross. That's the attitude.

Doesn't matter what measuring stick somebody holds up and says, well, you did or you didn't do this, that and the other. Man looks on the outward appearance. God looks on the heart.

And that's in common. Look at the Caleb attitude. Look at the tribe of Gad attitude.

And look at the apathy of these seven tribes who have to be prodded and goaded to receive their inheritance. Which one do we want to be? That's really the emphasis in this whole thing. God is going to give different assignments.

Some people are only going to have to hold a town. Others are going to have to hold a

whole territory. Some of them are going to be responsible for producing rulers and princes and administrative leadership.

Others are going to be the farmers and the tenders of flocks and herds to provide the economic backbone for the nation. Is one more important than another? What kind of a king are you going to be if you've got no food and your people are starving and dying in droves? What kind of an economy are you going to have if you're faithful in tending your flocks and herds but the administration is corrupt and you lose everything because of bad decisions and you're overrun by foreign powers? Everyone has to do their part. Everyone has to tackle his or her assignment.

That's the body of Christ. We're not all an ear. We're not all a mouth.

We're not all a hand. We're not all a foot. We all have our assignments over and over and over again in this section of scripture.

You see this. What is the lot? God determines the fall of the lot. It is up to us, once that allotment is given, to go for it with gusto, with aggressive confidence that God will fulfill his plan and purpose in us.

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. Is there anything too hard for the Lord? With God, all things are possible. If God be for us, who can be against us? How many times does scripture have to make this point before we begin to remember it? The battle is the Lord's.

And we ride on that victory to be overcomers and to be those brethren with whom Christ shares the spoils of victory. It is all a matter of attitude. It is a matter of approach.

It isn't even the results that are visible and measurable that count. It's what's going on in our heart, what's going on in our soul. And I would rather be the guy with the bad back being medevacked out than the guy who gave up in his head before he got halfway up the mountain.

What a travesty. And to have that recorded on film, Fall Eternity, the guy by name is on there as a quitter, as a ne'er-do-well, as a bad attitude type. He's immortalized.

That documentary will be here until the Lord comes back. Oh man, I would rather die trying than be immortalized in that way. And we ought to have an attitude of aggressive faith, aggressive pursuit of what God has for us.

All of us have our allotment. And all of us know what that allotment is. We know, just like these tribes.

Is there any doubt in their mind what their allotment is? God's man reveals it to them. Joshua says, come here, I'll throw the lot and you'll know exactly what your assignment

is. It's these cities.

It's this border. It's this area. That's your assignment.

Go for it. Why are you standing around waiting for the God of your fathers? He ought to be your God. You ought to be claiming his promises personally.

So it's a great exhortation. It's a great sermon to us to make the most of the time that remains to us. The time is short.

The Lord is going to be back soon. God's plan is going to move forward. And our place in it is going to depend in great measure upon these daily decisions that we make.

We will pick up and move substantially forward next time in Joshua. We are going to be finished with these border descriptions and move into chapter 20 and find out about the cities of refuge. It's a fascinating, fascinating subject.

How do cities of refuge go through the observation, interpretation, application model? I challenge you to think about cities of refuge and form a theory before next week. But let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the graphic and effective way that it communicates to us your grace and the opportunities that are ours because of the strategic victories of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray to God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts and find us teachable and malleable so that we will be conformed to the image of our Savior and thoroughly equipped for every good work. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.