

The Weekly Word
January 23-29, 2017

We continue our walk with Joshua this week. Happy reading...
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

Monday, January 23: Joshua 15- Individually known...

Each tribe received their own inheritance. Chapter 15 is the inheritance of Judah. The thought of individual inheritances sparked my thinking.

Within the overall inheritance for the people of Israel, Judah received her own special allotment. With forethought the Lord gave Judah the land He had in mind for her. And isn't that how God treats all of His children. God gives to each of us precisely the gifts He wants us to have. These gifts allow us to do the things God has for us to do and be the kind of people God wants us to be.

God knows us individually and His gifts are chosen just for us.

Do you know the gifts God has given to you? If so are you using them for His honor and glory???

Thank You, Lord for the gifts You have given me. I pray that I am using them to bring You honor and glory. Through Jesus Christ my Lord's name I pray. Amen.

Tuesday, January 24: Joshua 16- Am I lazy with my inheritance?...

They did not dislodge the Canaanites living in Gezer; to this day the Canaanites live among the people of Ephraim but are required to do forced labor (10).

I wondered about this sentence. Did it represent laziness or outright disobedience? By leaving Canaanites in the Land, Israel ran the risk of becoming religiously polluted and drawn away from the Lord by the Canaanite practices. Whether these particular people actually helped lead Israel astray I do not know. But I do know that Israel was led astray by many foreign religious practices.

Making them forced labor sounds like a helpful compromise, but was it a compromise from what God instructed? I think so... And compromise from the instructions of the Lord is disobedience.

I wonder if I compromise on some of the gifts and inheritances God gives to me? I wonder if I am lazy about using the gifts and inheritances the Lord gives to me?

Hmmm... some worthy thoughts to ponder and consider as I go about my day today.

Pierce my heart with Your truth, O Lord. Truth about Your greatness, love and mission and truth about me as Your child. Show me where I need to grow and mature as Your son, Lord. I pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

Wednesday, January 25: Joshua 17- A surprise allotment...

In the patriarchal world of its time, Joshua following the Lord's lead made a surprising ruling. *Now Zelophehad ... had no sons but only daughters, whose names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah and Tirzah. They went to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our relatives." So*

Joshua gave them an inheritance along with the brothers of their father, according to the LORD's command. (3-4; see Numbers 27 for more history and the Lord's ruling on this).

The Lord reiterates what He spoke to Moses. These daughters were to have an inheritance.

I realize this unique exception does not mean all daughters were equal with sons in inheritance law, but still I cannot ignore how revolutionary and counter-cultural this ruling was.

In literature this could be considered a foreshadowing... in the New Testament Paul under the leading of the Lord writes *So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:26-29).*

God sees a human heart, not which color, gender or human status the body it is in holds.

Lord, give me Your eyes as I see people. I pray in Jesus name. Amen

Thursday, January 26: Joshua 18- Gift and responsibility...

So Joshua said to the Israelites: "How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you? Appoint three men from each tribe. I will send them out to make a survey of the land and to write a description of it, according to the inheritance of each. Then they will return to me (3-4).

The Lord gave Israel an incredible inheritance... the Promised Land. God hand brought them in. God's hand gave them victory... the Land was gift.

But along with the gift comes responsibility. This responsibility plays itself out in many and different ways throughout our walk of faith. Israel it seems lost initiative. They were waiting for the silver platter rather than seizing the Land the Lord had given them. Through Joshua's words God seems to be spurring Israel on to take initiative and step into the promise the Lord gave.

As I ponder this there is a fine line in the dance of cooperation with the Lord. As believers we need to press into every gift the Lord gives... work at it, grab hold of it, and use it to God's glory of course. But then again, we don't want to run ahead of God into places and uses for which God has not prepared or called us.

It is owning our salvation but understanding it is gift. (Work out your salvation with fear and trembling Philippians 2:12)

It is seeking to advance the gospel, but always listing for God's open and closed doors (see Paul's call to Macedonia, Acts 16)

It was taking the Land but remembering it was by God's power not their own.

Every gift of God comes with responsibility to use it and to use it by faith following the constant lead of the Lord through open and closed doors.

Am I taking responsibility for my salvation? Am I working at and for my spiritual growth... all the while understanding that God shows the increase?

Hmmm things tot think about. How about you???

Lord, guide me in the dance of following You. To have the constant faith to listen and follow while having the hutzpab to go for it... I pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Friday, January 27: Joshua 19- Every tribe an inheritance...

Every tribe received an inheritance. The Lord skipped no one.

I thought the same is true to this day. Every believer receives an inheritance. This side of eternity every one of us who follows Jesus receives the Holy Spirit and along with Him spiritual gifts through which we can serve our Lord by serving people in the world. And on the other side of eternity, we receive life with Him for eternity.

Question is, 'will I develop the inheritance I have been given?'

Israel was given land but they had to develop it. There were some cities and town but Israel had to develop the rest, build roads, more cities, plant vineyards and tend all of it. Inheritance is given but we need to maintain it and make the most from it.

Am I maintaining and making the most of the inheritances I have been given?

Are you?

Think about it, I am...

Lord, I am Yours... my life, my breath, my gifts, my abilities, my body, my limitations, my frailties... I am Yours. I place myself at Your disposal. Use me Lord for Your honor and glory. Amen.

Saturday, January 28: Joshua 20- ...

Cities of refuge are a powerful concept. In life stuff happens and sometimes the stuff is an accident. Should a person die because of an accident? Most of us from a neutral non-involved position would say, NO.

I believe God thinks so too. So He set up Cities of Refuge. In a rough and tumble world where the next of kin could exact punishment for a bodily harm crime up to 'an eye for an eye' God establish safe towns. Cities of Refuge were towns where fugitives who believed themselves innocent could flee until a neutral assembly studied the case and gave a judgment.

Another great stroke of justice God established in Israel...

My pondering turned on the above sentence and I began thinking about the Lord and His pension for justice and His character of love and mercy and grace.

The Lord is the great God... and I sat marveling at His greatness and His character.

Lord, I am so blessed to know You, to have had my eyes opened to the wonder of who You are. To have had my heart strangely warmed to You.

Thank You for opening my eyes and opening my heart to Your person, Your way, Your love. I pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

Sunday, January 29, 2017, Sunday Worship

If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.

If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at office@pcogonline.org.

Click [here](#) for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.