

## ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE AND MOVE ON LESSON 15

**Series Subject: Accept the Challenge and Move On!**

**Lessons 11-16: The Inheritance and Division of the Promised Land Josh. 13:1-21:45**

**Lesson 15: Completing the Distribution Josh. 18:1-19:51**

**Today's Study: Josh. 18:1-19:51**

1. Compelling Witness 18:1
2. Complacency Rebuked/Action Taken 18:2-10
3. Circumference and Cities of Benjamin 18:11-28
4. Cities of Simeon 19:1-9
5. Circumference and Cities of Zebulun 19:10-16
6. Circumference and Cities of Issachar 19:17-23
7. Circumference and Cities of Asher 19:24-31
8. Circumference and Cities Naphtali 19:32-39
9. Cities of Dan 19:40-48
10. Conspicuous Lifestyle/Joshua 19:49-51

**Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.**

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Highlights from Lesson 14

##### (a) **COMMITMENT!!**

*The following two quotes were included in my presentation on **Commitment** made in Lesson 12. I also repeated these quotes in Lessons 13 and 14.*

***Commitment is compulsory in every phase of life as well as our commitment to God!!***

- (1) "Whatever goals we have they require **commitment** for them to be realized, especially when challenges arise and at time overwhelming."
- (2) "**Commitment** entails ability to work hard and keep infinite fortitude, despite the pain of adversity you will press on!! **Staying committed to your goal is one of the most fundamental principles of success.**"
- (3) **Prov. 16:3 ESV**  
"Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established."
- (4) **Col. 3:23 ESV**  
"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."

##### (b) **Behavior determines our eternal destiny.**

- (1) Behavior/conduct do need serious attention because it determines our destiny, in fact it determines our eternal destiny. . . . “We choose what to focus on, we can choose what things mean and we can choose what to do. Those three choices; those three decisions, really control our life.”
- (2) Our eternity is determined by how we behave, by our conduct before God. If we believe—giving our lives to God and follow Him—we will live with God eternally. But if we have not surrendered our lives to God—if we are determined to live by our standards—we will be doomed, separated from God eternally.
- (c) **Six strong practical lessons on the believer’s behavior noted in Joshua chapters 16 and 17.**
- (1) **Josh. 16:1-4:** God’s abundant blessing to the faithful and obedient believer.
  - (2) **Josh. 16:5-10:** Showing the need to live together as one people.
  - (3) **Josh. 17:1-2:** Examples of the marginal, those who have not gone all the way; and the faithful, those who endure to the end.
  - (4) **Josh. 17:3-6:** An example of faith in that which was promised.
  - (5) **Josh. 17:7-13:** An unfortunate situation of failure, compromise, and evil association with worldly neighbors.
  - (6) **Josh. 17:14-18:** Pride and seeking “to be at ease in Zion”—and the necessity to be steadfast and zealous.
- (d) **Joseph’s blessings flowed over to his descendants.**
- (1) “The children of Joseph” (16:1) refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and next to Judah they received the largest inheritance of land.
  - (2) The inheritance these two tribes was allotted because of Joseph’s faithfulness and obedience (Gen. 37:1-50:26).
  - (3) The location of these tribes was very desirable.
    - It was composed of a district that was both fertile and beautiful.
    - Beside the sacred valley of Shechem it included some of the finest parts of Palestine, the mountain of Ephraim, and the great and fertile maritime plain of Shechem.
    - One might say the lot of the children of Joseph reflected the favor of God for the courageous father of these tribes.
  - (4) Two of the significant places related to this lot (a few highlights):
    - **The waters of Jericho** (Josh. 16:1)
      - The water was not beneficial which was the reason for the unfruitful situation for the area; the water was eventually healed by Elisha (2 Kings 2:19-25).
      - The people who settled in this area in those days did so to take advantage of the fresh water which was such a scarcity in the harsh desert environment just north of the Dead Sea.
    - **The Valley of Shechem**
      - Shechem was the first capital of “The Kingdom of Israel” (The Northern Kingdom) (1 Kings 12:25).

- In reference to Joshua's use of Shechem for that final admonition to the people, one scholar wrote:  
"For this solemn act he [Joshua] did not choose Shiloh, the site of the national sanctuary . . . but Shechem, a place which was sanctified as no other was for such a purpose as this by the most sacred reminiscences from the time of the patriarchs."

**(5) God honors the second birth!**

- Manasseh was Joseph's first born and Ephraim the second born; however, when Jacob blessed the two sons, he blessed Ephraim over Manasseh.
- By birth Ephraim was to receive the lesser inheritance, what Jacob did when he blessed Joseph's sons was to reverse the birth order and gave the greater blessing to Ephraim (Gen. 48:13-22).
  - Warren W. Wiersbe states:  
"God rejected our first birth and gives us the second birth. God accepted Abel and rejected Cain; He rejected Ishmael and accepted Isaac, Abraham's second son; He rejected Esau and accepted Jacob."
  - Clearly illustrated in this act is the fact that God rejects our first birth and demands that we be born again, that we receive the second birth created by the Holy Spirit (John 3:1-11; 1 Cor. 12:3).
- Jesus declares the sharp distinction between being born of the flesh (physical birth) and being born of the Spirit (Spiritual regeneration). The one gives physical life, the other spiritual life (John 3:6; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23).

**(e) Ephraim's Allotment**

- (1) Ephraim's allotment was an integrated community; their inheritance included cities and villages within the territory of Manasseh.
- This act of uniting these tribes was necessary because the tribe of Ephraim had grown larger than Manasseh (cf. Num. 26:34-37 with Deut. 33:17).
  - Definitely, this combining was indeed a blessing in disguise because it created a situation for the tribes to mingle together. This situation generated a spirit of unity and cooperation
- (2) **Why harmony is so important?**
- It makes the Church a positive example to the world and helps draw people to the Lord (John 13:35; 1 John 4:20).
  - It helps us to cooperate as a body of believers as God meant us to, giving us a foretaste of heaven (John 17:11, 22).
  - It renews and revitalizes ministry because there is less tension to sap our energy (Acts 2:41-47; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 2:1-5).
- (3) **Ephraim's failure to expel the enemy** (Josh. 16:10).
- The failure to completely drive out the Canaanites is unfortunately typical of other tribes as well.

- The irony of this situation is, if they had power to use them as slaves (Josh. 16:10), they certainly had the power to destroy them as God had commanded (Deut. 12:1-4; **20:16-18**).
- (4) **Ephraim's history teaches the danger of lingering sin!!**
- These people became weak and slothful concerning God's will.
  - They became profit seekers rather than prophetic preachers; they had the Canaanites "**served under tribute**" (Josh. 16:10).
  - They became so spiritually weak that the temptations of idolatry and immorality overcame them.
  - They entered into the spiritual darkness in which "**everyone did what was right in his own eyes**" (Judges 17:6).
- (5) Clearly seen in the tribe of Manasseh are the examples of the borderline believer and the faithful believer.
- The "borderline believer" is one who lives on the border of believing or below it. The significant, revelatory sign of the borderline believer is that they never get very far into Christianity, they always linger near the border.
  - The borderline believer seeks to obey God based on their way and under their terms. They prioritize comfort and make decisions on what they see (1 John 2:15-17, NB v. 16).
  - As believers we must make up our minds to go all the way with God! We must reject the world and follow after God, with the determination never to compromise with the ungodly lifestyle to which so many are adapting.
- (f) **Manasseh's portion was divided into ten plots of land (Promised Land . . . West Jordan) plus the inheritance on the East of Jordan.**
- (1) For a listing of the six remaining sons of Manasseh to receive their inheritance see Josh. 17:2.
- (2) The inheritance was divided as follows:
- Five plots were given to the daughters of Zelophehad in lieu of the Hephher's family (Josh. 17:3-6).
  - Five plots were given to the other five families (Josh. 17:2).
  - East Jordan or Gilead (Josh. 17:6) was given to the other descendants, these were the compromising families of Manasseh.
- (g) **Discontent of the children of Joseph** (Josh. 17:14-18).
- (1) Their complaint was that their allotment was not large enough.
- (2) Joshua's recommendation was for them to clear the forest and drive out the remaining Canaanites occupying their inheritance.
- (3) Joshua's challenge brought to light the besetting issues characterizing these tribes; they were self-centered, laid-back and sluggish.
- (4) Note the following two quotes:
- "Simply stated, these two tribes were 'at ease in Zion,' gripped by a spirit of inactivity, idleness, slothfulness and self-satisfaction. They had allowed themselves to become complacent, lethargic, sluggish, and apathetic.

They did not want to undertake the difficult task of clearing out forests and driving out formidable enemies.” (Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible).

- **“Many wish for larger possessions who do not cultivate and make the best of what they have, think they should have more talents given them who do not trade with those with which they are entrusted. Most people’s poverty is the effect of their idleness; would they dig, they would not beg.”** (Matthew Henry)

## 2. Introduction to Josh. 18:1-19:51

As we have noted in other lessons, this particular period of distributing the Promised Land was an exhilarating and electrifying time in Israel as they take possession of what was promised to them centuries before, it was something they long awaited.

Five tribes were already assigned their inheritance and seven were yet to be assigned their land, namely: Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Dan.

The attitude displayed by Caleb as well as the daughters of Zelophehad (Josh. 14:6-15; 17: 3-6) was a demonstration of faith in claiming their promised inheritance. As it relates to these remaining seven tribes, it seems as if they were overtaken by complacency and half-hearted commitment. Their inheritance was awaiting them but it was Joshua who had to wake and spur them to action (Josh. 18:3-10).

Whether its complacency or a lack of commitment or both, these are major problems in today’s society. These are underlying reasons for catastrophic damage and loss of property and life. What happens when a spirit of complacency and half-hearted commitment grips: a husband and wife, a physician, an attorney, a judge, a teacher, a student, politicians, etc.?

The inheritance of the Promised Land was in process of being divided among the tribes of Israel. These two chapters, Josh. 18 and 19, presents a strong lesson on the faithfulness of God and man’s complacency or half-hearted commitment.

Believers cannot afford to be overtaken by complacency or halfhearted commitment, there is much work to be done and beloved, the call for help can be heard every day all over the world (Acts 16:6-10; etc.). Some seem to confuse contentment and complacency . . . note a brief explanation on these two terms: *“The difference between contentment and complacency is a subtle one. Being **content** means happy. Being **complacent** means refuse to work to improve.”*

The person who is content can be a hardworking individual who sets goals and strives to do something but is happy regardless of the result. Whereas the

complacent person just doesn't care enough about the result to even work hard toward the potential of having a good result from their work.

Paul in Phil. 4:10-12 demonstrates that contentment is not complacency. It is not an excuse to be lazy. In fact, as we read the Bible we notice many actions for the Christians to take, for example; "go", "be", "occupy", "work", "teach", and "do".

Think on this thought:

**"Complacency is not only a rigid illusion nursed by those who embrace mediocrity as a way of their life. A dangerous disguise, it also deprives people of opportunities and brings growth to a standstill. . ."**

### **Summary of Josh. 18:1-19:51**

**Josh. 18:1:** The Tabernacle was removed from Gilgal to Shiloh.

**Josh. 18:2-10:** Joshua stirred up the complacent tribes to take action towards occupying their inheritance. The inheritance of the remaining seven tribes was decided by lots at Shiloh.

**Josh. 18:11-28:** We have the inheritance of Benjamin, which included the borders and cities within this lot.

As noted in the description of the lots of Judah and Benjamin we have an account of both the borders that surround these lots as well as the cities within them.

As it relates to Ephraim and Manasseh we have the borders but not the cities.

In Joshua 19 we note that the tribes of Simeon and Dan, we have their cities and not their borders, this was because they were within Judah's inheritance, especially as it relates to Simeon.

All other tribes have both their borders and cities noted.

Lastly, we have the inheritance of Joshua assigned to him and his family (Josh. 19:49-51).

### **3. Excerpts from Josh. 18 and 19 (Josh. 18:1-10; 19:49-51 NKJV)**

"Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled at Shiloh, and set up the Tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance. Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: 'How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers has given you? Pick out from among you three men of each tribe, and I will send them; they shall arise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come back to me. And they divided it into seven parts. Judah shall remain in their territory on the north. You shall therefore survey the land in seven parts and bring the survey here to me, that I may cast lots for you before the LORD our God. But the Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance.

And Gad, Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh have their inheritance beyond the Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.”

Then the men arose to go away; and Joshua charge those who went to survey the land saying, ‘Go walk through the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots, for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.’ So the men went, passed through the land, and wrote the survey in a book in seven parts by cities; and they came to Joshua at the camp at Shiloh. Then Joshua cast lots for them before the LORD, and there Joshua divided the land to the children of Israel according to their divisions. ...

... ..

When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun. According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath Serah in the mountains of Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt in it. These are the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel divided as an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the Tabernacle of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the country.”

#### A. Compelling Witness Josh. 18:1

##### 1. Setting up the Tabernacle (Josh. 18:1)

“... the children assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there.” (v. 1a KJV).

(a) This was a central act in the midst of the land distribution.

(1) In the midst of the distribution of land in the Promised Land we have this account of the relocation of the Tabernacle.

(2) When Israel crossed Jordan into the promised Land they had set up Gilgal as their headquarters (Josh. 4:19; 5:8-10; 10:43) and obviously, they would have set up the Tabernacle at that time.

- During the conquest of Canaan, the Tabernacle remained at Gilgal and in the center of camp.
- During the conquest of Canaan, the Tabernacle was surrounded by four squadrons: Judah, Ephraim, Reuben and Dan.
- Of the four squadrons that were camped around the Tabernacle, three had now taken possession of their inheritance, leaving only the tribe of Dan in their place; it was therefore time to have the Tabernacle relocated.
- The priests and Levites had taken down the Tabernacle many times before, according to directions given them (Example see Num. 4:5-14; etc.); however hereafter it would not be moved again.

(b) **Central focus!**

(1) The Tabernacle in the midst of Israel.

- The Tabernacle was not only pitched in the center of the Israelites camps (Num. 2:17); it was meant to be their centralized focus. Their lives were to be structured by the principles and laws of the holy God they served and whose Tabernacle was in their midst.
  - This center of worship, an insignia and dwelling place of the very presence of the true and living God was a way to help make and mold the Israelites lifestyle by holy standards.
- (2) The centralized location of the Tabernacle continues to be the most essential aspect of the lives of the Israelites.
- After the boundaries for Ephraim had been settled, Joshua commanded all Israel to assemble **at Shiloh, and set up the Tabernacle** (Josh. 18:1).
  - It should be noted that this new location, Shiloh, would still have the Tabernacle in a centralized location. The worship of the LORD could be regularly observed here, as the land was conquered.
- (3) **Every opportunity was provided for these people to retain a proper relationship with God. Joshua has always given the highest priority to spiritual interest; to do otherwise is to fail to give major attention to major issues.**
2. **Significance of the Tabernacle** (Josh. 18:1)  
*The study of the Tabernacle covers much more than we could do in an entire lesson; the following is a rather brief presentation of a few highlights.*
- (a) The Tabernacle
- (1) The Tabernacle means “residence” or “dwelling place”, it was known as **Tent of the Congregation, Tent of Meeting,” Sanctuary”, “Tent”, etc.** (Ex. 25:8; 27:21; 38:21; 39:32, 33; 40:2, 34; Num. 17:8).
- (2) The Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God.
- It was the portable earthly dwelling place of God (**Ex. 25:8-9; 36:8-38; etc.**).
  - It stood in the center of the twelve tribes (Num. 2:17); continuously, the cloud above and the glory of God dwelt within!!(Ex. 40, NB Vv. 34-38).
  - The Tabernacle allowed the Israelites to dwell with God and draw closer to Him!!
  - The **immediate purpose** of the Tabernacle was to wean (*wean: detach, discourage, break off, etc.*) the children of Israel away from false worship to which they were exposed in Egypt and practiced by other nations. The Tabernacle set before them a pure and noble ideal of worship and witness.
  - The Tabernacle was a witness to both Israel and all nations of “the presence of God”, the true and living God! (Ex. 40:17-38, NB Vv. 34-35)  
**Ex. 40:34 Amplified Bible**  
 “Then the cloud [the Shekinah, God’s visible presence] covered the **Tent of Meeting**, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle! [Rev. 15:8].”



## (b) The Tabernacle was a place of “awe!”

(1) The excellence of the Tabernacle, both in its materials and its workmanship, was a reflection of the excellences of God.

(2) The Tabernacle was a holy place because abiding in it was a holy God (Ex. 40:34-38)

- The Tabernacle testifies in its structure the holiness of God; holiness was a matter of top priority (Note Ex. 30:34-38).
- The emphasis on holiness was evident in the priests’ garment; for example, Aaron wears the engraving, “Holiness To The LORD” (Ex. 28:35-43, NB v. 36 KJV) on his head-piece.
- The priests were warned in the proper administration of their office, “less they die” (Ex. 30:17-21).
  - The death of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-7) made clear the seriousness of an offense which was deemed unholy to God.
  - To summarize this account (Lev. 10:1-7): the evil of Nadab and Abihu was **their decision to determine for themselves right and wrong ways to worship God** (Example see Gen.3:5-6; Josh. 7:25-26; 1 Sam. 6:19-21; etc.).

*You are encouraged to an in-depth study of the Tabernacle and discover its rich symbolism as it relates to our Christian experience. I will close with a few more pointers.*

(c) Setting up the Tabernacle at Shiloh (Josh. 18:1) *This is somewhat a brief review.*

(1) Israel moved its center of worship from Gilgal to Shiloh.

- There they set up the Tabernacle, the place in which the Ark of the Covenant was kept and where God manifested His presence among the people in a special way (Ex. 25:8; 27:21)
- Although the Tabernacle is not mentioned in the Book of Judges; it remained at Shiloh throughout the time of the judges (i.e. about 300 years, some say 369 years), until the Philistines captured it during the time of Samuel (1 Sam. 4:3-5:1).

(2) **Practical challenge . . . Briefly Noted**

*The following is based on the fact of God’s detailed planning and the powerful significance of what the Tabernacle represents, even today.*

- It would be well for us today if all the servants of Christ would remember that the Lord has not been less careful about building His Church.
- He has given the divine pattern and the most minute instructions as to how His House on earth is to be ordered (Example see 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy).
- God’s standards remain (Heb. 12:14; etc.); this abides the un-repealed and unchanging will of God for His peoples’ obedience throughout the whole of the Church’s earthly history until Jesus Christ returns.

(3) The Tabernacle was God’s first dwelling place on earth.

- He walked in the company of Adam in Eden.

- He visited Abraham at Mamre, but no dwelling-place there.
- In the Tabernacle, He comes down to dwell with His redeemed, and from then till now, He had a dwelling place on earth.
- Jesus' coming brought a major difference; in Christ, God was manifested in the flesh: "the Word became flesh and tabernacle among us" (John 1:14 Amplified Bible Classic Edition).
- Next came the Church—a spiritual house, a holy temple, built of living stones.
  - This is the present dwelling place of God on earth.
  - Some references: 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16).
  - Therefore, where two or three are gathered in His name, He is in their midst (Matt. 18:20).

### 3. Shiloh (Josh. 18:1)

(a) The Tabernacle was removed from Gilgal to Shiloh.

- (1) Shiloh was a city in the lot of Ephraim, but lying close to the lot of Benjamin.
- (2) As noted before, Shiloh was a centralized location and convenient for the Israelites to assemble. The Tabernacle was always in the center of camp during the wilderness wandering and was only appropriate for it to remain in a centralized location.
- (3) Also note above is that Shiloh was located in the lot of Ephraim, which was Joshua's tribe.
  - Joshua was their chief magistrate, and it was both an honor and for the convenience and advantage of the Israelites to have the Tabernacle near him.
  - As Matthew Henry states: "**The testimony of Israel and the thrones of judgment do well together**" (Psa. 122:4, 5).

(b) Some features of Shiloh

- (1) Shiloh served as Israel's religious center during the days **before** the establishment of the United Kingdom of the Israelites.
  - The United Kingdom was under Saul, David and Solomon (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuels, Kings and Chronicles).
  - The division came during Rehoboam's (King Solomon's son) reign (1 Kings 12).
- (2) Shiloh was the administrative and religious center for the Israelite tribes during the early settlement period.
- (3) It was at Shiloh that lots were cast to determine the distribution of land to the remaining seven tribes (Josh. 18 and 19).
- (4) It was at Shiloh that the ten tribes gathered to consider the seemingly volatile situation regarding the East Jordan tribes (Josh. 22:15-34).
- (5) It was at Shiloh that Hannah prayed for a son (1 Sam. 1, NB Vv. 3, 11).

- (6) The Tabernacle, with the **Ark of the Covenant**; remained located at Shiloh during Samuel's early years as prophet and priest, until it was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:3-5:1)
- Unfortunately, Shiloh never lived up to its reputation as Israel's religious center, for later references in the Bible point to the wickedness and idolatry in the city (Psa. 78:56-64; Jer. 7:12-15).
  - Idolatry was the characteristic sin of Israel after they arrived in Canaan (example Psa. 78:58-59). This was one of the reasons God instructed Israel to destroy the Canaanites and their ungodly practices (Ex. 34:11-16; Deut. 7:1-5).

4. **Solemn Occasion** (Josh. 18:1)

"Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh . . ." (v. 1 NKJV).

(a) The devotion and commitment of the people.

- (1) They had come a long way, they witnessed all that God did on their behalf! They knew that He was worthy of their all!!
- (2) There was a sincere and intense relationship of gratitude that characterized and naturally flowed from the people.
- (3) It was time to give special praise, glory and honor publicly to God who is worthy!!
  - The Ark of God, which was the symbol of God's presence, was always warmly welcomed by the people.
  - Every Israelite was interested in the Ark of God and all expressed their joy and satisfaction for this particular occasion (2 Sam. 6:15).

(b) United, unique and purposed driven . . . the people of God.

- (1) Most likely those who were still camping at Gilgal removed and encamped around Shiloh in a bond of unity.
- (2) **"The whole congregation . . . assembled"** (v. 1)
  - Scholars note that the word "congregation" is the same as that used by Christ in Matt. 16:18. In the Greek, this is the word "*ekklesia*" ("*ecclesia*") which is translated "church".
  - For the New Testament writers this Greek term was considered the most accurate word to designate the character of the Church as the true people of God,
- (3) **"*Ecclesia*"** originally stands for "an assembly of people" in a Greek city. These were called out "by means of the herald's trumpet."  
(*"assembly": gathering, meeting, congregation*)
- (4) **When the term, "congregation", was applied to the Israelite, the nation is considered as called out by God from the rest of the world.**
  - These were those who were to bear witness to His unity, to preserve His laws and to keep alive the hope of His redemption.

- God’s people were to contrast to the world about them because they lived in righteousness and true holiness.
- What glorious glow; a powerful testimony to the world when the people of God unite and that lustrous glow beams across the world!!

**Matt. 5:16 Amplified Bible**

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praise-worthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.”

**B. Complacency Rebuked/Action Taken Josh. 8:2-10**

**1. Sluggishness Rebuked/Action Taken (Josh. 18:2-3)**

- (a) Joshua reproved those tribes which were still not settled in their inheritance, because they did not make an effort to occupy what God had promised them.
- (b) The reason for Joshua’s rebuke was the complacency and half-hearted commitment of these seven tribes in claiming their inheritance.
  - (1) No representative from any of these tribes had contacted Joshua or any of the leaders in-charge of the distribution to request their inheritance.
    - An attitude of complacency and sluggishness had settled in; apathy, lethargy, and indifference had controlled them.
    - They were satisfied with where they were and lacked zeal and dedication to lay claim to God’s wonderful gift, the inheritance of the Promised Land.
  - (2) The following was noted in Lesson 12:
 

“**Commitments** are powerful because they influence how you think, how you sound, and how you act. Unlike a half-hearted hope or one’s hardest or most enthusiastic attempt, **making a commitment means that you try harder, you look for solutions when faced with obstacles, you don’t consider quitting as an option, and you don’t look back.**”

**2. Sharp Rebuke (Josh. 18:3)**

- (a) Joshua reprimanded them, indeed it was a stern rebuke for their complacency.
  - (1) The leaders of these seven tribes were summoned to appear before Joshua.
    - Joshua charged them with being slack and neglectful
    - He charged them with being complacent and half-hearted and lacking zeal and dedication.
  - (2) They were slothful and procrastinators, not willing to do what it takes to realize the things they desire and from which they would be benefited.
    - The lazy man acts extremely foolish; he expects success without effort (See Prov. 26:13-16).

**Prov. 26:15 NIV Study Bible**

“A sluggard buries his hands in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.”

    - See also Prov. 19:24; 20:4; 24:30-31; etc.

(b) “How long will you be neglectful?!” (v. 3).

“**How long will you neglect** to go and possess the land . . .?” (Josh. 18:3a NKJV).

- (1) Here were people who had been given land to possess, but were too contented with the initial conquest to focus on realizing their desired goal.
  - During the conquest of the land in the midst of all that activity they were fully active.
  - Now that the individual battles had to be fought, the enthusiasm was gone and sluggishness had set in.
- (2) Joshua’s question: “**How long will you neglect** . . . possessing that which was promised to you?”
  - Often we delay doing jobs that seem large, difficult, boring or disagreeable.
  - But to continue putting off what must be done shows lack of discipline, poor stewardship of time, and disobedience to God.
  - Jobs we don’t enjoy, require concentration, teamwork, twice as much time, lots of encouragement and accountability. We need to be attentive, faithful, obedient and refuse to procrastinate.
  - We must remain firm even, under suffering or misfortune without yielding, though it is difficult . . . we must persevere! We must faithfully endure!! (Ecc. 9:11; Matt. 24:13, 14; 1 Cor. 9:24; James 1:2, 4; etc.).

### 3. **Strong Charge!** (Josh. 18:4-7).

(a) In response to their complacency, Joshua gave them a strong charge, he presented a new approach for dividing the remaining inheritance among the seven tribes (Vv. 4-7).

- (1) The land remained to be inherited had to be surveyed, an account of the cities and territories were to be documented.
- (2) The surveying team consisted of twenty-one men, three from each of the seven tribes.
  - Twenty-one was chosen, forming seven groups, most likely because the matter was to be done expeditiously and they had already lost much time.
  - Each of the seven tribes were equally represented which provided an impartial decision and distribution of the land.
  - They were to travel throughout all the land and survey the cities and landmarks, writing out a description of each significant part.
  - The surveyors’ task was a time consuming one, however it had to be done in order for each tribe to receive its promised inheritance. Once the survey was completed they were to immediately return and report to Joshua.
- (3) Some basic guidelines the surveyors were to abide by:
  - The remaining land was to be divided into seven parts, a territory for each tribe (v. 5).

- The surveyors were to respect the territory of Judah and Joseph; their borders were not to be breached (v. 5).
- Upon receiving the surveyors report of the remaining land Joshua would seek the LORD'S guidance as to the distribution to the seven tribes. Eleazar the priest would seek God through the Urim and Thummim, by casting lots in the presence of God (Num. 26:52-56; **27:18-23, NB v. 21**; 33:54; Josh. 14:1-2; 18:6, 10; also note Psa. 16:5-6).
- Joshua reminded the seven tribes of these two facts about the remaining inheritance (v. 7).
  - The Levites were to be excluded; the LORD Himself was their inheritance.
  - The two and one half tribes of East Jordan had already received their inheritance.

(b) Joshua's plan put them (the tribes) in a position to settle the need themselves. It was a plan to take them from an inactive to an active position . . . it would help them to overcome the stagnation that had overtaken and possessed them.

#### 4. **Strengthening the Charge** (Josh. 18:8)

(a) Joshua reemphasized the charge he had given; this was done when the team was about to commence their mission.

(1) The **repetition** was necessary because of the complacency and sluggishness, their half-hearted commitment and failure to claim their promised inheritance.

(2) The instructions remained the same, (a) survey the remaining land (b) upon completion they were to present their report to Joshua (v. 8).

(b) Too many within the Church do not have time for detailed study of God's Word, or some think it is a waste of time for needed repetition, etc. and yet some of these same folks spend countless hours with things contrary to their spiritual well-being!!

(1) We have examples of those who not only hear God's Word but took extra time to study it! One example: "The Brethren at Berea", see Act 17:10-15, NB v. 11.

(2) Note carefully the following on "The Importance of Repetition."

"Repetition is an important literary device because it allows a writer or speaker to place emphasis on things they choose as significant. It tells the reader or audience that the words being used are central enough to be repeated, and lets them know when to pay special attention.

Furthermore, repetition has historically been an important technique for oral tradition, as it helped storytellers remember details and lines that may have otherwise been difficult to repeat."

#### 5. **Surveyors' Obedience** (Josh. 18:9)

- (a) The survey was completed and the report brought to Joshua (v.9).
- (1) It is worthwhile to note their obedience in following Joshua's instructions.
  - (2) Josephus, a Jewish historian, believed it took the spies seven months to complete their assigned mission.
- (b) Two noteworthy features of the surveyors' mission:
- (1) **They displayed faith and courage.**
    - There were yet enemies in the land, the major armies were defeated or destroyed but there were smaller and weaker armies remaining.
    - These remaining enemies were all raging against Israel, "*as a bear robbed of her cubs*" (Prov. 17:12; Hosea 13:8).
    - Despite any potential danger the surveyors were obedient to Joshua's command and fully committed themselves in the hands of God's power, to the service of their country.
  - (2) **The providence of God was their protection!!**
    - God protected them from all possible danger and from the enemies of the land.
    - It was God who guided and overshadowed them and took them safely back to Shiloh.
    - **Beloved, when we are in the way of our duty we are under special protection of the Almighty!**
    - Irrespective of what glitters and radiantly glows in the world, there is nothing like knowing for sure that we are leaning on the everlasting arms, because only then we are truly safe and secure from all harm and danger!! He is the Almighty God and our only assurance (Gen. 17:1-3; 35:11; Ex. 6:3; etc., note also **1 Chron. 29:11**).

#### 6. Seeking Divine Direction (Josh. 18:10)

- (a) Upon receiving the surveyors' report, Joshua went before the LORD and sought His will in dividing the remaining land among the seven tribes.
- (b) He acknowledged the sovereignty of God and the necessity of His continued guidance.
- (1) The land was promised by God (Gen. 12:7; 15:18; 17:8; Josh. 1:13). It was God's command that the inheritance be distributed (Josh. 13:7). It had always been God's command that the distribution be made by lot (Num. 26:55; 33:54; Josh. 14:1-4).
  - (2) Joshua, having received the report from the surveyors, didn't just go ahead and distribute the land but sought the mind of God!!
- (c) **In this act, Joshua sets a pattern for success in God's work.**
- (1) He first planned his work by accumulating the needed facts.
  - (2) When the facts were obtained, he worked his plan on the basis of fact and totally depended of God's guidance!!

### C. Circumference (Border) and Cities of Benjamin Josh. 18:11-28

#### 1. Circumference (Borders) of Benjamin

- (a) **Their border on the north side**, mainly coincided with the southern boundary of Ephraim.
- (b) **The southern border** for Benjamin coincided with the northern border of Judah.
- (c) Jordan was the **boundary on the east side**.
- (d) Then the line **went up through the mountains westward**.

#### 2. Cities of the Benjaminites

- (a) In our text twenty-six cities are named.
- (b) The territory contained some cities which have been lost in the ancient history, but there are others whose names continue to the present, for example: Jericho, Bethel, Gibeon, Ramah, Mizpeh, and Jerusalem.
  - (1) **Jericho** was the scene of Israel's first great victory in the Promised Land (Josh. 6).
  - (2) **Bethel** is honored as the place of Jacob's special revelation of God (Gen. 28:10-22).
  - (3) "In **Gibeon** the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream (1 Kings 3:5).
  - (4) **Ramah (Currently: Er-Ram)** was Samuel's home, "and there he judged Israel. and there he built an altar unto the Lord" (1 Sam. 7:17).
  - (5) **Mizpeh (or Mizpah+)** was one of the three holy cities which Samuel visited in succession as judge of the people (1 Sam. 7:16).
  - (6) **Jerusalem**, on the border between Judah and Benjamin, became the chief city of Palestine; a holy city for Christians, Jews and Muslims (2 Chron. 6:6).

#### 3. Continued Care of God (Josh. 18:11)

The land inherited by Benjamin was located between Judah and Ephraim. As we know Benjamin was Joseph's younger brother, and the tribe of Benjamin was sometimes called "**little Benjamin**" (Psa. 68:27).

The location of Benjamin between these two tribes is considered an example of God's provision of protection and security.

#### **Psa. 5:11 Amplified Bible**

"But let all those who take refuge and put their trust in You rejoice; let them ever sing and shout for joy, because You make a covering over them and defend them; let those also who love Your name be joyful in You and be in high spirits."

### D. Cities of Simeon Josh 19:1-9

#### 1. Weak Witness

- (a) As far as we know, Scripture has not mentioned a significant person ever coming from the tribe of Simeon.
- (b) The tribe had very little influence on the subsequent history of Israel.
  - (1) This had actually been predicted in the prophecy uttered by Jacob centuries before (Gen. 49:5-7).



- (2) **Gen. 49:7b KJV:** *“I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel”*; was fulfilled when Simeon’s descendants were absorbed into the territory of Judah (Josh. 19:1).
- (3) There is reference to them later moving into Mount Seir area and making it a more permanent home for themselves (1 Chron. 4:24-43, NB Vv. 39-43)

## 2. Willing to Share

- (a) Simeon’s lot was within that of Judah (Josh. 19:1) and was taken from Judah’s lot (v. 9)
- (b) There was no opposition from the tribe of Judah with Simeon occupying some of their cities.
  - (1) The cities were already assigned to Judah and was rightfully theirs, yet they would not insist that such distribution be not made to the tribe of Simeon.
  - (2) Judah’s response to share with the tribe of Simeon was one of humility, the willingness to share and care for others!
- (c) Judah had received more than was necessary (Josh. 19:9).
  - (1) There was a significant contrast between the tribes of Judah and the two tribes of Joseph who had complained that they didn’t receive sufficient inheritance (Josh. 17:14-18).
  - (2) As it relates to Judah we have a rather unusual situation, namely, a people who are willing to admit that they have more than enough, and are willing to share what they have.
  - (3) Matthew Henry notes:  
**“We must look on the things of others, and not on ours only. The abundance of some must supply the wants of others, that there may be somewhat of an equality, for which there may be equity where there is not law.”**

## E. Circumference (Border) and Cities of Zebulun Josh. 19:10-16

- 1. **Region Allocated (Borders)** (Josh 19:10-16)
  - (a) A general summary of the borders.
    - (1) In general, the area for this tribe was enclosed by Asher on the west and northwest (Josh. 19:27), and by Naphtali on the north and northeast (19:34), and by Issachar on the southeast and south (19:18-22). **This would place them north of Nazareth in a rather fertile territory, and somewhat isolated.**
    - (2) The lot was also graced by the Great Sea (Mediterranean Sea) on the west, and by the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee ... Lake) on the east, which fulfills Jacobs prophecy in Gen. 49:13; as one translator puts it: *“Zebulun shall be a haven of ships, trading ships on the great sea and fishing ships on the sea of Galilee.”*
  - (b) There were some important places noted in this tribe’s lot, for example:
    - (1) **Mount Carmel**, this was where the famous trial between God and Baal occurred during Elijah’s period of ministry (1 Kings 18, NB Vv.21-40).

- (2) Mount Carmel became more distinguished in the New Testament, because within this lot was Nazareth, where our blessed Savior spent much of His time during His earthly ministry, and from which He was called “Jesus of Nazareth” (Mark 1:24; 10:47; Luke 4:34; John 1:45)
- (3) **Mount Tabor** was also significant because it was from here Jesus was transfigured (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36).
- (4) **The Sea of Galilee (Sea of Tiberias . . . a lake)** was a place where Christ preached many of His sermons and wrought many miracles (Matt. 4:18-22; 14:22-33; 15:29-39; Mark 2:1-28; Luke 8:22-25).

## 2. Reversal of the Birth Order (Josh. 19:10)

- (a) Zebulun was the younger brother of Issachar but he got his inheritance first.
  - (1) The order of natural birth was first Issachar, then Zebulun; however, the order of inheritance was reversed by the grace of God.
  - (2) This act of God in reversing the birth order was briefly discussed in Lesson 14, page 12.
- (b) Throughout Scripture God often choose the second son to receive the major portion of the inheritance.
  - (1) God did this to demonstrate His grace, that salvation comes through a second birth and not the natural birth of the flesh (John 3:1-11).
  - (2) For this reason, Zebulun was receiving his inheritance before Issachar, his older brother; it was the divine will of God.
  - (3) **Beloved, the second birth is compulsory!!**  
**John 3:5-7 NKJV**  
 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **Do not marvel that I say to you, You must be born again.**”

## 3. Recorded Information

- (a) Very little is recorded concerning Zebulun.
  - (1) In Deborah’s triumphal psalm (Judges 5:14-23) celebrating the great victory over the Canaanites she stated that “Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto death in high places of the battlefield.” (Judges 5:18)
  - (2) They were also mentioned in later history: “Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart” (1 Chron. 12:33).
  - (3) Zebulun is also found among those who are generous and lovers of peace (1 Chron. 12:40).
- (b) **Although their lot was in a somewhat isolated area it had no negative effect on them!**

These people seem to have had the disadvantage of being at a greater distance from the place of worship. Nevertheless, they evidently kept in touch with the others, and maintained favorable relationship with God.

## F. Circumference (Borders) and Cities of Issachar Josh. 19:17-23

### 1. Inheritance (Josh. 19:17-23)

- (a) The boundaries are not given in great details but this is what we do know:  
The lot ran from Jordan in the east and southwest of the Sea of Galilee reaching down to the vicinity of Beth Shan and west of the Jezreel Valley; Mount Tabor marked its northern border. Manasseh was to the south and Zebulun on the north.
- (b) Some related facts:
  - (1) Some scholars have suggested that Issachar received for the most part the large and very fertile plain of Jezreel.
  - (2) This territory had been noted as the highway of every invader whose goal was to conquer Palestine.
  - (3) It was here that Jabin was defeated (See Judges 4, NB Vv. 10-16, 23-24).
  - (4) Also in this area Gideon encountered the host of the Midianites (Judges 7).
  - (5) It was in this lot that King Saul fought his last battle with the Philistines (1 Sam.31).
- (c) In this location, Issachar was exposed to both the Egyptian influence and the influence of the East. These sources helped to fulfill Jacob's prophecy, "Issachar is a strong ass . . . and become a servant unto tribute" (Gen. 49:15-15).

### 2. Interesting Facts Relating to this Lot

- (a) Persons who were noteworthy (some).
  - (1) Issachar was a numerous tribe (Num. 26:25).
  - (2) Tola a member of this tribe served as judge of Israel (Judges 10:1).
  - (3) Baasha also of the tribe of Issachar served as King of Israel (Northern Kingdom) (1 Kings 15:27)
- (b) Places of interest.
  - (1) King Ahab's palace was located in **Jezreel**, and near Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21).
  - (2) The **river Kishon**: It was on the banks of this river that Sisera was defeated by Deborah and Barak (Judges 4).
  - (3) **Shunem**, where lived that good and generous woman that extended hospitality to Elisha (2 Kings 4:8-21).
  - (4) The **mountains of Gilboa**, on which King Saul and Jonathan were slain, which were not far from **Endor**, where Saul consulted the witch (1 Sam. 28:3-25; 31:1-13)
  - (5) The **Valley of Megiddo**, where Josiah was slain near **Hadad-rimmon** (2 Kings 23:26-30; 2 Chron. 35:20-25; Zech. 12:11).

**G. Circumference (Border) and Cities of Asher Josh. 19:24-31****1. Property Location (Josh. 19:24-31)**

The tribe of Asher settled in upper Palestine beyond the tribe of Zebulun and west of Naphtali. The territory bordered the Great Sea, or the Mediterranean Sea, it actually sat along the seacoast, north of Carmel, reaching all the way to Tyre and Sidon.

**2. People of this Tribe.**

- (a) Scripture does not provide evidence of any famous person of this tribe, with the exception of Anna the prophetess, who was a constant resident in the temple at the time of our Savior's birth (Luke 2:36-40, NB v. 36).
- (b) Some scholars believe there was a spirit of cheerfulness that characterized this tribe (Asher) and was referred to as the happiest tribe.

**3. Produce/Prosperity**

- (a) This portion of Palestine contained some of the richest soil of the country, and the maritime portion of the fertile plain of Esdraelon, and commended (controlled, govern, etc.) all approaches to Palestine from the sea on the north.
- (b) Asher was known for its good food and prosperity, all of which came from resources of the region and especially the olive oil it produced. In fact, an olive tree was the symbol of the tribe.
- (c) The inheritance of Asher crisscrossed with trade routes to the sea (noted above).
  - (1) The tribe was industrious, energetic, making good use of what it had economically produced; based on their level of production they were called upon to provide a yearly quota for the palace (Deut. 33:26; 1 Kings 4:7, 27).
  - (2) Moses in his blessing upon Israel (Deut. 33), noted in regards to Asher:
 

“. . . Asher is most blessed of sons; Let him be favored by his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil.” **(Deut. 33:24 NIV)**

**4. Place in History (A few general facts)**

- (a) The subsequent (succeeding) history of Asher suggests that their wealth and proximity to the Phoenicians resulted in shameful degeneracy.
  - (1) “The Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out” (Judges 1:32).
  - (2) As we have seen before this gradual adapting to sinful lifestyle was one of the reasons why God specifically commanded Israel to destroy the Canaanites (Num. 33:50-56; **Deut. 7:1-5**; 20:16-20).
- (b) In the time of Israel's conflict with Sisera, “Asher continued on the seashore, and abode in his breaches” (Judges 5:17). In fact, Dan and Asher seem not to have responded to the summons for help (Judges 5:15-17).

- (c) The tribe of Asher became so separated from the other tribes that their names did not appear in the list of the chief rulers during David's day (1 Chron. 27:16-22).

## H. Circumference (Border) and Cities of Naphtali Josh. 19:32-39.

### 1. Background

*The following is a quote from The Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible.*

"The land inherited by Naphtali is a picture of great conquest through the power of God. Note the reference to fortified cities, sixteen of them (Vv. 35-38). These cities had been conquered either by Joshua or by the tribe of Naphtali when they moved into their territory. Whatever the case, the inheritance of this tribe is a clear picture of a great conquests that had taken place.

... ..

Victory is assured by God. Through the power of God, we can conquer the enemies of this life, the enemies that try to keep us out of the promised land. No matter who or what the enemy is, we can conquer them by the power of Christ."

### 2. Borders (Josh. 19:32-39)

An area mostly to the north of the Sea of Galilee, including the mountains bordering on Asher and Zebulun to the west. Its southernmost point was the southern end of the sea of Galilee.

*A total of nineteen cities with their villages were inherited (v.38).*

### 3. Basic Information

- (a) Barak appears to be the only national hero associated with this tribe (Judges 4, NB v. 6).
- (b) It was in the lot of this tribe, near the waters of Merom, that Joshua fought and routed Jabin (Josh. 11:1-9, NB Vv. 1, 5; etc.)
- (c) Although Naphtali had a good heritage, they did not "drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh, or Beth Anath; but they dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. . . ." (Judges 1:33).
  - (1) This statement clearly shows that the tribe of Naphtali placed small value upon God's plan for them.
  - (2) It is not sure whether they were able to collect tribute from the Canaanites.
  - (3) There was no aggressive effort to promote the program of God. If they had exercised the diligence and effort the enemy would have been expelled, with God's help (Deut. 2:24-25; Josh. 12:6; etc.).
  - (4) Naphtali enjoyed its greatest distinction because Jesus Christ did so many mighty works in such areas as Capernaum and Bethsaida as well as the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Tiberias or Lake Tiberias).
    - Matthew mentions Jesus dwelt or lived in Capernaum by the sea "in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali" (Matt. 4:13 RSV).

- By living in Capernaum Christ fulfilled the prophecy by Isaiah (See Isa. 9:1-2 and Matt. 4:14-16).
- The sad reality is that the people in this area who should have been reflectors of the light had been content to dwell in darkness. How unfortunate and yet the same happens today (John 3:19).

## I. Cities of Dan Josh. 19:40-48

### 1. Settled Boundaries

An elbow of land squeezed between Ephraim and Judah and west of Benjamin. The port of Joppa marked the northwest corner of Dan having a boundary along the Mediterranean Sea.

The tract of land was smaller than the other land grants but was fertile and with boundary along the Mediterranean Sea they were engaged in fishing and commerce.

### 2. Soldiers with Experience

Despite all the setbacks and failures noted among this tribe it must be remembered:

- (a) They were not novices, they had experience in warfare.
  - (1) They had gathered much exposure and first-hand experience during all the wars of Israel.
  - (2) They (the Tribe of Dan) served as rear guard:
 

“Dan troops went last marching behind their banner and serving as **rear guard** for all the tribal camps. ...” (Num. 10:25 LASB).

    - A rear-guard is that part of a military force that protects it from attacks from the rear, either during an advance or a withdrawal.
    - A rear guard’s duty, is the defensive or delaying fight waged as resisting against the encroaching enemy.
- (b) Not only did the Danites had experience in warfare but most importantly, the true and living God fights their battles (Deut. 2:25; 20:4; 2 Chron. 20:17; etc.)
- (c) Whether the tribe of Dan or any other tribe who were oppressed by the enemies; they could have experienced victory through God, who not only leads and fight for them but was also their rear-guard!

#### **Isa. 52:12 Amplified Bible**

“For you will not go out with haste, nor will you go in flight [as was necessary when Israel left Egypt]; for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.”

### 3. Suppressed

- (a) Dan’s first location was in the southern lowland.
  - (1) They were unable to settle in their first location because of the Amorite’s opposition, as a result they dwelt in the mountains (See Judges 1:34)
  - (2) As noted above, the Danites had the necessary military experience to fight their battles but in their situation we have witnessed weakness and failure because of fear and a lack of faith.

(b) Note carefully Josh. 19:47

**Josh. 19:47a**

**NIV:** “When the territory of the Danites was lost to them they, went up and attacked Leshem . . .”

**RSV:** “When the territory of the Danites was lost to them, the Danites went up and fought against Leshem ...”

**LASB:** “But the tribe of Dan had trouble taking possession of their land, so they attacked the town of Laish . . .” (*Laish or Leshem*)

(1) The territory of the Danites was lost to them. The Amorites of this area “confined the Danites to the hill country” (Judges 1:34), so most of the tribe migrated to the upper Jordan valley where they seized the town of Leshem (Josh. 19:47).

(2) An easier way desired by the Danites.

- The tribe of Dan found some of their land was difficult to conquer, so they chose to migrate to Leshem; where they knew victory would be easier.
- **Anyone can trust God when the going is easy.**
  - It is when everything looks impossible that our faith and courage are put to the test.
  - Have faith that God is great enough to tackle your most difficult situation!! He is able and will see you through!! (**Psa. 46:1-3; 41:10; Isa. 41:10. etc.**)
- In the midst of a life-threatening situations, Paul was cool, confident and courageous because of his relationship with the true and living God (**Acts 27, NB Vv. 27-44, highlight Vv. 21-25**).
- Beloved don’t allow the devil to keep you back, censor you, intimidate you, and defeat you!! **God is able!!** Let go of self and all hindrances and **Let God!! (2 Chron. 15:7)**.

#### 4. Sin Inclined/Infected

(a) Jacob’s prophecy and blessing (Gen. 49:16-18).

(1) The prophecy in regards to “judging the people” was fulfilled through Samson (See Judges chapters 13-16, NB 14:4)

(2) Note a few highlights in regards to Gen. 49:17:

*“Dan shall be a serpent . . .”*

- The Danites, like the serpent, would be unfaithful to God.
  - They (Dan) were not able to occupy their inheritance due to a lack of faith and commitment to God and later they moved north (Judges 18)
  - In the process of moving they stole Micah’s idols (Judges 18:14-24, 31).
  - Their act only proves their level of commitment to the true and living God. All of that transpired in this account as well as their conduct otherwise were strictly forbidden by God especially their act of

idolatry (Ex. 20:1-8; Lev. 19:4; Deut. 12:13-18; **Destroy the heathen's idols Deut. 7:1-5**; etc.)

- The sad reality is that the Danites continued in apostasy and idolatrous worship until the Assyrian Empire took them captive (**Idolatry**: 1 Kings 12:28-30; 2 Kings 10:29; 2 Kings 15:27-29; **Assyrian captivity**: 2 Kings 17, NB Vv. 5-12).

(b) **Caleb continues to be such an outstanding example to the glory of God!**

- (1) We have seen other tribes failing to drive out their enemies and lived alongside them. The probing question is: "Were they unable to defeat their enemies or was it lack of faith and wholehearted commitment to God and His will?"
- (2) Caleb despite his age and so many years of service was not only willing to expel the formidable enemy from his inheritance but he went on to have those expelled from Debir which was not his personal inheritance!! (Josh 15:13-19. As we saw in other lessons Caleb wholeheartedly served God, trusted and obeyed Him (See Josh. 14:6-15, NB Vv. 9, 11, 12; 15:13-17).

5. **Strong Compelling Lesson**

A strong lesson in regards to spiritual weakness, fear, doubt and lack of faith is noted and observed in the inheritance of the tribe of Dan. They were unable to conquer the enemy that occupied their lot and were not able to possess it. Their alternative was the city of Leshem (or Laish), which was a weaker enemy who they conquered and possess their city. The underlying factor was not so much the strength of the enemy that occupied their first city but that they (Dan) were overcome by weak faith and failing to trust the power of God.

The Danites account is a clear warning to us: **we must guard against spiritual weakness**. We must guard against anxiety, mistrust and a lack of faith in God. We must be resolute and maintain an unshakeable faith in God. We must maintain our position in God; stand firm, be rooted and grounded and keep looking to Jesus Christ! In Christ alone we will be able to successfully stand against all opposition from the enemy!!

The forces of hell will relentlessly maintain their opposition doing all that they can to hinder us possessing our promised inheritance but our victories come through Jesus Christ our Lord!!

Beloved, we must ". . . press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward" (Phil. 3:14 Amplified Bible).

God is able  
He will never fail  
He is Almighty God



Greater than all we seek  
 Greater than all we ask  
 He has done great things.

## J. Conspicuous Lifestyle/Joshua Josh. 19:49-51

### 1. Cohesiveness (Josh. 19:49)

“When they had made an end of **dividing the land** as an inheritance ...” (v. 49).

*There were several good reasons for establishing these well-set boundaries instead of turning the Promised Land into a single undivided land.*

- (a) The boundaries gave each tribe ownership of an area, promoting loyalty and unity that would strengthen each tribe.
- (b) The boundaries specified areas of responsibility and privilege, which would help each tribe to develop and mature.
- (c) The boundaries reduced conflicts that might have broken out if everyone wanted to live in the choicest areas.
- (d) The boundaries fulfilled the promised inheritance to each tribe that began to be given as early as the days of Jacob (Gen. 48:21-22) (*In essence these two verses predicted the return to Canaan*).

### 2. Considerate, Caring and Compassionate Leader (Josh. 19:49-51)

(a) Joshua’s inheritance was given last.

- (1) He made sure that the other tribes and individuals were taken care of first.
- (2) Joshua was a selfless leader, a leader who willingly gave so that his people were cared for first, even before himself.

(b) The assignment to Caleb is treated first (Josh. 14:6-15), the assignment to Joshua last (Josh. 19:49-51).

- (1) Consequently, the allotting of inheritance to these two courageous servants of the LORD from the wilderness generation (Num. 13:30; 14:6, 24, 30) frames the whole account—and both received the territory they asked for.
- (2) Appropriately, Joshua’s allotment came last; he was not a king or a warlord but the servant of God commissioned to bring the Lord’s people into the Promised Land.

(c) The posture he maintained continues to be exemplary!!

- (1) He was last served although he was the eldest and greatest man in all Israel, and commanded the conquest of Canaan; he might have demanded the first settlement in it for himself and his family.
  - But his attitude and action showed that he sought the good of his country and was not driven by any private interest of his own.
  - He was content to be unfixed until he saw the people settled; and herein is great example for all in public office to prefer the common welfare before their particular satisfaction.
- (2) **“The children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua, the son of Nun among them.”** (Josh. 19:49 KJV).

- The Israelites gave to him; this clearly demonstrated Joshua’s humility.
- He did not use his authority to take his inheritance without the people’s consent and endorsement.
- Despite his authority, he would not act as if only his needs and opinions matters; **he would acquire his inheritance under God by the grant of the people!**

### 3. **Commanded by God** (Josh. 19:50)

“According to the word of the LORD . . .” (v. 50 NKJV).

(a) Joshua’s inheritance was commanded by God Himself.

- (1) Joshua was a godly leader, a man who followed God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength . . . he was wholeheartedly committed!!
- (2) Because of Joshua’s faithfulness, God took care of His dear servant, making absolutely sure that he received his inheritance. God will reward those who faithfully serve Him!!

#### **Col. 3:23-24 Amplified Bible**

“Whatever may be your task, work at it heartily (from the soul), as [something done] for the Lord and not for men, knowing [with all certainty] that it is from the Lord [and not from men] that you will receive the inheritance which is your [real] reward. [The One Whom] you are actually serving [is] the Lord Christ (the Messiah)

- (3) The time of communication regarding Joshua’s inheritance may have been made by God at the time as that of Caleb (Num. 14:24; Josh. 14:9).

(b) To Joshua, first and foremost, to Joshua, was the perfect will of God.

- (1) As it relates to his inheritance, Joshua was primarily concerned about acting under God’s approval.
  - All other events under his administration had followed this pattern.
  - This act of acting under God’s guidance is seen also in the distribution of the inheritance, note: “. . . **divided as an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the LORD . . .**” (Josh. 19:51b NKJV).

(2) Note also the committee in-charge of the distribution:

#### **Josh. 19:51a NKJV**

“These were the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel . . .”

- This type of representation assured consultation in an atmosphere of prayer; in fact, this committee was chosen by God (Num. 34:16-29, NB v. 17).
- Having God genuinely in control reduced, to minimum, complaints because the committee acted under God’s guidance!

### 4. **City had to be Built** (Josh. 19:50)

(a) His inheritance showed who he was!

- (1) He was strong, diligent, hardworking, and a faithful servant of God and is a powerful example for us.
  - (2) In regards to Joshua's choice, one scholar noted:  
 "He asked for Timnath-serah, a city in the hill country of his own tribe Ephraim, on the north side of the mountain of Gash (Judges 2:9), not a paradise rich in fertility or beauty, but a place to be built up and to dwell in (Josh. 19:50b), to serve the LORD and to die in (Judges 2:8-9).
- (b) Definitely, Joshua remains a role model!
- (1) His lot chosen was within Mount Ephraim.
    - He chose to dwell among his own tribe, although he had the opportunity to live anywhere he desired.
    - He was also located near the Tabernacle which was a central and essential feature of his life and ministry.
    - Matthew Henry noted:  
 "Let no man's preferment (*promotion, advancement, etc.*) or honor make him ashamed of his family or country, or estrange him from it. The Tabernacle was set up in the lot of Ephraim and Joshua would forecast (*foresee*) not to be far from that."
  - (2) Others inherited homes that they built not Joshua (Deut. 6:10-11). Joshua must build for himself even if it is not considered the best (*this ought to be a pattern of hard work and contentment even with that which is considered insignificant*).
  - (3) Our Lord Jesus Christ, accordingly came and dwelt among us, not in spectacle but in poverty, providing rest and hope for us, yet Himself not having where to lay His head (Luke 9:58). **Even Christ pleased not Himself (Rom. 15:3).**

## 5. Conclusion (Josh. 19:51)

- (a) This verse presents the closure of the division of the inheritance of the tribes of Israel
  - (1) This is a forceful conclusion because it reveals that the inheritance was assigned in the presence of the LORD.
    - The LORD was present in a special way during all phases of the distribution.
    - God's presence was guaranteed from the start of Joshua's assignment (See Josh. 1 NB v. 9b); in fact, God was always with Israel (Gen. 28:15; Ex. 13:21-22; 33:14; etc.).
  - (2) It is also important to remember that the LORD Himself guided and determined what each tribe received (example Num. 26:52-56)
    - This fact clearly presents to us the uttermost necessity for **God's daily presence and guidance** as we seek the great inheritance that He promised.
    - **Beloved, we need God in our daily lives!!**

“Without Him, I could do nothing!” And that is a reality we ought to live practically every day!!

- (b) The devil’s continued effort to hinder us (no one is exempted)!! Satan wants to prevent us from experiencing what God has promised for all His people!!
- (1) Satan, through various enemies, ceaselessly fought Israel from entering and possessing the Promised Land but God was with them (Deut. 2:25; Josh. 1:1-9; etc.).
  - (2) The only way we can reach the Promised Land of God—the promise of conquering and experiencing a victorious life—is through **the abiding presence of God!!**
    - For us to experience His promises is by His presence and guidance.
    - God is our **ONLY** way of conquering, our only way of victory over the enemies of this life!! (Rom. 8, NB Vv. 28-39, highlight v. 37; etc.)

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (**Rom. 8:37**).

### **Victory in Jesus**

#### Refrain

Oh victory in Jesus my Savior forever  
 He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood  
 He loved me ‘ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him  
 He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.

### **2 Tim. 2:15**

#### **KJV**

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

#### **Amplified Bible**

“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”

## LESSON 15 REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer.  
 “Behavior (conduct) determines our destiny.”

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2. In Joshua chapters 16 and 17, we noted six practical lessons, relevant to the believers’ behavior.

Match the statements on the left with their correct reference on the right.

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCE	JUMBLED REFERENCES
An example of faith in that which was promised.		Josh. 16:1-4
God’s abundant blessing to the faithful and obedient believer.		Josh.17:7-13
Situation of failure, compromise and evil association with worldly neighbors.		Josh. 17:1-2
Example of the marginal, those who have not gone all the way and the faithful, those who endure to the end.		Josh. 16:5-10
Pride and seeking to be “at ease in Zion”— and the necessity to be steadfast and zealous.		Josh. 17:3-6
Showing the need to live together as one people.		Josh. 17:14-18

3. What are some reasons why “harmony” is so important among believers, give references?

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4. Explain what is meant by “borderline believer.”

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5. Complete the following:

“Many wish for (a) \_\_\_\_\_ possessions who do not (b) \_\_\_\_\_ and make the best use of what they have, think they should have more (c) \_\_\_\_\_ given to them who do not (d) \_\_\_\_\_ with those with which they are (e) \_\_\_\_\_. Most people (f) \_\_\_\_\_ is the effect of their (g) \_\_\_\_\_, would they dig, they would not (h) \_\_\_\_\_”  
(Matthew Henry).

6. By observing Caleb and the daughters of Zelophehad in claiming their inheritance, what difference is seen in comparison to the seven tribes who did not claim their inheritance (Josh. 18:1-3)?

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7. Briefly explain the difference between “contentment” and “complacency”.

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8. Note the tribes we have an account of (a) their borders and cities (b) only their cities (c) borders only . . . in the distribution of inheritance as recorded in our various texts.

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9. During Israel’s days of living in tents where was the Tabernacle located in camp and why?

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10. Complete by choosing the correct answer:  
“Every opportunity was provided for these people to retain proper relationship with God. Joshua has always given the highest priority to spiritual interest; to do otherwise is to fail to give \_\_\_\_\_.”

11. (a) What other names have been used for the Tabernacle? Briefly explain what was regarded as the “**immediate purpose**” of the Tabernacle to the Israelites.

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12. Briefly explain in what ways was the Tabernacle was a symbol of the holiness of God. that He requires of His people?

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13. In what ways God detailed planning of the Tabernacle and the powerful significance of it relates to the believer today? (Briefly)

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14. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer:  
“The Church is the dwelling place of God.”

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15. In what way does the word “congregation” in Josh. 18:1 relates to the “Church”?

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16. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“When the term “congregation”, was applied to the Israelites, the nation is considered as called out by God from \_\_\_\_\_.”

- (a) a life that is boring
- (b) the rest of the world
- (c) commitment to always serve faithfully
- (d) all happiness, joy and fun

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17. When the leaders of the seven tribes were summoned before Joshua (Josh. 18:2-3), what were the charges laid against them?

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18. What is exemplified by anyone who continues to put off what must be done, for example as seen in Josh. 18:2-3?

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19. Joshua repeated his instructions to the surveyors (Josh. 18:3-6 and 8); briefly explain why repetition is important.

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20. Briefly note two “noteworthy features” of the surveyors’ mission (Josh. 18:9).

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21. List five popular cities that were in Benjamin’s lot; briefly note one outstanding feature of each with reference.

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22. Complete the following:

*The following refers to Judah’s willingness to share their lot with the tribe of Simeon.*

*Matthew Henry notes:*

“We must look on things of (a) \_\_\_\_\_, and not on ours (b) \_\_\_\_\_.

The (c) \_\_\_\_\_ of some must (d) \_\_\_\_\_ the wants of others, that there may be somewhat of an (e) \_\_\_\_\_, for which there may be (f) \_\_\_\_\_ where there is not law.”

23. Briefly note three important features as relates to Issachar’s lot.

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24. The tribe of Dan served as “rear guard for the camps of Israel: (a) give Scriptural proof and (b) define “rear guard”.

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25. Joshua obtained his inheritance last; in what way such disciplined posture is an outstanding example?

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