

## **APRIL 16**

Joshua 11:18 says that the war went on a long time. It seems, for us, that it's been quick, since we just started reading about it this week and now it's almost over. Obviously the Lord has given us an abbreviated version. Today we'll find out how long the fighting lasted from crossing the Jordan to the point of dividing the land. Even there, the Lord will tell us that there were still a lot of peoples and cities to fight against.

God hardened the kings so they would fight against Israel, but there were some examples of mercy and grace to balance the hardening. I don't believe these kings wanted to make peace, but I think the hardening is that God made them confident in their madness. Even the giants couldn't stand against God. With God at your side, big guys make big targets. Big problems often lead to huge opportunities.

### **Joshua 13-14**

Joshua 13

Vs. 1-7 This summary mentions that even though the military might of Canaan was broken, there were still people and cities to be removed. Even after great victories in our lives, God still keeps things in our lives that make us live by faith, still needing to depend on God. The introduction to the book of Judges explains this too.

Joshua was an older man and the fact that God told him that he was an older man indicates that his days of fighting were over. He had done what God wanted; the military might of Canaan was smashed, and now the next great task would be assigning the people the land. It could be that Joshua was in his 90's as he entered the land and was at or beyond 100 at this point.

Remember, too, that this is an incredible moment in the plan of God and the life of the nation. They are about to be given a piece of the Promised Land that had been promised to Abraham. Also, as boring as these sections might seem, the fact that they are recorded in the Bible made them official real estate documents.

Vs. 8-33 The description of dividing the land begins with what Moses had already done.

Vs. 8-14 This is a summary of all that Moses did.

V. 13 At this point, this is just a report of peoples who were left in that part of the land. Actually, in a way, that was no problem since that side of the Jordan was not Canaan. These people were not under God's judgment. If they threatened the tribes, Israel could deal with them by trusting God.

Notice in this chapter how often it's mentioned that the Levites had no inheritance. Their privilege was from God and the people needed to remember that. Also, their privilege was given in contrast to their lack of territorial inheritance.

Vs. 15-23 These are the legal boundaries of the land given to Reuben. Notice the mention of Balaam. He becomes a symbol of someone close to the truth, leading those in the truth into ruin. Reuben's land was in the south, going up the east side of the Dead Sea and a little north along the Jordan River.

Vs. 24-28 Gad's land went further north to the bottom of the Sea of Galilee.

Vs. 29-31 Finally, this is the land on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus did a lot of ministry there and in His day the population of that area was predominantly Gentile.

Vs. 32-33 Notice that the Levites are mentioned again. What is also interesting is that Moses is the main person in all of this. So much of what we read here is about Israel's obedience to God

through His servant Moses. At this point, the people obeyed God and obeyed Moses. It is interesting that years later, the Pharisees who revered Moses tried to use Moses against Jesus.

Joshua 14

Vs. 1-5 This is the summary of how the land in Canaan would be divided. Notice that Joshua, Eleazar, and the elders were involved in this process. No one had the authority of Moses so the authority was spread around. According to the [Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT](#), p. 356, this selection by lots was apparently done by taking a name out of an urn and then taking a land parcel out of another urn. God was the one who really decided. Also, we were told earlier, under Moses, that a large tribe should get more than a smaller tribe.

Vs. 6-12 Apparently, as the word was communicated to the tribes that the land would now be divided, Caleb came forward to address an issue. He not only represented Judah, but God had made some promises to him that needed to be attended to. Before the lots were cast, Caleb reminded Joshua of the promise.

It is inspiring listening to this man of faith. And think too, that although Caleb didn't die and was rewarded for his faith, he still had to wait the 38 years in the wilderness as God prepared the next generation. I wonder if Caleb played a role in passing on his faith among the people of Judah. What a model for following Christ through all the turmoil of life and church and everything else. Caleb was focused on the promise of God.

Notice that this section gives us a time marker. By what Caleb says here, we know now how long Israel has been at war (chapters 1-12). Caleb was 40 when he went out as a spy. At that point, Israel had already been in the wilderness for a year and a half, being ordered as a nation. Then they wandered for 38 ½ years. So, Caleb would have been 78 when they crossed the Jordan. Since Caleb is now 85, this means that they have been at war for 7 years.

V. 12 Apparently Caleb wasn't afraid of giants. You know, big guys make big targets.

Vs. 13-15 Joshua blessed his old comrade-in-arms. There was no lot cast, because Judah's land would have to encompass the land promised to Caleb. Hebron would become the city that King David would live in for seven years as the king of Judah, as Israel fought a civil war with the tribes still following the family of King Saul.

It seems that Caleb went right to work. Notice that before Caleb named the city Hebron, it was named for its ruler who was a giant among the giants, and apparently an even easier target to hit. When this guy was put down, again, the land had rest from war.

### **Luke 18:1-17**

V. 1 So, Jesus has just told His disciples that things will get bad for them, and that things will really get bad for His followers during the Tribulation. I guess that discussion was not so motivational for the disciples. Now He tells them to pray, instead of losing heart. Again, it is interesting that the Spirit moved Luke to include this. Luke was a missionary companion of Paul and knew adversity and persecution from the Gentiles, the Jews and the Jewish factions in the church.

Vs. 2-8 Notice that although the overall meaning of the story is for perseverance and pestering God in prayer, the object of the parable is begging for justice, vindication and deliverance. Verse 7 points to the focus of this crying out, and v. 8 refers, again, to the Tribulation and the second coming of Christ.

Notice that the idea of praying, not giving up and not being disheartened, kind of sounds like God's words / command to Joshua, *be strong and courageous* (Josh. 1:6). Just as God promised victory to Joshua, Jesus is promising victory to His followers in the harvest.

Vs. 7-8 Jesus promised a quick response from God. This has to be understood during the time of the Tribulation. During that judgment on the earth, there will be an almost one-to-one correspondence between the persecutions of the believing and God's terrifying acts of judgment toward the nations. As God brings judgment, instead of the masses of people repenting and coming to God, they will rail against Him and go after His people. But the more they go after the elect, the more God judges them. You'll see all of this when we get to Revelation at the end of the year. If you're interested now, reading Revelation 9-17 should give you a sense of this.

But even for us now in the harvest, we are to be crying out to God day and night. If it takes great disaster to make us cry out to God, and we're not crying out now, we really don't see life as it is. The believers in the Tribulation will be living and testifying for Christ as the world gets darker and darker. Is our world really any different? We may not be visually losing massive numbers of people to "natural" disasters, but each day we are losing incredible numbers of people to death, blinded by the enemy, dying in their sins and going to hell. I'd say that should be a cause for some emotional distress on our part.

Notice Jesus' question in v. 8. Faith continues to cry out. Faith knows that the only deliverance is from God. Faith understands that the only one who can help is God. In a land, and during a time, when we have so many resources, is it any wonder why we don't cry out? It is easy for our lives to become focused on us and not on those who don't yet know Christ. We have everything we need, so we don't need to cry out. But if we are laboring in the harvest, we see the loss and we see that we will always need Him and His help. Will the Son of Man find faith when He returns to the earth or will He just find religious belief? Not all religious belief is faith, even in our camp. If our love for Christ and our passion to follow Him isn't directed to the harvest and the making of disciples, who make disciples, we might only have a comfortable collection of beliefs.

Vs. 9-14 Verse 9 gives you the guide to understanding what He's about to say. These people who were to be cautioned by this parable were most likely disciples. The fact that a Pharisee was used in the parable is like Jesus saying, "Don't be a Pharisee." Also, think back to the beginning of chapter 15 when the tax collectors and sinners were coming to Jesus and the Pharisees began complaining. Jesus ended that entire lesson telling the disciples that they had to put aside their feelings and extend forgiveness to all who sought it. Jesus didn't want His followers to become the next group of Pharisees.

Just like the *unworthy servants* who had only done what was required of them, even though we know and serve Christ, our prayer is to be like this tax collector, *God, be merciful to me, a sinner*. We carry the body of death until we leave this place, or if we are still around when Jesus comes and are changed. As disciples in the harvest, the minute we lose our perspective on our own lives, our own sin, the miracle of our own salvation, we lose compassion for the perishing. The grace we've received is what should move us to tell others, or as Paul says, *For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.* (2 Corinthians 5:13-15)

Vs. 15-17 And here is a case in point regarding the perspective of the disciples. The disciples' problem with letting children be brought to Jesus for blessing was not theological, but a matter of their own standard of "importance" and "worth." Jesus told them that they needed to look to those who have faith. A child, or a sinner, who has just understood grace and forgiveness, responds with humility and gratefulness and excitement. This is a good lesson for us as disciples in the harvest. Who has faith to believe? Like the victim in the story of the Good Samaritan, it is often the person in need who looks humble, dirty, outcast and beaten up. Sometimes, the people we should be working with in the harvest are not the good-looking people on our "A" list.

## **Psalm 85**

It is interesting to speculate a little, thinking about when some of these psalms were written. As I read this I can imagine David trying to form Israel around the worship of God. David inherited a country that had crumbled in neglect, and he not only needed to create unity, but Israel was being preyed upon by all of its neighbors. The things that had happened to Israel showed that God was judging the people for their disobedience and neglect.

Vs. 1-3 This sounds to me like an appeal to God to remember how He took Jacob from Egypt, through all the rebellion in the wilderness.

Vs. 4-9 Having read so many of David's psalms, this sounds so much like his heart. Notice the mention of God's steadfast love and the desire that God's glory would dwell in the land.

Vs. 10-13 What an interesting way to express God's blessing of unity and revival in the land.

It is interesting how often a prayer for the future is based on what God has done in the past. Knowing what God has done in the past gives us hope for the future. Reading through the Bible like this will be a great benefit to your praying and your faith. You'll become more familiar with how God's love and faithfulness in the past gave, and still gives, His present followers hope in following His plan of redemption into the future.

### **Proverbs 13:7-8**

V. 7 appears to say that if riches are what you want, they will twist you and warp you whether you have them or not. Real richness is a matter of the heart being rich in God. 1 Timothy 6:9-10 talks about the "wonderful" effects of the desire to have money. The poor (and righteous and content) may not have the resources, but they also don't have the trouble and the twisting.