



"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 16

In our lesson last week, we had the joy of meeting up with our old friend Caleb. He was found to be faithful and committed to the Lord after all those years. He must have been quite an example and an encouragement for the children of Israel as they watched him serve God with the same zeal that he had when he spied out the Promised Land with Joshua many years earlier. God rewarded him by giving him the city of Hebron for his inheritance, which later became the first capital of David.

This week we are going to read through chapters 15-17. It may seem like just another geography lesson, but again, try to pick out any details that you may find encouraging, interesting, or informative. Remember, each verse in Scripture is "inspired by God" (2 Timothy 3:16).

First Day

1. Read chapter 15. Whose inheritance is first mentioned? Why do you think we are given so much detail about this one?

Judah's land bordered Edom to the south, the Dead Sea to the east, the Mediterranean to the west, and the northern territory was shared with the tribe of Benjamin (18:15-19). Locate these cities on a map and get acquainted with their boundaries.

Irving Jensen explains more on how the land was allotted: "The basic principles of allocation had been stated originally by Moses (Numbers 26:52-62) and were based on the size of the tribes (Numbers 26:4-51) and the

drawing of the lots. When it came time to divide the land, it was understood that the largest and most prominent tribes of Judah and the sons of Joseph should receive their land first, which would determine the remainder of the allotments to be made. The allotments for Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh very likely were made at Gilgal. The later allotments were made at Shiloh (18:1)."

More of the details of determining the land allocations for the seven tribes are described in 18:4-10.

In his commentary on the book of Joshua, Irving Jensen also gives us some interesting insight on the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Judah was the most blessed of Jacob's sons (Genesis 49:8-12). His land was very good and very large. Three prominent prophecies of Jacob's blessing were fulfilled in this land assignment:

1. Exposure to the enemies (Genesis 49:8-9). Bordering Judah were the Moabites to the east, Edomites to the south, Amalekites to the southwest, and Philistines to the west. The exposure demanded a strong Judah, and from his ranks emerged such mighty men as David.
 2. Land of the vineyard (Genesis 49:11-12). Moses' spies made special note of the grapes produce of the area (Numbers 13:22-24).
 3. Land of the scepter (Genesis 49:10). Jerusalem was allotted nominally to Benjamin but it became identified with Judah. The throne of David was eventually set up there, and the messianic ("Shiloh") rule was associated with it.
2. Read through chapter 15 again. Do you find any cities that are familiar to you? Choose one to look up and learn more about. What happened there in the past? In the future?
 3. Who was given a portion of land among the children of Israel? (vs 13)

4. Was he obedient to the command that Israel should drive all the inhabitants from the land?

Caleb not only "talked" about faith, he "acted" on faith!

5. Read James 1:21-25. What does this passage mean?
6. What is promised to one who is a "doer"? (vs 25)
7. Would you consider yourself a "doer," a "hearer," or both? What were you this past week?
8. Who married Caleb's daughter? Why?
9. Why do you think the story of Achsah's water is recorded for us in verses 15-19? How important do you think water was? What does this tell us about God's provisions?
10. What are your thoughts upon first reading this chapter? Did you find it boring? Exciting? Informative? Challenging?

We'll end our lesson here for today. Tomorrow we will continue learning about some different cities that were given to Israel as an inheritance. The next four chapters are a testimony to God's faithfulness. That's a "**Reason to Rejoice**," isn't it?

Memory Verse of the Week: "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself." **2 Timothy 2:13**

Second Day

Review your memory verse. What does it mean?

1. Read chapter 15 again. Let's look at three cities that you may remember.
2. **Beersheba** (vs 28) This is a city in the southern part of Israel, about midway between the Mediterranean Sea and the southern end of the Dead Sea. It is still a principle Bedouin market and a main town in southern Israel. It got its name because of the digging of the well and making of a pact between Abraham and Abimelech. Read the following stories from Scripture and briefly describe what happened in this city.
 - a. Genesis 21:22-34:
 - b. Genesis 26: 16-33:
 - c. 1 Kings 19:1-8:
3. Read 1 Samuel 27:1-6. Who was Ziklag (Joshua 15:31) given to? Why?
4. Read 1 Samuel 22:1-5. Who hid in the cave of Adullam (Joshua 15:35)?

Joshua 15:62 mentions the city of En Gedi which is just north of the Masada by the Dead Sea. David hid in the caves of En Gedi when he was running from Saul (1 Samuel 23:29). This city is a "must-see" if you ever get the opportunity to go to Israel. The waterfalls there are absolutely beautiful. It is amazing to see the actual caves that David might have been hiding in! (Can you tell that En Gedi was my favorite place to visit on our trip?)

The "City of Salt" in verse 62 may be a place that is now known as Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in 1947.

Just in case you noticed, verse 32 says there were 29 cities, but 36 are actually named. It is thought that maybe the names of some of the "villages" outside the city walls are included in the list.

5. Who were the children of Judah unable to drive out of their land in Joshua 15:63?

Israel was able to take the king of Jerusalem and his army in chapter 10, but did not take the city. Many Jebusites had redeveloped over time.

6. Read Judges 1:8. What happened to the city of Jerusalem after Joshua's death? Were all the people driven out at that time? (Judges 1:21)

7. What did David do to the city of Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 5:6-7?

It seems like the tribe of Judah was content to live among the pagans. They were compromising what God had told them to do. When we don't obey completely, we also compromise. Compromise means "a weakening or a giving up of one's principles or ideals for the reason of expediency."

We should never give up what we know to be true, no matter what the cost. In today's world it is easy to compromise; everyone's doing it. Instead of standing on God's Word, many Christians allow the world to shape their principles, both morally and spiritually. This always results in compromise.

8. What are the dangers of compromise, or living with one foot in the world and one foot in Christ?

- 9. Are there any areas in your life where you are in danger of compromising?** Are you going places you shouldn't? Are you allowing things in your mind that are weakening your convictions? Are you looking at things that are drawing your mind to places it shouldn't be? (If the answer is yes, are you ready to repent and start fresh?) Spend some time confessing those things to the Lord, asking Him to give you the strength to stay above reproach in all areas.

We'll end here for now. Compromise is easy to do but so damaging to our relationship with Christ. May our convictions and principles be strengthened as we read the Word of God. Make sure you plant your feet firmly on the **"Rock of our salvation."** (2 Samuel 22:47)

Third Day

Review your memory verse. How did God prove Himself faithful today?

1. Read Joshua 16. Write down any interesting facts you find.

2. Who was next to receive their inheritance?

Hopefully you remember that last week we learned about Joseph's two sons who were ordained to be the heads of two tribes (Genesis 48:5). The birth order was "Manasseh and Ephraim," but you'll notice they were reversed. Please refer to the last lesson for a more detailed explanation. Because the land they received borders the Jordan River, their land was very fertile.

3. Ephraim had one problem. What did they have in common with the tribe of Judah? Read Joshua 16:10.

4. What did the Canaanites become for the Ephraimites?

It seems like Ephraim not only didn't drive out the enemy, they used them for their own advantage.

5. How do you think Ephraim rationalized doing this?

6. Do we do the same thing? Or should I say, "**how**" do we do the same thing? Are there any "sins" that you are rationalizing away?

7. The Canaanites stayed in Gezer. What else happened there? Read 1 Kings 9:15-19.

God wanted the inhabitants of the lands driven out because He wanted His people to remain pure. There are so many dangers of becoming "yoked" or "mixed" with the world. As Christians we are called to be pure in all form of thought, word, and deed.

8. We are called to be pure because God is pure. What do the following verses tell you about purity?

a. Proverbs 30:5

b. Psalm 19:8

c. Psalm 24:3-5

d. Matthew 5:8

e. James 3:17

f. 1 John 3:3

Let's end here for today. Paul told young Timothy not to let anyone despise his youth, but "be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." He also said, "Until I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:12-13). You stay pure by reading and obeying His Word, because it is perfect! Are you giving attention to these things?

Fourth Day

What's your memory verse? Were you faithful this week?

1. Read Joshua chapter 17. What new facts do you find in this chapter? Do you see any application for yourself?

2. What is unusual in verses 3-6? Read Numbers 27:1-11 for more details.

3. Why did these daughters have a right to receive land?

4. What do we learn about the faith and courage of these women by this incident?

These daughters are a good example of how we are supposed to come to the Lord. We should pray with boldness, confidence, and assurance.

5. Read Hebrews 4:15-16. Where and how are we supposed to go for help?

6. Why aren't we supposed to be "bashful" when we pray?

7. Oh, no, not again! What happened in Joshua 17:12-13?

8. Read verses 14-18. What were Ephraim and Manasseh complaining about?

9. What did Joshua tell them to do? Did he give in to their request?

10. What did the sons of Joseph think about themselves? What sin do we detect?

11. Do you remember what tribe Joshua is from? Read Numbers 13:8.

What a difference between Caleb and these men. Caleb saw giants and attacked them. He saw a challenge and with God's help, met it straight on! These tribes saw a problem and instead of asking God for help, they immediately complained and grumbled, believing the situation to be impossible. Hadn't these tribes seen miracle after miracle already?

Warren Wiersbe said, "It's not your boasting but your believing that gives you the victory and gains you new territory. Sometimes those who talk the most accomplish the least."

12. Read Deuteronomy 7:17-22 and 20:1. What did Moses tell Israel to do in a situation like this?

Not only were Ephraim and Manasseh not content with the gift of land that God had given them, they also seemed to be doubting God's ability to deliver them from their enemies. How could they have forgotten God? Again!

13. Are you content with the "lot" God has given you in this season of your life? These tribes said, "This is not enough." Are you saying that today? What are the dangers of allowing the root of "discontentment" to remain in your heart?

Okay, I'm convicted. It's easy to allow yourself to want more, even to "expect" more. I'm not only speaking about money or material things, but about anything in life. Paul said, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Philippians 4:11). Lord, help us to not only be content, but joyful!

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory. This is definitely one that you want to hide deep down in your heart.

We know that in Joshua 17, the house of Joseph showed an ungrateful attitude towards the gift God had given them. God has given us many gifts, both physical and spiritual. He has given us the gift of life, which we take for granted daily. We have the tendency to take for granted the spiritual gifts He has given us as well.

A spiritual gift is defined as a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to each member of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7, Romans 12:5-6, 1 Peter 4:10). The term comes from the word "Charisma" which means grace. We do not deserve any gifts, but because of His amazing grace, He blesses us with them. We, in turn, are to use them for His glory.

God gives each believer a gift according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:11) for the purpose of accomplishing His purposes in the world, for the edification of the church, and for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Once we accept Christ and are baptized by the Holy Spirit, He then comes "upon" us to empower us for service (Acts 1:8). The spiritual gifts are a manifestation of Him coming upon us and living through us.

1. List the spiritual gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-31, Romans 12:3-8, and Ephesians 4:11.

2. What are your gifts? Do you see any of them evident in your life? If not, ask God to show you what your gifts are. That's the best way to discover them; ask Him to show you.

3. Is it possible to be discontent with your spiritual gift? Give an example.

4. Compare that to the discontentment of the house of Joseph. Is it similar?

5. If we are unhappy with the gifts God has given us, what is that saying about God and to God?

6. Why is it so unhealthy to compare your gifts to other's? What can be the result?

7. You knew this question was coming ... Have you been comparing the gifts that God has given you with those around you? Has it made you discontent?

8. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31. Why is it so important for each person to diligently use the gifts they have been given?

9. Are you being diligent with the gift God has given you? Are you a healthy, functioning part of the body of Christ?

10. To recap, what specifically spoke to your heart in Joshua 15-17?

11. What changes do you need to make as a result of studying God's Word this week?

12. How did this week's memory verse speak to your heart specifically?

What's your "**Reason to Rejoice**" this week? I have so many, don't you? Isn't God good? We have so much to be thankful for. Let's be content this week, shall we?

