

APRIL 18

Joshua 16-18

At the end of this document there is a map from the Bible Knowledge Commentary OT, p. 358, showing where the tribes were placed in the land.

It says in Joshua and Judges that the people obeyed until the last of the elders who served with Joshua had died. This means that the two references you will find saying that the Canaanites were not driven out, but put into forced labor were written later as historical notes, possibly by Samuel, the last of the judges.

Joshua 16

Vs. 1-4 Next came the tribes of Joseph. In Genesis 48 it seems that Jacob gives the blessing of Abraham and firstborn blessing to Ephraim. Yet, God decided that Judah was the honored tribe. You'd think that everyone would have been jealous of the huge amount of land given to Judah, but some of it was the worst land. The south was desert and wilderness and there were very fierce enemies. God gave the hardest territory to the tribe with the godliest leader. In a manner of speaking, I think He still does that today. Opposition is given to those who can bring it before God, fight in prayer and perseverance, and still prosper in the harvest.

Vs. 5-10 This is the territory given to Ephraim. Notice v. 10. Now, it does say in 15:63 that the tribe of Judah wasn't able to drive out the Jebusites in Jerusalem. I think God had a purpose in that and Jerusalem was a fortified city. Actually, we'll see that Jerusalem was also in the territory of Benjamin (18:28). The big difference between that comment about Judah and this one about Ephraim is obvious. Ephraim had the opportunity to win, but instead of sending these people into God's presence, they put them to forced labor. Ephraim wasn't tricked into making a covenant with the Canaanites; they just disobeyed, using the situation with the Gibeonites as a precedent. This was for their own convenience and economic prosperity. I'm sure there were also soft-hearted, humanitarian arguments.

Joshua 17

Vs. 1-2 Now we get to Joseph's other son, Manasseh.

Vs. 3-6 This shows the fulfillment of the situation with the daughters of Zelophehad. This is the fourth time these women and this situation has been mentioned. It will be mentioned one more time in 1 Chronicles 7. It seems to me that God is making a point of what happened here. Not only did God protect the inheritance of Zelophehad, but He laid out the precedent of extending these rights to women. Based on what happened here, thousands of other situations could be determined. God's heart was known and it was written in Israel's law. That's kind of nice of God to do that.

Vs. 7-13 This is the land division for Manasseh. You notice v. 13. Again, this was added later, after the fact. This is absolutely tragic and it is exactly what God told the people not to do. We are getting ready for the darkness that is the book of Judges.

Vs. 14-18 This story is also very foreboding. I don't know if there is an intentional contrast to Judah and Caleb, but there is a definite difference in the tone of this request and Caleb's request. There is no faith visible in the people of Joseph, only whining. In vs. 15 and 17, Joshua tells them they were able to do this from the standpoint of power, but they didn't have the faith.

Notice that the people are already making excuses for not driving the people out. It is almost as if God has done the big work through Joshua, and now "the disciples" have to live by their own faith. Tragic as it is, left to their own faith and their own initiative to seek after God, they failed; not because God failed, but left to themselves, they really had no faith, or, to use one of Jesus' parables, they had no root in themselves.

Joshua 18

V. 1 In the Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT, pp. 360-361, Donald Campbell links the tone of the people of Joseph to the move Joshua makes here to establish the tabernacle in Shiloh. The people were worn out and becoming fearful. They would now have to follow and obey by faith and there were already signs that they were beginning to fail. This is the first mention of Shiloh. Apparently they set up camp there, and that is where the tabernacle was for about 300 years, until the ark was lost to the Philistines during the lifetime of Samuel.

Vs. 2-10 This is pretty interesting how they decided to divvy up the rest of the land. You can sense again in v. 3 that there was a reluctance of the people to joyfully strike out and take the land that God had already shown He would give them. You wonder too, if the other tribes felt bad because so much was given to Judah, Manasseh and Ephraim. Notice that it is mentioned again that the Levites were given no inheritance of land. The land divisions were made by these roving surveyors, but the seven areas that they made were allotted to each tribe by God at Shiloh. The lots being cast were probably the Urim and Thummim.

Vs. 11-28 This is the land given to Benjamin, on the northern boundary of Judah. Eventually, Judah and Benjamin would become the southern kingdom. Though Simeon is given land, like a bubble, in the middle of Judah, they will move to fertile lands up north. When the kingdom splits, the northern kingdom will be ten tribes and Judah will actually be Judah and Benjamin.

Of note here is the mention of Jerusalem also belonging to Benjamin (and apparently also to Judah). Also, notice Gibeah in v. 28. This city is the center of a tragic story at the end of Judges. It is the first city of Israel to go "Sodom," and in the civil war that follows, the entire tribe of Benjamin will be reduced to 600 men.

Luke 19:1-27

I've never noticed this before, but it seems that all of this takes place at Zacchaeus' house. Jesus had told His disciples that you had to receive the kingdom like a child. So in Jericho we've met Bartimaeus, crying out and, once healed, bounding around Jesus, following Him. Now we'll see a contrast to the rich, young ruler. We'll see a rich man who is saved, and again, acts like a kid.

Vs. 1-10 It is interesting that just recently, God brought Jesus into contact with the rich young ruler. Here, you have a tax collector. He was rich and he hadn't been a completely honest guy (since he had people to pay back), but he was repentant and willing to give everything away for the sake of knowing Jesus. Funny how the religious young ruler backed away from Jesus, but the sinner was ready to follow.

Vs. 4-6 Again, you have childlike faith to the point of climbing trees and bounding around in joy. Notice that this is the second story in a row of someone willing to "seek" Jesus and to endure shame for doing it. Zacchaeus, like the blind man, wasn't blind to who Jesus was.

V. 7 I'll bet you don't have to guess who "they" were.

Notice, too, that over half of the story has to do with Zacchaeus seeking Jesus. The remainder of the story is the proof of his sincerity and salvation. Jesus didn't have to ask Zacchaeus to give anything because he was already ready to do so.

V. 9 Zacchaeus wasn't saved by doing what he did, but like the test to the rich young ruler, the willingness to give stuff away proved that his treasure was in heaven and that money didn't own his heart like it did the rich young ruler's.

V. 10 I read today, "A disciple is not above his teacher....it is enough that a disciple is like his teacher...." If this was why Jesus came and it expresses His passion, we too should be living to seek and to save what is lost.

Vs. 11-27 Luke tells us why Jesus is telling this parable here. This story is similar, but not the same as the parable of the talents that Jesus will tell in Jerusalem the Wednesday before He dies. You probably have a note telling you how much a "mina" was. That would be a hefty amount.

In light of the purpose of the story, what was Jesus trying to get across to the Twelve and to the others who were following Him? Everyone was hoping He was about to overthrow the Roman government and bring the religious corruption to an end (everyone knew the chief priests were no good).

For us as disciples, there is an application. We are entrusted with something. There also seems to be variable rewards based on fruit. Fruit is relative and all fruit is rewarded. Fruitlessness is not celebrated here. It seems that the lack of trying was the real issue. Is it fair to say that if someone has been "given" forgiveness and grace, they will see it as their mission to see that forgiveness and grace is "invested" in the lives of others who have not found it?

V. 26 This saying has been used by Jesus often, particularly in training His disciples. It is almost like He's saying, "use it or lose it." It might be like saying that a truly believing person will strive to understand and bear testimony to Christ, whereas a "professing" but lost person will not strive or be passionate about making their life count for Christ.

V. 27 These are the general masses who didn't want this man to rule over them. It seems that the servant who didn't engage in business for his master could be one of those who didn't really want his master to return. I find it hard to accept Jesus applying the words, *wicked* and *condemn* to a disciple in v. 22. On the other hand, if this parable is being applied to unbelievers, I can't see Jesus entrusting them with His truth, if that's what the mina means. We know from 1 Corinthians 3:15 that there will be a "test by fire" for disciples to see what they have built on the foundation of their faith and God's truth. My view here is that the *wicked* servant is a real believer who will be tested by fire and will find that everything he built in this life got burned away. That person in 1 Corinthians will enter heaven and live eternally, but he will enter heaven with shame as he meets the Lord he has let down and sees that his life for Christ was a sham.

The point for me here is, *Engage in business until I come*. Amen.

Psalm 87

This is a very interesting psalm. Basically it says that Zion (Jerusalem) is not only God's city, but will someday be the great city of the world.

Rahab stands for Egypt and Babylon is Iraq, both places where God led Israel. These two nations hosted Israel and will apparently be blessed for that, and with these other nations mentioned here, will someday be adopted and included in Israel's worship as part of Israel. It will be said that they were born in Zion. Verse 6 says the same thing. The Lord will include them in the register of those who have been "born in Zion," belonging to the blessing of that kingdom. This all sounds like a fulfillment of the promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him. Also, since this event has never happened to this point in history, I'd say it is referring to the Millennial Kingdom, where Jesus will rule the world from Jerusalem for 1000 years.

Notice that v. 3 gave birth to a song, a hymn, "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken, Zion, City of our God." Imagine my surprise when we moved to Germany and, watching a soccer game, discovered the melody of that hymn is the melody of Germany's national anthem.

V. 7 In the future, all joy will spring from that city, its river of healing and its King.

Proverbs 13:11

I guess the stories we have of lottery winners being ruined by their quick wealth bears this out. The real virtue here is steady diligence in work, rather than chasing after wealth, fame or

success. I think this also goes for working in the harvest, growing disciples and building churches that labor in the harvest, making disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples.