



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

Week 13, Day 1 --- Joshua 12-15

Week 13, Day 2 --- Joshua 16-18

Week 13, Day 3 --- Joshua 19-21

Week 13, Day 4 --- Joshua 22-24

Week 13, Day 5 --- Judges 1-2

Week 13, Day 6 --- Judges 3-5

Week 13, Day 7 --- Judges 6-7

Day 1 --- Joshua 12-15

It seems to me that Joshua has aged while Caleb still has not. Remember that these were the only two Israelite men over 20 who survived the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Maybe the burden of leadership has aged Joshua the way it ages all leaders. The Promised Land had boundaries, just like our lives. God blessed the Israelites, but He also set limits. They conquered much of the land, enough to get comfortable, but then they didn't finish the job.

Day 2 --- Joshua 16-18

This section describes the process for dividing up the lands to the tribes. Each of the tribes stopped far short of what God intended and had promised. You can see signs of trouble coming for the future. Ephraim and Manasseh were the two largest and most powerful tribes. When Joshua told them that they could have more land simply by going out and conquering it they responded in fear.

- What were these two tribes forgetting if they were discouraged by iron chariots?
- What do you think will happen as a result of not completing what God asked them to do?

Day 3 --- Joshua 19-21

This section of scripture is always hard to read. It just seems like a list of unpronounceable names. What is amazing is that some of the cities still exist so there are some clues that can be taken from these lists to get an idea of how the land was distributed. Here's what I noticed. I know that Simeon is one of the tribes that becomes a part of the Northern Kingdom. Their allotment of land was the most southern portion of the land. I'm going to be watching now to see if there is any indication as to when they move from the south to the north and give up their land.

The cities of refuge were extremely important. There was no police force in these days, but there was a justice system. It would be very difficult for the family and friends of a victim to provide a fair trial, so God has the accused run to a town where the elders can give an objective judgment. God also knows how difficult it is for us to forgive, so he has the accused remain away even when innocent to reduce the temptation for the family of the victim to take revenge.

Joshua 21:43-45 is a very important set of verses. God kept His promise and the Israelites had a land of their own.

Day 4 --- Joshua 22-24

The concept of one God and one place to worship God was very unusual at this time. Most of the peoples of the earth worshiped idols. Their idols were wood, stone, or precious metal images of multiple gods. They had these in their houses and many times on the hills near their towns. When the western tribes heard that the eastern tribes had built an altar they were afraid that the eastern tribes had very quickly deserted God to follow their own gods. They understood their agreement with God and knew that He would destroy them all if this was the case.

The people want to do things right. They fear God, but don't understand His love for them. We need both. If we see God only as powerful and holy we will eventually rebel even if we are punished. If we see God only as loving and forgiving then we will eventually ignore Him and do whatever we want. God is all of these things. He is truth and grace in one person. Truth sets the boundaries and grace makes it desirable to live within them. The people of Israel have a choice and Joshua once again presents it.

The recording of this choice process may be shorter than it was with Moses, but Joshua basically goes through the same process with the Israelites before he dies. He renews the covenant and as long as the leaders of his generation are alive the people keep it.

- What is the most significant promise that you have made, but not kept?
- Why didn't you keep it?

Day 5 --- Judges 1-2

The first couple of chapters of Judges overlap with the end of Joshua and are a review. This review gives us a little better understanding into why the land was not totally conquered. The people begin to worship other gods just as God had predicted. God in His goodness presented the possibility of eliminating the evil. Instead, the people immerse themselves in evil. The book of Judges is going to show the consequences of this choice over and over.

The city of Jerusalem is mentioned twice in the first chapter. On the surface it seems that the tribe of Judah completely destroys it, and then we are told that the tribe of Benjamin fails to conquer it. We know that Jerusalem was not completely captured and controlled until much later in the reign of King David. Jerusalem was on the border between Judah and Benjamin. It is most likely that Judah was able to conquer the portion of the city lying in their territory, but that Benjamin failed to complete the task.

- Why do you think the people so quickly turned to idols?
- How do you respond when someone doesn't quickly give you what you want?

Day 6 --- Judges 3-5

You might have gotten the impression that women never did anything significant in the Bible. The story of Deborah should change that impression. The pattern you see in these chapters will repeat itself over and over again. The people are tested and they fail the test. They make bad choices and suffer the consequences. Eventually, the consequences are so severe that they cry out to God. God sends a hero to save them. However, notice that their salvation always comes in cooperation with God. After the battle there is peace for a time. Forty years would have been about one generation. It is a rare thing when the peace lasts for multiple generations. In Deborah's song you can see that the rivalry between

the tribes is very apparent. King Saul and King David will eventually pull the tribes together, but only for a very brief time.

- What do you learn about God from these chapters?

Day 7 --- Judges 6-7

This section includes the story of Gideon. It is a favorite children's Bible story, but we only tell the positive parts. The story doesn't begin very well and ends very badly. The constantly repeated phrase in this book is "the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord". When they repented and they had a really good judge then they were blessed with 40 years of peace. I think there are two lessons from this section. First, God wants us to choose Him and He won't force us to do that. Second, He is strong enough to defeat all enemies. He can even use cowards like Gideon.

- What does Gideon know about God before the battle?
- How much does Gideon trust God before the battle?
- How would you expect Gideon to act after God gives the Israelites a great victory?