

Message #32

Joshua 19:1-9

As we have been going through Joshua, we have been seeing and learning many things:

- 1) God wants us to have victory. He wants us to experience His blessings. He does not want us just crossing the Jordan; He wants us experiencing His great blessings.
- 2) No matter what one's background or personality, God can still use and bless.
- 3) God demands obedience if we are to experience His rich and full blessings.
- 4) God demands that we fight a good war if we are to experience His full blessings. It is our responsibility to spot enemies, fight enemies and defeat them.
- 5) God does not want us living on old past victories. He wants us to go on to new present and future victories.

These are just some of the great lessons we see in this book of Joshua. We are now in the time of distribution of the land. Each tribe who went into the Promised Land was given a specific land to live in, to develop and to enjoy.

God took a Personal interest in every one of the Tribes of Israel and He saw to it that they were placed exactly where He wanted them to be placed. They were rough people who were being molded by Him and He put each of them where they needed to be. As we come to this text, we come to the distribution of the land to Simeon. There is a profound lesson to be learned:

GOD PUTS HIS PEOPLE EXACTLY WHERE HE WANTS THEM TO BE AND GIVES TO HIS PEOPLE EXACTLY WHAT THEY NEED IN COMPLETE CONFORMITY TO HIS WORD, AND HIS PEOPLE CAN EXPERIENCE GREAT VICTORY AND BLESSINGS RIGHT WHERE GOD HAS PUT THEM.

God is sovereign in our world. He has us exactly where He wants us and He wants us to be faithful to Him. He does not esteem quitters. His people do not need to go somewhere else to experience victory. His people do not need big numbers to experience victory. That is a lesson we need to learn.

God is sovereign and He has us where He wants us right now. God expects us to fight a good fight and have victory right where He has us. We are not who we are or where we are by chance. We are who we are and where we are by the sovereignty of God.

Now everything God will do He will do in precise conformity to His Word. As we come to chapter 19, we learn from **verse 1** that the second lot fell to Simeon.

Now we may recall that after the Tabernacle had been set up, Joshua said it is time for the rest of the tribes to get their inheritance. Some of them were just content with where they were and had no interest or zeal to move forward.

So Joshua sent 21 men from the remaining seven tribes to survey the land and when they got back seven month later, he decided by lot to divvy it up. The first lot fell to Benjamin and the second lot fell to Simeon.

Actually in the big scheme of things, Simeon is the eighth tribe to receive her land. The chronology of land distribution so far is:

- 1) Reuben (Joshua 13:15-23) - east of Jordan
- 2) Gad (Joshua 15:16-28) - east of Jordan
- 3) Half-tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 15:29-31) - east of Jordan
- 4) Judah (Joshua 15:1-63) - west of Jordan
- 5) Ephraim (Joshua 16:1-10) - west of Jordan
- 6) Half-tribe of Manasseh (Joshua 17:1-17) - west of Jordan
- 7) Benjamin (Joshua 18:11-28) - west of Jordan
- 8) Simeon (Joshua 19:1-9) - west of Jordan

Why God waits until now to give Simeon land, only God knows. But God put Simeon right where He wanted him and He did when the time was right and He did it in full conformity to His Word.

Now in analyzing these nine verses, there are four historical realities we want to bring out:

HISTORICAL REALITY #1 – The history of Simeon.

Simeon was the second son of Jacob by Leah (Gen. 29:33). We may recall that Jacob was tricked by his uncle Laban into marrying Leah, when he was really in love with Rachel. Leah was kind of a sickly looking woman whose eyes didn't look too healthy (Gen. 29:17). Rachel, on the other hand, was a beauty both in form and face and Jacob wanted Rachel (Gen. 29:18).

He worked for seven years to get her and then Laban put on a big feast, got Jacob drunk and switched girls, giving him Leah instead of Rachel (Gen. 29:22-25). So Jacob worked another seven years for Rachel. He never loved Leah like he did Rachel and Leah knew this and as a result, God gave her Simeon (Gen. 29:33).

Here is the point of all of this—**you do not have to come from the perfect home setting to be greatly used by God or to be greatly blessed by God or to end up with a great inheritance.**

Sometimes you will hear someone say they have the perfect relationship. That is hogwash. There is no such thing as a perfect relationship, because we are sinful people. Any relationship that has two finite sinful people in it takes work. There is no perfect relationship.

You do not need to have a perfect pedigree, where mother or father never spoke a disparaging word to each other or where there was total harmonious bliss in the marriage. Simeon is proof of that. You do not have to have a perfect relationship with God to be blessed of God.

You may come from a background that is a mess. Your mother may have loved someone other than your father or your father may have loved someone other than your mother. That does not mean your life is any less important. In fact, God ordained your life and He can use your life and bless your life. The proof is Simeon.

HISTORICAL REALITY #2 – The prediction given to Simeon. Genesis 49:5-7

When it came time for Jacob (Israel) to die, he called his sons together to give them his blessings. Jacob made a prediction concerning Simeon and his family:

- 1) They would be great warriors (Gen. 49:5). They were good fighters (I Chron. 4:24, 41-43).
- 2) They would be quick-tempered (Gen. 49:6-7). God will use this quick temper for His purposes.
- 3) They are self-willed (Gen. 49:6).
- 4) They would receive an inheritance within an inheritance (49:7).

In other words, they would not get their own land per se, but would receive an inheritance within another's inheritance. You may have somewhat of an ugly personality. That does not mean God cannot use you or that he will not bless you or give you an inheritance.

When we move the clock forward to the time of Joshua and come to the distribution of the land, we discover this is exactly what happened. **There are no boundary descriptions given of the land to Simeon, only cities.**

Those cities, which Simeon received, were cities in the midst of Judah's inheritance (Josh. 19:9). In fact, they inherited the cities in the southern part of Judah (15:26-32; 15:42).

In precise conformity to the Word of God and the predictions of God, He literally fulfilled this prophecy in the distribution of the land.

Now God knew that Judah would help stabilize the temper of Simeon, so God put Simeon exactly where he needed to be.

God knows what we need even better than we do. He will give us exactly what we need and what He gives us will always be in complete conformity to His Word. Furthermore, we see that God fulfills prophecy literally. When God promises something, you may be certain that even though there may be a great gap of years that prophecy will be literally fulfilled.

HISTORICAL REALITY #3 – The cities given to Simeon. **19:1-9**

There are 13 cities given to Simeon in **verses 2-6** and 4 cities given to Simeon in **verse 7**. So the total number of cities given to Simeon is 17.

At the first census in the book of Numbers there were 59,300 warriors (Num. 1:23), but by the time the second census was taken, that number had dwindled to 22,200 (Num. 26:14).

By using this second number we may assume that each main city would contain slightly over 1300 warriors and the villages would easily give enough room for them and their families.

God knew exactly how much this family needed. He provided for Simeon in a very precise way. She was not big or impressive, but she did receive plenty from God.

Irving Jensen says that this land is flat and has a lot of desert country. We know from I Chronicles 4:24ff. that there was some good pasture land in this land (I Chron. 4:39) and we also know that this land was filled with the Amalekites (I Chron. 4:43).

By putting the quick-tempered, fast-fighting group of Simeon right here, they could easily see enemies coming across the flat land and fight them.

HISTORICAL REALITY #4 – The warfare of Simeon.

The next O.T. book of the Bible, after Joshua, is Judges. Judges opens with some interesting information about Simeon (Judges 1:3). Judah needed Simeon's help to fight the Canaanites. Judah contacted Simeon and Simeon responded and Judah experienced great victory and so did Simeon (Judges 1:4, 17).

It is interesting that some who have traveled to the Middle East to this area in southern Judah say that there are still some Simeonites, who are there who have no connection to the Arabs. They actually claim they have descended from the group in I Chron. 4:24-43.

What this teaches us is that God put Simeon right here at this time for this purpose. God knew where Simeon needed to be and He knew where Judah needed to be and their warfare turned out to be one of the great highlights of the book of Judges.

The distribution of this land to Simeon teaches us that God puts His people exactly where they need to be at just the time they need to be there. He does not want them to run; He wants them to fight a good war and experience His blessings in full conformity to His Word.

With all of your hang-ups and pet quirks and personality disorders, God can lead you to His blessings if you will follow Him. That is the story of Simeon.