



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

KEEP CALM AND MARCH ON!

Marching through the Book of Joshua: Lesson 15

In Joshua chapter 1, Joshua received a command from God to conquer the enemy and take control of the land. The second part of that command was to divide the land between the tribes of Israel as an inheritance from the Lord. In the following chapters, we find Joshua, God's faithful and obedient servant, obeying every detail of that command.

As you read the next few chapters, you may find them, at first, to be boring and uninteresting. Personally, geography is NOT my favorite subject. I like to know more about the people than the land. But everything that God has chosen to put into His Word is for the purpose of edifying His children and to teach us something about God and man. Don't give in to the temptation of skimming over these chapters like they don't mean much. Let's ask the Holy Spirit to give us eyes to see all the details that He has put into His Word and how they can be applied to our own life. As you read, try to pick out key points or thoughts, interesting facts, or new information. I'm sure that you will find facts that seem so insignificant upon first reading, but after further study, prove to be valuable nuggets to chew on!

First Day

1. Read Joshua chapter 13. Write your first thoughts.
2. Read Joshua 11:23. What is the "apparent" contradiction?

This "apparent" contradiction can be easily explained. Joshua and the children of Israel did take control of the whole land by destroying the key cities, along with their people and the king. They broke the unified

resistance that was formed by all the cities, with the purpose of coming against them. This caused them to be the dominant people in the land. They didn't take every city, citizen, or ruler, but they took enough to gain the control they needed. After each tribe received their allotment of land they would move in and drive out any inhabitants that remained.

3. What land still remained to be conquered?

As you read this chapter, try to put yourself in the shoes of the Israelites. Although what is happening may not seem like a big deal to us, this was a climax for Israel. This was the first time EVER that Israel could claim land as their own, given to them by God. How exciting! It's what they had been looking forward to with great anticipation. Not only could they claim the land, they had an opportunity to settle down, build homes, and live with God in peace.

4. According to verse 1, why was the land being divided immediately?

5. Joshua was now approximately 90-100 years old. How old was he when he died? Read Joshua 24:29.

In Joshua 1:6, God told Joshua that he would be the one to divide the land. Joshua wanted to be obedient to God before he died.

6. Who was going to drive out the inhabitants of the land, according to verse 6?

Joshua was now going to be relieved of the tremendous burden of being responsible for the entire nation. As each tribe was assigned their land, they were to assume the responsibilities that came with it. After driving out any inhabitants that remained, they were to farm it and govern it themselves.

The land was to be divided by family, or "clan." The clan gave portions of land to each family member. Each clan fell into a larger subdivision called a "household." The term "Father's house" denotes that family which belonged to the father of a tribe or his representative in each division of the people.

7. What method was to be used to divide the land? Read verses 13:6, 14:2, and Proverbs 16:33.

The phrase “**divide by lot**” means to “**cause to fall.**” God ordained the “casting of lots” as the method to make decisions for the leaders of Israel. Proverbs 16:33 tells us that God “ruled the lot.” Therefore, it was God who would be making the decision of who would be receiving what land. It was God’s land and He should be the one who decides who will live there. This would prevent Joshua from being accused of showing favoritism.

Do you remember from our previous lessons who these 12 tribes are, and why only 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ tribes are receiving an inheritance, according to verse 7? Let’s review.

The 12 tribes of Israel came from the 12 sons of Jacob and his two grandsons (Genesis 35:23-29, 49:28). Jacob had a deep love for Joseph, so he adopted Joseph’s two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, as his own (Genesis 48:5). They would together receive one allotment. This would equal 13 tribes, but only 12 are recognized, because the tribe of Levi was set apart as priests and “teachers of the Law” and was not given a land inheritance.

8. Who was the mother of Joseph? Read Genesis 35:24.
9. Read about the romantic meeting of Jacob and Rachel in Genesis 29. Why do you think that Jacob loved Joseph so much? Read Genesis 29:30 and 37:3.

Let’s end here for today. Isn’t it exciting to see Israel finally being able to claim their inheritance? What about you? Are you taking possession of all that God has given you? Are you taking hold of His promises? Let’s “**rejoice**” in knowing that we not only have blessings to enjoy here on earth, but He has also blessed us with “every spiritual blessing in the Heavenly places in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:3)

Memory Verse of the Week: “Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children’s forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.” Joshua 14:9

Second Day

Review your memory verse. How can you apply it to your life?

1. Let's read chapter 13 once more, looking for more details. Write any new tidbits you find as you read today.

2. Why were there only 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ tribes left to divide the land among? Read Numbers chapter 32 to review. Answer the following questions:
 - a. Why did Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh want their land early?
 - b. Why did Moses think this was unfair?
 - c. What rebuttal did they give to Moses' argument?
 - d. Did Moses change his mind? What stipulations did he give?
 - e. What would happen if Israel didn't keep their agreement?
 - f. Did the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh keep their commitment? (Joshua 4:11-12)

Joshua did exactly what Moses had told him to do by giving them their land. Verses 8-33 are a summary of what had already been promised to these 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tribes. These tribes had self-serving motives, being tempted by green pastures. Although they may have received their inheritance first, they would later pay. Their land was continually exposed to invasions from the enemy because of their location.

3. What eventually happened to these tribes? Read 1 Chronicles 5:23-26.

4. Read Joshua 13:13. Why is this verse significant? (What were the Israelites supposed to do?)

Verse 13 gives us a glimpse of the state of Israel's heart. They hadn't even begun to enjoy their inheritance when they were already disobeying a command from God. Not driving out the people was an act of **"incomplete obedience."** They only partially obeyed God. There was no immediate crisis or result, but there seldom is. But the tribes would certainly pay later for their sin of disobedience.

5. Define "incomplete obedience." Have you ever been guilty of this? Are you right now?

6. Spend some time searching your heart, asking yourself if you are in a state of "incomplete obedience" in any of the following areas. (Has God asked you to do something and you've only partially obeyed?)
 - a. As a wife?

 - b. As a mother?

 - c. As a friend?

 - d. As a grandmother?

 - e. As a Christian woman?

Verse 13 is a sour note that rings out as you read chapter 13. Do you hear any "sour notes" ringing from your life?

7. Read Joshua 13:14 and verse 33. What inheritance does Levi receive?

The tribe of Levi was not being punished or disgraced by not receiving any land of their own. They were privileged to be set apart to be priests and teachers of the Law. They lived off tithes and love offerings rather than the fruit of their own farming (Numbers 18). They lived in cities that belonged to the other tribes. Isn't it interesting that God spread the teachers of the Law all through the land to remind Israel about the

importance of keeping *God's Law*? They were marked for a blessing and singled out for *God's special service* (Numbers 35).

8. **"God was their inheritance."** Isn't that an awesome statement? Is *God* your inheritance? Are you set apart for His special service? Read the following Scriptures. How do they encourage you?
 - a. Psalm 142:5
 - b. Psalm 73:25-26
 - c. Psalm 16:5-6
 - d. Lamentations 3:24

9. What does the phrase **"the Lord is my portion"** mean?

10. Read Psalm 17:14. What does it mean to have your portion "in this life"? Contrast this with verse 15.

11. Where is your portion? Are you claiming the things of this world as your portion? Are you working harder to leave "things" to your kids rather than things of eternity? (If all we have given our children at the end of this life are "things," we have failed in our job of "training them up in the way they should go.")

This ends our lesson for today. I want everything that *God* has for me, don't you? Let's not settle and take the world for our inheritance, but let's look for our "portion in the Lord".

Third Day

What's your memory verse? Are you hiding it in your heart?

1. Read Joshua 13:15-33. Do any names or places in these verses sound familiar to you?

2. What do you know about Balaam? Read Numbers 22-25.

Chapter 13 explains to the reader the overall picture of what's happening. Chapter 14 then repeats it briefly and moves on to some more details regarding the dividing of the land to the rest of the tribes, beginning with our friend Caleb.

3. Read Joshua 14:1-15. Who helped Joshua distribute the land? Why? Read Numbers 34:16-29.
4. What determined how much land they would receive? Numbers 26:52-56
5. Who came to Joshua in verse 6 with a request? What tribe was he from?

Judah was Jacob's 4th son. Why did he get the first allotment?

Let's review:

6. Reuben was Jacob's first son. How did he forfeit his rights as first-born? Read Genesis 49:3-4 and 35:22.

Simeon and Levi were 2nd and 3rd. They shamed their family by deceiving and slaughtering the men of Shechem (Genesis 34). For this sin they were scattered among the tribes. Simeon received only cities within Judah's territory, but eventually was absorbed and disappeared. Although Levi was cursed for the same thing, because they were the only ones to reject idolatry at Sinai, God turned their curse of scattering into a blessing (Exodus 32:25-29). This caused Judah to have the rights of the first-born.

7. What spiritual blessing did Jacob give to his son Judah? (Genesis 49:8)
8. Whose earthly lineage is traced through this tribe? Matthew 1:1-3

Jacob described his son as a "lion's whelp." A lion symbolizes strength and royalty. In Revelation 5:5, Jesus is called the "**Lion of the Tribe of Judah!**"

Notice that all this is happening in Gilgal. Later Joshua moves the base of operations from Gilgal to Shiloh (Joshua 18:1), the home of the first tabernacle.

9. What do you remember about Caleb? Read Numbers 13 and 14 to review. What is he known for?

10. Read Deuteronomy 1:36. Why does Caleb get to be the first one to receive the allotment of his choice?

11. In Joshua 14:8, 9, and 14, what phrase is repeated when describing Caleb?

We'll talk about Caleb some more in tomorrow's lesson. Spend some time today meditating on the phrase, "wholly following the Lord." What does that really mean? Are you doing it? And, by the way, I don't think I've asked you yet...what's your **"Reason to Rejoice"** for today?

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? I pray that God is using it in your life.

In today's lesson, God rewards Joshua for his obedience, just like He said He would.

1. Read Joshua 14:1-15 again.
2. What does it mean to "wholly follow the Lord"? Give Scriptures to support your answer.

3. What does it mean to follow the Lord with "half a heart"? Can you give an example in Scripture of someone who followed God half-heartedly?

4. How much of your heart is following after Jesus? What about this week? What about today? In what areas is your heart still struggling to follow Him?
5. How many times does Caleb refer to "God's Word" or "what He said" in this chapter?
6. What does that tell us about Caleb and his relationship with God?
7. What does it tell us about Caleb's faith?

Caleb's faith was built upon God and His Word. His faith was not based on his feelings or what he thought was best or fair, but on "what He had said." He trusted God's solid Word.

8. What is your faith built upon? Is it built on what others have told you or what you were taught growing up? Is it based on God's Word or what you "think"?
9. If you answered the above question with "God," now ask yourself ... does your life reflect that? Are you living "according to His Word," obeying the principles it teaches, even when it comes against what you "feel" is right?

Caleb remembered what God had done. He remembered God's power. Time didn't cause him to forget all God's wonderful works or His promises. Caleb didn't allow it! Caleb saw the past as a testimony of God's incredible faithfulness!

10. Caleb didn't ask for a small, little, quiet, out-of-the-way city, did he? What place did he ask for? Who was still there?
11. What does this tell us about Caleb?

12. Do you think he's boasting in verses 11-12? Who does he believe will give him what he needs to get the job done?

Caleb was 85 years old and still felt that he, with the Lord's help, was capable of driving out any remnants of the Anakim that dwelt there. He was still a man of unwavering and unflinching faith and strength. Irving Jensen said, "To many, seeing is believing, waiting is wearying, and aging is to retire. To Caleb, believing was to see Canaan conquered, waiting through the wilderness years and the wars for Canaan to be strengthened, and aging was to take on yet another giant task with the same strength, giving God the glory!"

Being old didn't deter Caleb from actively pursuing and depending on God. He still was following Him with his whole heart. What a great example Caleb is for us as we grow in years, like me!

13. What are some common attitudes of many believers who have grown older, regarding their service for the Lord?
14. Do you feel like you're "getting old"? Have you set your service "on the shelf"? What does God want to do for you today? Read 2 Timothy 1:6.
15. Read Titus 2:1-5. What is the role of the "older woman" in the church? (That really includes all of us, because we are all older than someone. Also, some are "spiritually" older than others.)
16. Name some ways that women who are older and maybe unable to do so much "busy work" can be used to minister to other women.

Caleb was a good example to the other men of Israel of faithfulness. He continued to trust God through his entire life! Unfortunately, although Joshua 14:6-12 gives us such a positive opening, chapter 17:14-18 gives us an equally negative ending. Israel had two choices: follow God with their whole

heart like Caleb, or be whiners, complainers, and doubters like the sons of Joseph. We have the same choice today, don't we? Are you ready to choose?

Many think that Caleb was an "optimist." Actually, he was just a believer who was doing what he was supposed to be doing...trusting God! Because his focus was right, his response to life, circumstances, and trials was affected. A believer should be an "optimist" if his eyes are focused on Jesus.

We'll talk more about Caleb tomorrow. Don't you just love him? I wish he was my grandpa! Are we being that example for our family?

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory. I'll ask again ... are you wholly following the Lord?

1. Read over Joshua chapter 14 again.

Joshua must have smiled as Caleb came forward and declared his dependence on God! What a good friend Caleb must have been to Joshua over the years. Scripture doesn't tell us that much about him, but the few glimpses we have show us his Christ-like character. I bet he was a great support for Joshua, especially during the tough times. We all would be truly blessed to have a friend like Caleb.

I'm sure that both Caleb and Joshua felt alone at times. They were the first ones to "go against the flow" when they served as the spies for Israel. And to wholly follow the Lord calls for commitment and dedication, along with standing up for what is right, even when others aren't. When you are "sold out" for God, at times you are lonely. Not everyone wants to join you in your pursuit of holiness.

2. Do you ever feel alone? Do you ever feel like you are being called to "go against the flow"? (Can you share with the group?) How does the example of Caleb encourage you? What Scripture is most encouraging to you when you are lonely, for whatever reason?

3. Back to Joshua 14. What city did Caleb receive? What was it formerly called?

Hebron was a strategic city in the hill country, full of fields and villages (Joshua 21:12). It was located 20 miles south of Jerusalem. God even renamed the land because it was to be a land full of his people. The word "Hebron" means "Alliance." And by the way, Caleb did drive out those giants in his land (Joshua 15:14-17)!

**Both Joshua and Caleb are pictures of endurance.
They didn't waver, but kept running strong!**

4. We are also called to endure. Read Hebrews 12:1-3. What do you learn about endurance? Who is our inspiration?
5. What if you're too tired and you want to quit? What does Isaiah 40:29 say that encourages you?

Picture yourself as a marathon runner. There are many hills, turns, and obstacles. There are times that you have bursts of energy, and there are times when you feel like you can't go another step. Sometimes it's lonely. Sometimes it's tough. Running in this race is definitely a challenge. But we are called to endure, despite the circumstances in our life. The Lord will empower you to run by His Holy Spirit! Don't quit! Joshua didn't! Caleb didn't! You don't have to either. Stay on course, stay focused, and do as Paul did, "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus!" (Philippians 3:14)

I want to end today's lesson with some words from a song called, "Hearts Courageous" by Jamie Owens-Collins. My prayer is that it will encourage you as much as it encouraged me today in the battle I'm in. God bless you all as you "follow Him fully" this week!

**"We're marching with our hearts courageous, we'll follow anywhere
You want us to, and should You lead us where the battle rages,
let us march with hearts courageous after You!"**

