

Within the Word

A Study of Joshua 13 & 14

A Note from Kathy

In these two chapters, we see Joshua and Caleb are both well advanced in years, and yet they are both still active in the work of the Lord. We must be very careful not to dismiss someone because of age. Our elders often have great wisdom that comes from walking faithfully with the Lord. Why not take a few minutes and seek the advice of a "senior saint." You may be surprised at the treasure you will find.

Observation

Read the chapter, at least twice, before beginning the study guide. This will give the Lord an opportunity to help you see the things He desires for you to know.

1. Joshua 1-12 dealt with the subduing of the land God had promised His people, which included their battles, victories, walk of faith, missteps, and God's faithful leadership. Chapters 13-19 focus on land allotments. Chapter 13 opens by acknowledging Joshua's stage of life. He had faithfully led the Israelites, and yet, there was still much work to be completed. What work remained unfinished?
2. The land of the Sidonians was a strip of northern coastal land around Sidon and Tyre. Even though many battles had been won, and much ground had been gained, who was still the one driving out the inhabitants of the land?
3. What was to be done with this parcel of land, after the Sidonians had been driven out?
4. Read Deuteronomy 11:22-23, which was the promise given to the Israelites who obeyed the Lord and remained vigilant to finish the work. Highlight their responsibility in one color and God's part in another?

Deuteronomy 11:22-23

If you carefully observe all these commands I am giving you to follow – to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him and to hold fast to him –²³ then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you.

5. The word inheritance paints a beautiful picture of exactly what this land is to be for Israel. What is an inheritance, and who gets it? You might want to look up the word inheritance in a couple of different dictionaries. Then write a definition in your own words.



6. Why were some tribes given land east of the Jordan? Read Numbers 32:1-5. Whose idea was this allotment? Why did they want this land, and what were the requirements for them to have this land? Were they faithful to carry out all they had promised?

As you read about the land allotments study this map. You may want to find other maps in order to locate specific cities and areas not listed on this map.

7. Joshua 13:33 and 14:3 told us the tribe of Levi was not given an allotment of land. In Numbers 18, God commanded that all the Israelites were to bring their offerings and sacrifices to the priests. It was the job of the priests to make the sacrifices for the people. This was an on-going everyday job for this many people. The best of the best was to be presented to the Lord as an offering. The rest would be given to the Levites, as their inheritance. Do you believe any Levite went to bed hungry or had a need that was not met? (*I did not say, did they live in the lap of luxury and have everything they ever wanted.*)
8. According to Joshua 14:4, what did the Levites receive? _____
9. The inheritance for each tribe was decided by lots. The Hebrew word for lot is *gowral*, which means pebble. It was taken from an unused root word meaning, to be rough (as stone). Can you think of a modern-day action that might be similar to this decision making process?
10. Joshua 14:6-15 dealt with that faithful servant of the Lord, Caleb. Caleb was _____ years old when he was sent to spy out the land for Moses. It has been _____ years since then. This makes Caleb _____ years old at this time. What is the inheritance given to him and to his descendants?
11. What amazing and unusual fact did we see concerning Caleb (v. 11)?
12. How does Caleb plan to take the area that God has given him?

13. What did you learn about Caleb's walk of faith in this chapter?
14. Spend some time uncovering the importance of Kiriath Arba. Read the verses below, and underline any reasons this place would be considered so special.

Genesis 23:19

Afterward Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan.

Genesis 25:8-10

Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people. ⁹His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, ¹⁰the field Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.

Genesis 35:27-29

Jacob came home to his father Isaac in Mamre, near Kiriath Arba (that is Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed. ²⁸Isaac lived a hundred and eighty years. ²⁹Then he breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, old and full of years. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Genesis 49:33, 50:12-13

³³When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people... ¹²So Jacob's sons did as he had commanded them: ¹³They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite.

15. Considering what you have read about Caleb, do you see why he might have chosen this place to inherit? Why do you believe he wanted it?

Application

1. The land was given to Israel as an inheritance. Who is the original owner of this land? Who decides how the property is to be distributed for an inheritance?
2. The Israelites made a promise many years earlier in Exodus 19:8, "The people all responded together, 'we will do everything the LORD has said.'" Have you ever made a similar promise to God? Have you faithfully carried out your promise?

3. What had the Israelites promised Joshua? Look back at Joshua 1:16-17; this was a serious promise to make. Joshua was to hear from God and lead the people. Who are your spiritual leaders? How well do you follow them? When you hear the word of God, do you view it as a suggestion for better living or a specific word from the Lord to you?
4. The Levites were given an inheritance by God, but it did not look like the inheritance of the other tribes. Does it bother you when someone gets a blessing from God that is different from yours? Do you feel God is unfair, if everyone is not blessed in the exact same way?
5. The children of Israel waited a long time before they received the promise of God. How are you at waiting on God's timing?
6. The last verse of Joshua 14 says, "Then the land had rest from war." What do you believe it means to be, at rest from war? What battles has God fought on your behalf, so that you could be at rest?

Why not take a moment to thank God for at least one way he has shown himself strong on your behalf this week. Share it with a friend, then join the Psalmist and exalt His name together.

Psalms 34:1-3

I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. ²I will glory in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. ³Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

7. For generations and generations the children of Israel lived in close proximity to one another. But, when the land had been subdued, God wanted them to disperse and settle the land He had given to them. This may seem like a small thing, when you think of all they have gone through to get to this point, but leaving the comfort of their fellow Israelites would take faith and obedience. Have you ever had to make the difficult decision to follow God's call, even if it meant moving away from family and friends? Describe the challenges you faced during your obedience.
8. Age can just be a number, as we saw with Caleb. The scripture says, even at 85 years old, he was still as strong and vigorous and ready for the battles that lie ahead. Are you strong and ready for the battles that lie ahead of you? We may not be clearing actual inhabitants out of the land, but what about spiritual battles? Consider the spiritual battles you could fight on your knees, for your family, your friends, your community, or the world of lost people who do not know the truth. Who are you battling for today?