

Joshua 13

v1

"You have grown old and are gone far in years, and very much of the land still remains to be possessed."

- Joshua 11:23 "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses"

- There are different reasonings and arguments as to what this verse means. It would seem to be a contradiction in scripture. Joshua took the whole land! Why then is there much left to be possessed?

- On one hand we have the possession of the whole land. A Spiritual maturity in possessing the whole man, the whole character. A life of true surrender and abandonment for The Lord. A life free from habitual sin, free from fear and doubt, a life conquered for The Lord and wholly given to His service.

- On the other hand we can see that perfection has not been reached. There is still so much more to possess. There are still battles to fight, valleys to walk through, storms to weather and tests to overcome... As long as we are in this flesh and on this earth, there is still much land to possess.

- We can also consider how there is always much work left to do for The Lord. Compare Joshua's leadership to a modern-day ministry, no matter how much has been accomplished "very much... still remains" to be done. I believe we can possess our mind and character in a thorough way, by the Holy Spirit, just as Joshua did with the land, however (Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?) there will always be a battle for the secret place against our own flesh & hearts.

- The land had been taken by Joshua but must be possessed by the children of Israel. Joshua had wholly and thoroughly completed the work set out for him and now it was time to pass on the baton and to delegate responsibilities (inheritances) for the tribes. There was still much that was left for the children of Israel (the next generation) to accomplish.

v6-7

"All the inhabitants... will I drive out from before the children of Israel"

- A promise that the same God of Moses and of Joshua will continue to fight for the children of Israel. Not in part or specifics but "all the inhabitants"

"only allot the land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you."

- The inheritance of what was already won and what was yet to be conquered.

- It was Joshua who was to divide the land. They were not left to choose for themselves. This left less chance for squabbling and confusion. Each tribe was allotted an area to possess and purify.

v13

"Nevertheless the children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites, nor the... and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day."

- Even with such a precious promise... They left a part undone. There were people left in the land that were meant to be destroyed and driven out. This proves to be a hindrance and a "thorn in the side" for Israel for generations. Sin that is acknowledged and not dealt with will be a constant curse and downfall in our lives.

- Why is this mentioned now? We are told that Joshua "took the whole land" so why is this oversight mentioned here?

v14 & 33

"Only to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the sacrifices made by fire to the Lord, the God of Israel, are their inheritance"

"the Lord, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He told them."

- Levi received/inherited no land. None of the land could be called theirs. They were not to claim it.

- Levi received the far greater inheritance! Levi received The Lord! A holy, separated calling unto The Lord himself. A people set apart to The Lord.

- They were not to concern themselves with the everyday tasks of agriculture, warfare, politics etc... They were set apart for religious leadership, teaching and preservation. They were to live to serve The Lord.

- We could perhaps see a Spiritual "type" here of a people who are set apart unto The Lord. There are many in the promised land. Many who can call themselves The Lord's but there are a minority who are truly set apart to His worship, service, seeking and teaching.

- We could also compare this to the early church...

- *Acts 6:2-4 So the Twelve [apostles] convened the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not seemly or desirable or right that we should have to give up or neglect [preaching] the Word of God in order to attend to serving at tables and superintending the distribution of food. [3] Therefore select out from among yourselves, brethren, seven men of good and attested character and repute, full of the [Holy] Spirit and wisdom, whom we may assign to look after this business and duty. [4] But we will continue to devote ourselves steadfastly to prayer and the ministry of the Word.*

- Some are set apart as their role/position necessitates it and some are set apart from a desire/love for The Lord.

- This separation should not be a cause for division or conflict. It is something that a people are called to and they should go with great humility into the work. Other's should respect and admire the calling and seek to provide for them in the way.