

## Joshua Chapters 14-15 – John Karmelich

1. In this chapter, we begin to read about the distribution of the land of Israel by tribes. If that sounds boring, ☹ hang in there, as I promise there are good applications for all our lives.
  - a) From this chapter to essentially the end of the book, the main idea is to say to the Israelites, "this part of the land of Israel is yours, this part is "yours over there" and this part belongs to that group". With that said, let me explain the focus of the two chapters that make up this lesson, and then I'll explain what it has to do with you and me.
  - b) In Chapters 14 and 15, the focus is in the land distributed to the tribe of Judah and a "special someone" from the tribe of Judah. Judah is not the next oldest brother to get his inheritance, but he is arguably the most important as the Messiah comes through Judah.
  - c) Therefore, God's plan of bringing the Messiah in through the tribe of Judah becomes a background consideration of these two chapters. While the concept of the Messiah is not mentioned, the fact that the tribe of Judah goes first is a significant factor within itself.
2. The key to understanding these two chapters requires a little bit of "bible history review". That is because a key person in these two chapters is a man named "Caleb". He was successful (i.e., a positive role model) who had a minor role while the Israelites were wandering around in the desert prior to entering the Promised Land. In other words, these two chapters come back to the story of Caleb, which "left hanging" in the book of Numbers.
  - a) Let's begin with reviewing the story of Caleb in order to teach why he is brought up here in Joshua and what is the significance of this man.
  - b) In the book of Numbers, the Israelites had been out of Egypt for about two years of what became a forty-year period of desert wandering. After two years away from Egypt, God told Moses to send out twelve spies to "check out" the Land of Israel. (Reference Numbers 9:1 and 13:2)
    - i) Ten of those spies brought back a bad report about Israel. They said in effect there are giants living in the land and we the Israelites will not be able to conquer them. The whole nation of Israel believed these ten spies. Because of their fear of going forward in faith, that generation of Israelites was sentenced to die in the desert over the next thirty-eight years. Only their children could enter the land.
    - ii) There were only two spies that brought back a positive report. One of them was Joshua, who is the same Joshua who is the main focus of this book.
    - iii) The other spy who brought back a positive report was Caleb. My point here is that Caleb, like Joshua was commended for trusting in God and saying in effect, "We can win in the Promised Land because God is leading us".
    - iv) The point is Caleb's story in Numbers, in effect never gets finished and it does finish in these two chapters of the book of Joshua.
    - v) Caleb also happens to be part of the tribe of Judah, which is one reason why his story is told in these two chapters. Even though Caleb is not part of the direct line of the Messiah, his story of "trust" is a good example of trusting in Jesus!
3. OK, so these two chapters focus on the rewards for Caleb and the rewards for the tribe of Joshua. John, it's time for you to answer your favorite question: ☺ Why should I care?
  - a) To answer that question, let me give the title for this lesson. It is "The secret of claiming the promises God gives us as believers". At this point in the book of Joshua, the Israelites are being divided up into groups (i.e., individual tribes). As opposed to just saying, "This tribe gets this area over here and that tribe gets that area over there". The story mixes in the story of Caleb with details of the distribution of the tribe of Joshua.
  - b) My point is the story of Caleb is a story of bravery and trust in God. It is mixed in with the story of Judah's inheritance to teach about what trusting in God is "all about".

- c) When God calls us as Christians to do things for Him, it usually requires a lot of trust in God as without His help, it would be impossible to get those projects done. What we need when we are doing some sort of project for God is leadership that has a tremendous amount of trust in God and sets an example for the rest of the group of how to apply that trust. Caleb is a great example of such leadership.
  - i) Like Joshua, Caleb is much older than all the other Israelites at this point in time. When the Israelites were told they could not enter the Promised Land, but only their children could enter it, the only exceptions were Joshua and Caleb. My point is simply that Caleb is significantly older than the other Israelites.
  - ii) After waiting out the forty years, plus another seven years of fighting in the land of Israel (we'll discuss how we know the time frame in this lesson), we have Caleb say in effect, "I'm old now, but I'm as strong as I was forty years ago and I'm ready to lead my part in the next challenge of finish taking the land promised to me."
  - iii) In other words, the job of the Israelites at this point is to finish conquering the land of Israel and to work by tribe. Caleb will say in effect, "I'm ready to go despite my age and I'm still willing to do whatever God commands me to do because I know that as long as I'm trusting in God, I cannot lose."
- 4. That last sentence may be the key point of this whole lesson. It is the idea that as long as we are trying to do God's will, and we are trusting in God to accomplish that will, we cannot lose. The victory is already won no matter how "frightening" is our enemy or our challenge in front of us.
  - a) Let me explain this in more practical terms. Let's say there is some sin issue God wants you or me to overcome. We work within a group to pray for that issue (to have accountability for that issue) and with God's help we can overcome that issue.
  - b) Another example might be some project for God. It may be a matter of preaching the Gospel to a group of people who haven't heard it or to an area where to date, Christianity has not made any sort of significant impact. Our group may be called to do the preaching and/or praying for that group. The point is the victory is guaranteed (on God's timing) as long as we are faithful to what God has called us to do.
  - c) If we are willing to take that "leap of faith" to take on a project that we are sure is God's will for our lives, we are guaranteed the victory on His timing.
    - i) So how do we know what is God's will for us? The answer usually comes through prayer. If we are still not sure, a simple test might be if the correct answer is "biblical". Let's say there is some prevalent problem within our church or group. God may call us on us not only to be a good witness to that group, but also to pray specifically for that issue and that group. My simple point is that if we are trusting in God, no matter how big the issue, the victory is guaranteed.
    - ii) Let me approach this issue another way: Suppose our group has been working on a project for a long time without any significant results. Let's say we are sure this is God's will for this project to be done. The first point is that the results are set to come on God's timing and not ours. There are many stories of missionaries that required many years of faithful service prior to any significant results happening. Often God tests our faith first, before allowing positive results based on our faith. My point is the results are based on God's timing, and not ours.
- 5. With all that said, I want to get started on the text.
  - a) The main point of these two chapters is they tell the story of the tribe of Joshua receiving their share of the land of Israel. Mixed into these two chapters is the story of Caleb's personal inheritance that was promised to him back when Moses told the Israelites that the land was to be divided up.
  - b) What I want us (Christians) to see when we read these two chapters is not just a historical account of Caleb and the tribe of Judah, but lessons in how God wants us, or our group to function as we trust in Him in whatever project He calls us to do.

6. Chapter 14, Verse 1: Now these are the areas the Israelites received as an inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the tribal clans of Israel allotted to them. <sup>2</sup> Their inheritances were assigned by lot to the nine-and-a-half tribes, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.
- a) The Israelites usually had two leaders at any one time: One was to be the civil leader and one is to be the spiritual leader. That is why Moses' brother Aaron was the first high priest and not Moses himself. My point is God split up the duties of the "civil leadership" and "religious leadership".
    - i) That split stayed during the time of Joshua. Even though Joshua was the general that led the fights, he was not the spiritual leader of the Israelites.
    - ii) The current spiritual leader was a son of Aaron named Eleazar. If you recall, Aaron's two oldest sons died in effect for being bad priests. (Ref.: Leviticus 10:2, 16:1.) Eleazar was the next oldest son and is now the head priest.
    - iii) My point here is that when the tribes were split up, not only was the civil leadership under Joshua supervising this distribution, but also the religious leader.
    - iv) The point? When projects for God are "set up", we not only want God behind that project, but also the "civil leadership" of our church or group. If a church wants to send out missionaries, we need the "church" behind the project (civil leadership) and God Himself in the project as something He (God) wants our church to do.
    - v) Does this mean every project we do in church must have the approval of the leadership of that church? If we are doing that project under the umbrella of that church, the answer is yes. If it is not under the "umbrella of that church", but you are sure it is something God wants you to do, that is a separate issue.
  - b) Getting back to the text, the point here is that God wants the land of Israel split among the nine and one half tribes that do desire to live in the Promised Land.
    - i) If you recall from the last lesson, two and one half tribes of Israel settle in the land east of the land of "Israel proper" and the remaining nine and one half tribes are the ones who actually settle in the land and receive part of the land of Israel.
    - ii) It is important to remember there are actually thirteen tribes of Israel. The twelve tribes are based on the twelve sons of Jacob. One of Jacob's sons had two sons of his own. Jacob adopts those two grandsons and treats them as sons. Therefore, there are "thirteen tribes to choose from" when making a list of "12 tribes".
      - a) This is important in that the tribe of Levi does not get an inheritance like the other tribes. The job of the Levites (over and above taking care of the tabernacle) is to scatter throughout the land and be help the other Israelites draw closer to God.
      - b) I mention all of this because as we divide up the land of Israel, just know that there are still "twelve tribes" that inherit land despite the fact the Levites (one of the 12 tribes) does not get a share like the other tribes.
    - iii) With all of this in mind, the next few verses should make sense to us.
7. Verse 3: Moses had granted the two-and-a-half tribes their inheritance east of the Jordan but had not granted the Levites an inheritance among the rest, <sup>4</sup> for the sons of Joseph had become two tribes--Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites received no share of the land but only towns to live in, with pasturelands for their flocks and herds. <sup>5</sup> So the Israelites divided the land, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.
- a) These verses summarize much of this section of the book of Joshua. God desired that the land of Israel be divided up by tribe. It mentions how the two sons of Joseph got an equal share of land with Joseph's other brothers and that Levi did not get a share of the land.
  - b) The text also mentions that Levi did get some towns and pasturelands for their flocks. In other words, even though they did not get an "area" of Israel for themselves, they still got some towns to live in and some fields for their own flocks and herds.

- c) There is one more thing that should be brought up in this section: The method of the distribution: It was divided by lots. What does that mean and why should I care?
- i) The idea of lots is that the land was split up by "rolling the dice". It would be rolling a pair of dice and if the dice came up "six and six" five times in a row, the Israelites would conclude that is "beyond coincidence" and therefore it was God controlling the dice according to His will.
  - ii) God commanded that the larger tribes get a larger share of land and the smaller tribes get a smaller share. (See Numbers 33:54. ) At the same time, some sort of "rolling the dice" method was used to decide the boundaries of each tribe.
  - iii) Here is why I wanted to mention this bit of bible trivia: It is not that so we can memorize how the Israelites divided up the land. It is to explain a key difference between "Old Testament and New Testament" ways of doing things. In the New Testament, the only time Christians used a "divination" method was in Chapter 1 of the book of Acts, when the apostles wanted to determine who is to be the new "12th Apostle" after Judas betrayed Jesus. The apostles used some sort of similar "roll the dice" method and a man named Mathias became the new "Number12".
  - iv) However, this event happened in Chapter 1 of the book of Acts. We don't read any more about Mathias in the book of Acts. In Chapter 2 of the book of Acts (which, of course, comes after Chapter 1 ☺), the Holy Spirit comes upon the church. I believe Paul was selected by God to become the "12th Apostle".
  - v) My point here is I don't believe it is God's will for Christians to use some sort of "rolling dice method" to determine God's will. What Christians should do is pray for God's word and let the Holy Spirit lead us in terms of what decision or choice to make at any given moment.
    - a) If God is not making a decision obvious for us, then it may be God's will to not have any of those choices or it may be God's will to wait for that decision. Sometimes our decisions are simply made by regularly study God's will to determine what person is best for a certain role.
    - b) When in doubt here, a great prayer is "Dear God, bless it or block it".
    - c) My simple point here is I don't recommend any sort of "random luck game" to determine what is God's will for our lives. A (not "the") reason that God gives all believes the Holy Spirit is to guide us as to what decisions to make in life, and therefore, methods like the ones used here in Joshua are not appropriate for Christians to us.
- d) Let me get back to the issue of "why". In these five verses, we have the Israelites dividing up the land of Israel by tribe. I explained in the last lesson that Jewish people living today do not know what tribe they are from and modern Israel is not divided by tribe. So why should we as bible believing Christians care that the Israelites divide up the land?
- i) For starters, it is to remind us that God keeps His promises. God promised this land to the Israelites as an unconditional promise. (See Genesis 12:7). The bible teaches that one day in the future God will divide up the land again. (See Ezekiel 48). Just because the Israelites failed to see Jesus as the Messiah, does not mean they lose out on their unconditional promise of getting the land.
  - ii) Next it is to remind us that God wants us to work in groups to finish the "clean up" operation of our lives. The point is the "Promised Land" represents a life where one is trusting in God for every aspect of our lives. That means we regularly should deal with issues that separate us from God. He wants us to pray and work together to overcome those issues. Christians should work as a team for all of us to draw closer to Him. That includes everything from studying the bible to praying to helping each other grow in God.
  - iii) My point is that God is setting the pattern of "group work" in our lives.

8. Verse 6: Now the men of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me. <sup>7</sup> I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, <sup>8</sup> but my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear. I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly. <sup>9</sup> So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.'
- a) Now we interrupt the story of the tribes getting their distribution of land to focus on one particular Israelite named Caleb and what is his inheritance.
  - b) Before I get into the particulars of these verses, let's talk about why these verses are here.
    - i) Let's face it, the bible could have been silent on Caleb's reward. Or, the text could have mentioned somewhere that Caleb got his reward as promised to him.
    - ii) My question to ponder is, why is so much text given to Caleb's story and why is it mentioned at this point in the "distribution" section of Joshua?
    - iii) For starters, Caleb is from the tribe of Judah, and the story of Caleb's share is part of the story of the tribe of Judah. Therefore it "fits here" in this section. Just as we should look to "the" representative from the tribe of Judah (i.e. a model of Jesus), so the Israelites should look at Caleb as a model of how we should live.
    - iv) The story of Caleb's reward is a story of bravery and trust in God despite past and future dangers. This whole section in the book of Joshua is about the Israelites learning to trust God after they have divided into their tribes. The story of Caleb's bravery and trust in God hopefully is an inspiration to the rest of the Israelites.
    - v) The point for us is similar. God wants Christians to draw closer to Him. He wants to trust in Him and work with other Christians to build up each other's faith. If we just read of "land distribution", we would miss the concept of using that distribution to draw closer to God. Therefore, having the story of Caleb here is an example of us to be "strong in God" that He will lead us to victory over whatever "enemies" or situations we face that can draw us away from God.
  - c) With that out of my system, ☺ I can now describe some of the details of this story.
    - i) The first thing to catch is these verses give us the "time line" of the book of Joshua. The text says that Caleb was 40 years old when God called him to be one of the 12 spies to spy out the land of Israel. In Verse 10 (coming up), Caleb says that was 45 years ago. The Israelites sent the spies into the land of Israel two years after leaving Egypt. Since they had to wander in the desert for forty years, that accounts for much of Caleb's life. However, Verse 10 says it was 45 years ago.
    - ii) If the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, and the spy incident was "Year 2 of the 40", that means there were 38 years of wandering to go before the next generation crossed the Jordan river. If Caleb is now 45 years older than when he was a spy, then the Israelites have been in the land of Israel for 7 years (45-38).
    - iii) My point is the Book of Joshua may have started 13-14 chapters ago, but that time span was 7 years. The point is all of this warfare we have read in the first half of Joshua covered a 7-year time span.
  - d) Now comes the "neat part" of the story. Time to pay attention. ☺
    - i) Caleb reminds Joshua that Moses promised him (Caleb) that he would receive a particular piece of real estate as his reward for being a "good spy" and trusting in God to conquer the land.
    - ii) The point is Caleb is recounting God's promise to him through Moses.
    - iii) My point is that promise was made 45 years ago. Caleb believed that God had a reward for him and waited the 45 years to receive that reward.
    - iv) The point? If God promises us something, it will happen on His timing!

- v) There are stories of missionaries who go out in "unchartered" parts of the world and for many years, it seems like they are making no progress. There are even stories where missionary boards give up on such people but those people continue serving as missionaries because they know God made a promise that "His word would not return void" (See Isaiah 55:11). Therefore, they keep on preaching to that "unchartered" territory until God's results happen.
- vi) My point is if Caleb can "prayerfully wait" 45 years to receive the promises that God made for him, maybe we can have a little more patience when God works in our lives and let go of our frustration when God is not working things out in "our timing" on our projects for Him.
- e) Getting back to the text, Caleb "brags about God's 45 year old promise and mentions how he brought back a good report when the 10 "bad spies" brought back a bad report that got the Israelites not to trust in God.
  - i) My point here is that there is nothing wrong about bragging about God and what God plans to do for our lives. Christians wrongly think that any sort of bragging is wrong. Bragging about ourselves is wrong as we are getting the focus off of God and onto us. Bragging about God is a good thing in that it is getting our focus on Him. In that sense, "bragging about God" is similar to singing songs to God as we are focusing on Him.
  - ii) Besides after 45 years of waiting for God and "now it is finally happening", I think Caleb deserves his "five minutes of bragging about God" as his moment is now coming to pass.
- 9. Verse 10: "Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the desert. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! <sup>11</sup> I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. <sup>12</sup> Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said."
  - a) In these verses Caleb finishes his "age speech" and mentions he is now 85 years old. Caleb says that he is just as strong now as he was forty-five years ago.
  - b) With that said, let me share a secret of how to live an "active senior life". Yes, good eating habits and "genetic makeup" are significant. What is just as important as those things is having a purpose for living at whatever age we are at. If you are not sure what is the purpose God called you to, ask Him. Over and above being saved, God wants all believers not only to draw close to Him, but to live to make a difference for Him in our lives. That is the "purpose" to which we should live. Having such a purpose can keep us strong even in later years. Even when our age requires us to change lifestyles, I still recommend asking God what purpose do You have for me "now" in my senior years.
    - i) Here is Caleb at eighty-five. He is not complaining that "I am old now and God can no longer use me." He is bragging in God that he is still strong as he trusts in God's promise and he knows there is more for him to do for God.
  - c) Next, I want to describe Caleb's reward itself: Notice Caleb didn't ask for a nice beach front home to kick back every day. ☺ He didn't even ask for a big flat piece of ground he could farm. He asked for a particular hill (or small mountain) on which Caleb could do more conquering for God.
    - i) In fact, the place that Caleb asked for had "Anakites" there. To make it simple Anakites are the giants that lived in the land of Israel. Going back to the "10 bad spies", the reason they brought back the bad report was because they were afraid of those giants living in Israel and the bad spies reported that because these guys were so big, the Israelites would be unable to defeat them and conquer this land.

- ii) Caleb was unlike the 10 bad spies in that Caleb knew it was God's desire to conquer all of the inhabitants of the land, including these giants. Therefore, as long as the Israelites were trusting God, they could defeat these giants.
  - iii) Here is Caleb at 85, 45 years after God promised Him "victory" at this mountain. Caleb is bragging that He is ready to take on the giants who live in this area, not because he is bigger than they are, but Caleb knows that "he and God" make a majority and with God leading Caleb, he can't lose this battle.
  - d) So John, are you telling us to quit our lives and go find some giants to fight? ☺
    - i) No I am not. I am saying that "spiritual warfare" does not end when we turn 65 or whatever age you want to pick. I am saying that as long as sin exists in our lives, God wants to lead us to fight whatever internal and external battles He wants us to face in order to draw closer to Him.
    - ii) Further, we should never let age be an excuse to take on the issues that separate us from God. Just because we are now "x" years old, does not mean it is now too late to draw closer to God and take on those issues in our life.
    - iii) The issues we face may seem like giants to us in that those issues are so big we think there is no way we can win. In a sense, that is correct. We can't have victory over those issues based on our own strength. However, if we are willing to trust God and let Him lead our battles, then we cannot lose over those giant issues.
10. Verse 13: Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. <sup>14</sup> So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the LORD, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly. <sup>15</sup> (Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba after Arba, who was the greatest man among the Anakites.)
- a) Verse 13 says that Joshua blessed Caleb. It is estimated that Joshua was around 95 to 100 as of this date. Caleb was a "young stud" at 85, ☺ so here we have the older man blessing the younger man. The point of the blessing is Joshua saying in effect, "If that is what God wants you to do, then who I am to stop you! Go do as God commanded you to do."
  - b) One also has to remember that Joshua is the leader of the people. With Joshua giving his blessing, it is a sign of approval of what Caleb wanted to do.
  - c) The text mentions that the land given to Caleb was called Hebron. Verse 15 mentions that the name of the land used to be called Arba. The reason it was called Arba is that it was named after the greatest man among the Anakites. The point is this land was conquered under Caleb and this land was renamed after it became a "Jewish town". The point again is that if we are trusting in God, He does lead us to victory. In a sense Verse 15 is telling us that Caleb won because the town was renamed after the victory.
11. Verse 15 (cont.): Then the land had rest from war.
- a) What I suspect Verse 15 means is that after Caleb attacked and defeated this area, it had rest from warfare. In other words, this last part of Verse 15 is a "footnote" to what may have happened after Joshua gave his blessing to Caleb to attack this land.
  - b) In the meantime, we have some land to allocate, tribe by tribe.
12. Chapter 15, Verse 1: The allotment for the tribe of Judah, clan by clan, extended down to the territory of Edom, to the Desert of Zin in the extreme south.
- a) Chapter 15 gives the allotment of land for the tribe of Judah. The "official" reason the tribe of Judah went first, is that the leaders of Israel probably "cast lots" to determine which tribe would get their land first, and the "lots" somehow pointed to Judah to go first.
  - b) Somehow, I don't believe it was an accident that the "tribe of the Messiah" got to go first.
13. Verse 2: Their southern boundary started from the bay at the southern end of the Salt Sea, <sup>3</sup> crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to Zin and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it ran past Hezron up to Addar and curved around to Karka. <sup>4</sup> It then passed along to Azmon and joined the Wadi of Egypt, ending at the sea. This is their southern boundary.
- a) In these verses, we start to get the literal boundaries for this tribe.

14. Verse 5: The eastern boundary is the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. The northern boundary started from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan, <sup>6</sup> went up to Beth Hoglah and continued north of Beth Arabah to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. <sup>7</sup> The boundary then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor and turned north to Gilgal, which faces the Pass of Adummim south of the gorge. It continued along to the waters of En Shemesh and came out at En Rogel. <sup>8</sup> Then it ran up the Valley of Ben Hinnom along the southern slope of the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem). From there it climbed to the top of the hill west of the Hinnom Valley at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. <sup>9</sup> From the hilltop the boundary headed toward the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, came out at the towns of Mount Ephron and went down toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath Jearim). <sup>10</sup> Then it curved westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, ran along the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Kesalon), continued down to Beth Shemesh and crossed to Timnah. <sup>11</sup> It went to the northern slope of Ekron, turned toward Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah and reached Jabneel. The boundary ended at the sea. <sup>12</sup> The western boundary is the coastline of the Great Sea. These are the boundaries around the people of Judah by their clans.
- a) The descriptions are literal and are based on actual locations that existed at that time. This is one of those bible sections where we need a good "land surveyor" to really appreciate it. You know those guys who stand in the middle of the street with a telescope-like device looking at some target and then writing down the distance from point A to point B? In a sense, that is what we have here. Somehow, Joshua knew of all of these specific points of reference and he was describing. It is saying to the tribe of Judah "here are the boundaries of your tribe". Therefore, know what they are and where you are supposed to live.
  - b) OK, let's suppose I never visit Israel and I never actually see the land. What is the purpose of me reading this? Does God want me to learn geography? Not exactly.
  - c) I believe the purpose is to show that just as God gave each Israelite tribe a specific area to live, so God gives each Christian a specific assignment to do. In other words, God does not tell us, "You go live within these boundaries and get involved with "x" Christian group". However, God does call us to live in certain locations and it usually becomes obvious to us that God wants us "here" at this location at this time. Further, as we get involved in Christian groups and Christian causes, there is a sense of comfort that comes over us that we, at that moment are doing God's will for our lives.
    - i) This does not necessarily mean that where we are at "this point" is where God wants us for the rest of our lives. It just means that God wants us "here" and being involved in this group at this point in our lives.
    - ii) I recently watched a movie about a man who lost his only son in a plane crash. The son was engaged. The father told his ex-daughter-in-law to be that "I (the father) was baptized in this river (where he lived) and this river bend has been my home and this is where God wants me to live. However, I know you and my son were planning to move elsewhere. This place is not the home God called for you and I want you to "let go" of my son and go live the life God called for you." That is an example of going to conquer the territory God has assigned for you.
  - d) In other words the "territory" God wants for us may be different than the territory or "assignment" God wants for our children. Getting back to Joshua, the point is not to memorize this section of text and ask, "What does this territory have to do with me"?
  - e) God has a specific "plan" marked out for our lives. We don't know how long we have in this life to "work" that specific territory or how long we are to stay in that territory. What God does want is for us to realize that just as He marks out a specific plan for the "Jewish tribes", so God has marked out a life for each of us. So how do we know what our "territory is"? It starts by asking God. Often it is just a feeling of "comfort" of knowing this is where God wants us to be.

15. Verse 13: In accordance with the LORD's command to him, Joshua gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh a portion in Judah--Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.)<sup>14</sup> From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites--Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai--descendants of Anak.<sup>15</sup> From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher).<sup>16</sup> And Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher."<sup>17</sup> Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took it; so Caleb gave his daughter Acsah to him in marriage.

- a) Meanwhile, the text now jumps back to the story of Caleb. Before I get into specifics about this text, ask yourself, why does the text jump back and forth between the allotment of the tribe of Judah and the story of Caleb and what he personally accomplished?
  - i) I believe the point ties to my lesson theme. The idea is God wants us to study the story of Caleb as an inspiration of what to do when we get our inheritance portion. It does not mean God gives each of us a piece of Israel. It means that God has a specific plan that He desires in the life of every believer. That plan does not mean we just "sit there and do nothing with our lives". It means we "work " our territory in that we live out our lives with the desire to please God in all that we do.
- b) Once Caleb got his allotted territory, he didn't just stand there and say, "Hey everybody look what God gave me." Instead Caleb got busy doing what God wanted him to do in his life. In this case, it was about attacking the specific inhabitants of that land, including actual giants who lived there.
  - i) For us, our "allotted territory" is wherever we live and whatever ministry God has called for us to get involved in. We too must defeat the "spiritual demonic giants" that live in our territory. We can defeat any negative issue no matter how big it is as long as we are willing to trust in God to lead us to that victory. That is the story of Caleb and hopefully, that is our story as well.
- c) Meanwhile, back to the text: After several verses of Caleb leading an attack on those giants and people who lived on this hillside area, we read a new story of Caleb promising his daughter in marriage to whoever captures "Kiriath Sepher", whatever that is.
  - i) So, was Caleb getting lazy at this point and wanted someone to take over? I don't think so. That's not the point of the marriage issue as I'll state in a moment.
  - ii) Here was Caleb offering his daughter in marriage as a prize. I have to admit I was curious as to what his daughter looked like. How good of a prize is this anyway? After all, Caleb was 85 years old. If Caleb was still as "studley" ☺ as he claimed to be in the last chapter, I suspect Caleb was still able to produce children and he probably had a good-looking daughter who was at the age when young Jewish women get engaged.
  - iii) Why would a man want to marry his daughter? I suspect that because Caleb was a leader and received a territory that is now conquered, one can inherit that land-blessing if one became the son in law of Caleb.
  - iv) The point is not that we should offer our daughters in marriage to whoever is willing to help us in our cause for God. The point is Caleb understood the principal that God desires "team work". Therefore, Caleb is trying to encourage others to lead in the conquering effort and is willing to offer a "great reward" to anyone willing to step forward in leadership.
  - v) The point for you and I is not only that we should "go" where God wants us to go, but we should encourage others to follow God's lead for their lives. We should look for methods to encourage others in their faith in God. Caleb's method was to offer his daughters' hand in marriage. Hopefully, our method is less drastic. ☺
- d) This ties well to the "land distribution" section. The land is being distributed so the Israelites could conquer it. Therefore "mixed in with that story" is Caleb's story.

16. Verse 18: One day when she came to Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What can I do for you?"
- a) Mixed in with the story of Caleb and the story of the land for the tribe of Judah, we have a short story in which the daughter of Caleb asks her father for some favors.
  - b) The essential point of this verse is that Caleb's daughter came to ask her father for a field.
  - c) Back in Verse 17, Caleb promised that any man who captured some place (probably a town) called Kiriath Sepher, that man can have her daughter's hand in marriage.
    - i) The winner of this contest turned out to be Caleb's nephew. Note that it was not forbidden at this time for a man to legally marry his cousin. (This was a time era before the "gene pool" was corrupted and still pure enough where one can legally and safely do this type of thing. I would not recommend it today. ☺)
  - d) The point is she (Caleb's daughter Acsah) had an inheritance promised to her, by her father and now she wanted a little more land and specifically a field. Maybe Kiriath Sepher did not have any good place to raise farm animals (or crops) and that is why the daughter wanted a field as well. It is interesting that she asked this of her father and not her new husband. I suspect the reason is because Caleb was given the whole surrounding territory and therefore it was Caleb's decision as to what to do with this surrounding land.
17. Verse 19: She replied, "Do me a special favor. Since you have given me land in the Negev, give me also springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.
- a) This is the end of the story of Caleb's daughter Acsah. The point of this little story is that besides the inheritance promised her by her father (the town of Kiriath Sepher, whatever that was), she also wanted some field-land and some land with springs of water.
  - b) So what are we to learn from this story, other than the fact that Caleb's daughter has a lot of boldness just like her father, and wanted more than what her father promised her?
    - i) For starters, she was willing to ask for more than what she had. That family "boldness" got her to desire more of the type of life God wanted for them.
    - ii) The physical point is that she needed more land with water. Maybe the land she got didn't have any water source, so that is why she asked for these springs.
  - c) I heard an interesting analysis of this. In the New Testament the term "spring of water" is a reference to the Holy Spirit living inside of us. Think of Jesus being at the well with the Samaritan woman (John Chapter 4). Jesus said whoever believed in Him would have wells of living water flowing out of them. (Verse 4:10 and 7:38). Jesus' point is that whoever believed in Him, would have the Spirit of God "flowing" from them.
    - i) Getting back to Caleb's daughter Acsah, she asked for "springs of water". Think of it as wanting one's inheritance and having the Spirit of God within her in order to appreciate and use the land being given to her and her husband.
    - ii) In other words, this little story of Acsah is another example of living the Spirit filled life of trusting God with every aspect of our lives.
  - d) This little story is also interesting to think about from Caleb's perspective. Water is a valuable resource in a dry climate like Israel. Caleb was willing to give up some of the water source in order to "spread it around" to other people. That leads me back to the Holy Spirit. His resources are not limited so that we have to "hog it for ourselves". God wants us to share His love with others and for others to appreciate God and also have His Spirit within them as it is within us.
18. Verse 20: This is the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, clan by clan:
- a) From Verse 21 to just about the end of the chapter, is simply a list of places that was part of the inheritance for the tribe of Judah, outside of the area given to Caleb.
  - b) For your benefit I read through a commentary on these place names. Some of these places have "history" in other bible stories. We know of most of these places today, but not all of them. In summary, I could not find much spiritual application to all of these places.

19. Verse 21: The southernmost towns of the tribe of Judah in the Negev toward the boundary of Edom were: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,<sup>22</sup> Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah,<sup>23</sup> Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,<sup>24</sup> Ziph, Telem, Bealoth,<sup>25</sup> Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (that is, Hazor),<sup>26</sup> Amam, Shema, Moladah,<sup>27</sup> Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet,<sup>28</sup> Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah,<sup>29</sup> Baalah, Iim, Ezem,<sup>30</sup> Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah,<sup>31</sup> Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah,<sup>32</sup> Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain and Rimmon--a total of twenty-nine towns and their villages.
- If you are the type of person that likes studying geography or likes studying the names of places, there is probably some interesting little "tidbits" within all of these names.
  - Other than knowing the fact that Judah got a list of a lot of different towns and villages, I didn't find a lot of things worth noting here. Let me give the rest of these verses and then I'll talk a little more about how all of this ties to our lesson theme.
20. Verse 33: In the western foothills: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah,<sup>34</sup> Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam,<sup>35</sup> Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah,<sup>36</sup> Shaaraim, Adithaim and Gederah (or Gederothaim)--fourteen towns and their villages.<sup>37</sup> Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad,<sup>38</sup> Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel,<sup>39</sup> Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon,<sup>40</sup> Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish,<sup>41</sup> Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah and Makkedah--sixteen towns and their villages.<sup>42</sup> Libnah, Ether, Ashan,<sup>43</sup> Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib,<sup>44</sup> Keilah, Aczib and Mareshah--nine towns and their villages.<sup>45</sup> Ekron, with its surrounding settlements and villages;<sup>46</sup> west of Ekron, all that were in the vicinity of Ashdod, together with their villages;<sup>47</sup> Ashdod, its surrounding settlements and villages; and Gaza, its settlements and villages, as far as the Wadi of Egypt and the coastline of the Great Sea.<sup>48</sup> In the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh,<sup>49</sup> Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir),<sup>50</sup> Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim,<sup>51</sup> Goshen, Holon and Giloh--eleven towns and their villages.<sup>52</sup> Arab, Dumah, Eshan,<sup>53</sup> Janim, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah,<sup>54</sup> Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) and Zior--nine towns and their villages.<sup>55</sup> Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah,<sup>56</sup> Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah,<sup>57</sup> Kain, Gibeah and Timnah--ten towns and their villages.<sup>58</sup> Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor,<sup>59</sup> Maarath, Beth Anoth and Eltekon--six towns and their villages.<sup>60</sup> Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim) and Rabbah--two towns and their villages.<sup>61</sup> In the desert: Beth Arabah, Middin, Secacah,<sup>62</sup> Nibshan, the City of Salt and En Gedi--six towns and their villages.
- I do find it interesting that Joshua knew the names of all these places. The Israelites have spent the last seven years fighting in Israel and wiping out a lot of people. I suspect they kept notes as to the names of places knowing that "this day would come" when the land of Israel would be divided tribe by tribe.
  - Remember that the Israelite army had already defeated a lot of people. Therefore, there were probably a lot of "empty cities and villages" in Israel at that time one could occupy. I suspect a lot of this list was for the moment, empty places for the Israelites to move to.
  - This fact does tie to my theme about the Promised Land. To trust in God and live the type of life He wants for us does lead us into a "rich full life". My point is the Israelites did not inherit a whole lot of desert wasteland. They got a place that was full of towns to occupy and full of land that can be used for farming and raising animals. Similarly, when God calls us into a life of serving Him, it is never a wasted "desert like" life. It is a life that can be "cultivated" and used to make a difference for Him.
    - In other words, when we are called to serve God, we are not to go live out in the desert all by ourselves and "live in misery"! We are to live a happy and rewarding life of serving God and taking in all the blessings that God wants to give us.
    - Those blessings were symbolized to the Israelites by all of these places.
    - Those blessings for you and me are about the happy, productive and enjoyable life of serving God. In other words, living for God will bring more happiness to one's life than anything and everything else this world has to offer. Living to make a difference for the God of the Universe has far greater rewards than everything this world has to offer. That is what the promise of this land is to us.
  - Once again, I got on a roll, and I still have one more verse to go. ☺

21. Verse 63: Judah could not dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the people of Judah.
- a) The chapter, and the discussion of the tribe of Judah ends on this "footnote" that the Israelites failed to eliminate the "Jebusites" that lived in Jerusalem at this time.
  - b) So why end the chapter on this bad note? The answer is to show that those from the tribe of Judah failed to "trust in God" as He had asked. In a "spiritual sense", they had failed to take for themselves all that God had desired for them.
  - c) On a practical level, Jerusalem is a hard city to conquer. It is up on a hill and I'm sure it had walls around the city at that time. In fact, it wasn't until the time of David, four to five hundred years later that the Israelites took this city for themselves. The point is, for four to five hundred years, God was waiting for the Israelites, and in particular, the tribe of Judah to do what God wanted them to do, which was conquer all of the land being allotted to them. That includes conquering Jerusalem.
    - i) Without God's help, I'm sure this was an impossible task of conquering Jerusalem.
    - ii) I'm sure those of the tribe of Judah saw the city of Jerusalem and its big walls and said, "We can never conquer that city". That's the problem: Once we get our eyes off of God and onto our problems, our "giants" are too big to conquer.
    - iii) Without God's help, we cannot conquer what God wants us to conquer.
  - d) By being dependant upon God, He will lead us to victory over any and all obstacles that prevent us from living the type of life God wants us to live. That is the key message of the book of Joshua and one of the key messages of the whole bible.
    - i) Yes, giving one's life to Jesus is the first step to having God lead us in our new life. I'm not discounting that fact at all. My point is "Once we give our lives to Christ, then what"? In a sense, that is the purpose of why I write these bible studies. To teach you and me how to live the type of life God desires for all of us.
    - ii) That desire to draw closer to God means to overcome any and all issues that separate us from Him. It may be sin issues or just "worldly things" that are drawing us away from God. It may be a fear of persecution as well. The point is God wants us to draw close to Him and He is more than willing to lead us to overcome any and all issues that separate us from Him.
  - e) There, on that happy note, ☺ I can end this lesson.
22. Father, like the Israelites, You have laid out a plan for our lives. We don't know what that plan entails but we are trusting You as You guide us in life. Help us to know that through Your power, we can overcome any obstacle or issue that separates us from You. Help us to be more like Caleb or even his daughter, who put their trust in You to keep Your promises and let You lead us to any and all victories for You. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.