Lesson 54 – The Division of Canaan Part II

based on Joshua 14-22.

Joshua, now at rest in the Promised Land, had made great progress in conquering the land. There were pockets of resistance left that the individual tribes were to root out of the land. Caleb went up with the blessing of Joshua and took the land that was promised him from Moses.

1) How does the Bible record that?
   Joshua 15:13-14 And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to _____, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. And Caleb _____ thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.

Here had been for many years the home of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and here, in the cave of Machpelah, they were buried. Hebron was the seat of the dreaded Anakim, whose formidable appearance had so terrified the spies, and through them destroyed the courage of all Israel. This, above all others, was the place which Caleb, trusting in the strength of God, chose for his inheritance.

The cowards and rebels had perished in the wilderness, but the righteous spies ate of the grapes of Eshcol. To each was given according to his faith.

2) What problem arose during the time of the division of Canaan?
   Joshua 17:13-14 Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not _____ _____ them out. And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a _____ people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?
3) What did Joshua reply?
   Joshua 17:17-18 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great _____, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt _____ _____ the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

The request was presented by the children of Joseph, the tribe of Ephraim with the half tribe of Manasseh. In consideration of their superior numbers, these tribes demanded a double portion of territory. The lot designated for them was the richest in the land, including the fertile plain of Sharon; but many of the principal towns in the valley were still in possession of the Canaanites, and the tribes shrank from the toil and danger of conquering their possessions, and desired an additional portion in territory already subdued.

4) What was their real problem?
   Joshua 17:16 …the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of _____…

They lacked faith and courage to drive out the Canaanites.

The power of the God of Israel had been pledged to His people and had the Ephraimites possessed the courage and faith of Caleb, no enemy could have stood before them. Their evident desire to shun hardship and danger was firmly met by Joshua.

5) Where was the Tabernacle taken to reside?
   Joshua 18:1 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at _____, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.

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Heretofore Gilgal had been the headquarters of the nation and the seat of the tabernacle. But now the tabernacle was to be removed to the place chosen for its permanent location. This was Shiloh, a little town in the lot of Ephraim. It was near the center of the land and was easy of access to all the tribes. Here a portion of country had been thoroughly subdued, so that the worshipers would not be molested. The tribes that were still encamped when the tabernacle was removed from Gilgal followed it and pitched near Shiloh. Here these tribes remained until they dispersed to their possessions.

The ark remained at Shiloh for three hundred years, until, because of the sins of Eli's house, it fell into the hands of the Philistines, and Shiloh was ruined. The ark was never returned to the tabernacle here, the sanctuary service was finally transferred to the temple at Jerusalem, and Shiloh fell into insignificance. There are only ruins to mark the spot where it once stood. Long afterward its fate was made use of as a warning to Jerusalem.

6) What warning was given to future generations about Shiloh?
Jeremiah 7:12 But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the _____ of my people Israel.
Jeremiah 7:14 Therefore will I do unto this _____, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.
7) What was given to Joshua when the division of the land was final?
Joshua 19:49-50 When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them: According to the word of the LORD they gave him the _____ which he asked, even Timnathserah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

The name given to the city was Timnath-serah, "the portion that remains", a standing testimony to the noble character and unselfish spirit of the conqueror, who, instead of being the first to appropriate the spoils of conquest, deferred his claim until the humblest of his people had been served.

8) Where were the Levites to reside?
Numbers 35:11-12 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of _____ for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person at unawares. And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in _____.

This merciful provision was rendered necessary by the ancient custom of private vengeance, by which the punishment of the murderer devolved on the nearest relative or the next heir of the deceased. In cases where guilt was clearly evident it was not necessary to wait for a trial by the magistrates. The avenger might pursue the criminal anywhere and put him to death wherever he should be found. The Lord did not see fit to abolish this custom at that time, but He made provision to ensure the safety of those who should take life unintentionally.

The cities of refuge were so distributed as to be within a half day's journey of every part of the land. The roads leading to them were always to be kept in good repair; all along the way signposts were to be erected bearing the word "Refuge" in plain, bold characters, that the fleeing one might not be delayed for a moment. Any person—Hebrew, stranger, or sojourner—might avail himself of this provision. But while the guiltless were not to be rashly slain, neither were the guilty to escape punishment. The case of the fugitive was to be fairly tried by the proper authorities, and only when found innocent of intentional murder was he to be protected in the city of refuge.

9) What standard was used to verify a claim of guilt?
Matthew 18:16 …that in the mouth of _____ or _____ witnesses every word may be established.

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It was Christ who gave to Moses these directions for Israel; and when personally with His disciples on earth, as He taught them how to treat the erring, the Great Teacher repeated the lesson that one man's testimony is not to acquit or condemn. One man's views and opinions are not to settle disputed questions. In all these matters two or more are to be associated, and together they are to bear the responsibility.

The cities of refuge appointed for God's ancient people were a symbol of the refuge provided in Christ. The same merciful Saviour who appointed those temporal cities of refuge has by the shedding of His own blood provided for the transgressors of God's law a sure retreat, into which they may flee for safety from the second death. No power can take out of His hands the souls that go to Him for pardon.

10) What is our Refuge?
Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no _____ to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh _____ for us.
Hebrews 6:18 …we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for _____ to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

He who fled to the city of refuge could make no delay. Family and employment were left behind. There was no time to say farewell to loved ones. His life was at stake, and every other interest must be sacrificed to the one purpose, to reach the place of safety. Weariness was forgotten, difficulties were unheeded. The fugitive dared not for one moment slacken his pace until he was within the wall of the city.

11) What would happen if the refugee left the city of refuge?
Numbers 35:26-27 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; And the revenger of blood find him _____ the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of _____:

The sinner is exposed to eternal death, until he finds a hiding place in Christ; and as loitering and carelessness might rob the fugitive of his only chance for life, so delays and indifference may prove the ruin of the soul. Satan, the great adversary, is on the track of every transgressor of God's holy law, and he who is not sensible of his danger, and does not earnestly seek shelter in the eternal refuge, will fall a prey to the destroyer.

12) What did Paul have to say about it?
Hebrews 10:26-27 For if we sin _____ after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.
13) Who had received their land previous to the invasion of Canaan?
Joshua 13:8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, _____ Jordan _____, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them;

To a pastoral people, the wide upland plains and rich forests of Gilead and Bashan, offering extensive grazing land for their flocks and herds, had attractions which were not to be found in Canaan itself, and the two and a half tribes, desiring to settle here, had pledged themselves to furnish their proportion of armed men to accompany their brethren across the Jordan and to share their battles till they also should enter upon their inheritance. The obligation had been faithfully discharged.

14) How did they return?
Joshua 22:8 And he spake unto them, saying, _____ with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.

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They were now to dwell at a distance from the sanctuary of the Lord, and it was with an anxious heart that Joshua witnessed their departure, knowing how strong would be the temptations, in their isolated and wandering life, to fall into the customs of the heathen tribes that dwelt upon their borders.

15) What report came back to Joshua?
Joshua 22:10 And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an _____ by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

The representatives of the people assembled at Shiloh, and in the heat of their excitement and indignation proposed to make war at once upon the offenders. Through the influence of the more cautious, however, it was decided to send first a delegation to obtain from the two and a half tribes an explanation of their conduct. Ten princes, one from each tribe, were chosen. At their head was Phinehas, who had distinguished himself by his zeal in the matter of Peor.

16) What did they ask?
Joshua 22:16 Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What _____ is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD?

The ambassadors, taking it for granted that their brethren were guilty, met them with sharp rebuke. They accused them of rebelling against the Lord, and bade them remember how judgments had been visited upon Israel for joining themselves to Baalpeor. In behalf of all Israel, Phinehas stated to the children of Gad and Reuben that if they were unwilling to abide in that land without an altar for sacrifice, they would be welcome to a share in the possessions and privileges of their brethren on the other side.

17) What was their reply?
Joshua 22:26-27 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: But that it may be a _____ between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your _____ may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

In reply the accused explained that their altar was not intended for sacrifice, but simply as a witness that, although separated by the river, they were of the same faith as their brethren in Canaan. They had feared that in future years their children might be excluded from the tabernacle, as having no part in Israel. Then this altar, erected after the pattern of the altar of the Lord at Shiloh, would be a witness that its builders were also worshipers of the living God.

While very sensitive to the least blame in regard to their own course, many are too severe in dealing with those whom they suppose to be in error. No one was ever reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many are thus driven further from the right path and led to harden their hearts against conviction. A spirit of kindness, a courteous, forbearing deportment may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins.

Can you see God has bigger plans for us than we realize?

Would you like to be more like Jesus?

When is it time to prayerfully go forward in faith?

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