

Let us begin the sixteenth lecture on Joshua. / We will examine chapter 18. / God gave the land of Canaan to the Israelites. / They arrived there and set up the tent of meeting there to serve God.

/God put Joshua in charge of distributing the land. / Verse 1 says, "The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there."

/Please read verse 1. / *The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there. The country was brought under their control,*

/They entered in the land of Canaan and set up the tent of meeting to serve God. /The Israelites were guided by God all along their exodus. / Now that they are in the Promised Land, they set up the tent of meeting to serve God.

/Seven tribes have yet to receive their lands. / But more important for them was serving God. / Since it was the period before the construction of the temple, they built the tent of meeting to serve Him there.

/They have been moving with the tent of meeting wherever they went. / Shiloh is a city centered with religion, politics, military, and governance. / We can learn something very important here. / It is that blessed people are to live a church-centered life.

/We should live a church-centered life to properly serve God. / Not only church-centered life, but God-centered / and Bible-centered life. / Thus one of the important aspects of a believer / is living a church-centered life.

/This is why the members of the early church strived to gather together every day. / They gathered in the name of Jesus / and praised God / and learned His words through the mouth of His servants. / They all came and prayed together.

/In order for a church to be healthy today, we should not be lazy in convening. / Truly one of the most important things for us believers / is service-centered life. / The success of service is success of our life. / Today, regenerated believers should consider service as the most important part of their lives.

/We should meet God through our service / and determine to devote ourselves for Him in every service. / But the Scripture says that people hardly meet with one another during the Last Days. /But we born-again believers should live a church-centered life.

/It is very important that we meet together with God in the center. / People today do not try to go to church. / But we should go to church and serve Him. / We should have fellowship with one another in love, just like the members of the early church.

/The Israelites came together and set up the tent of meeting. / The seven tribes have not received their lands yet. / If they acted based on their human logic, they would have tried to take the land first.

/But they first set up the tent of meeting and served God. / And those who live a God-centered life/ and who are faithful to His grace are never forgotten by God.

/What did they decide in the tent of meeting? / They must have determined to serve the Lord. / Those who are devoted to live for God / are never abandoned by Him.

/They set up the tent of meeting and chose to worship God first. / If we look at the traits of successful people today, / we can know that they have priorities in life. / What should be the priority of believers?

/We ought to ponder what should come first before anything else. / God should come first before anything else / and we should begin with worship and prayer. / This is why the first day of the week is Sunday, the Lord's Day.

/We come together and serve Him in the Lord's Day, / and we give the first day of the week to Him and start the week. / We should also give the early hour to God as well.

/We should start the day with morning prayer, / just like how we start the week with the Lord's Day. / Even in our earnings, / we should offer Him tithe and use the rest wisely.

/Whether it be time, / day, / or material, / we must serve Him first. We then can receive blessing from God. / In Matthew chapter 6, / Jesus told us to not worry about what we will eat, / drink, / or wear.

/He said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." / The first we should do is serving God as our Master / and serving Him well. / His Kingdom should be the focus of our life.

/When Jesus said that we should first seek the righteousness of God, He meant that obedient life to His words should be the first in our life. / Obeying His words is the righteous life. / In anything that we do, it should be good in the eyes of God. / We can be blessed when we serve Him well just like how the Israelites set up the tent of meeting.

/Next in verses 2-10, Joshua appointed three men in each tribe to survey the land. / The seven tribes have not taken the land yet. / In verse 3, Joshua rebuked the people to quickly take the land God has promised to give them.

*/Verse 3. / 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?"*

/God rebuked the seven tribes through Joshua. / "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?" / We should strive to take what God has given us.

/They can take the land after they win the battle against the people living there. / The same goes for us today. Our territory will be expanded once we are victorious in our good fights. / The Israelites should strive to acquire the land God promised to them.

/But they were waiting because they were afraid. / Seeing this, God rebuked them through Joshua. / Joshua's reproach is God's reproach.

/Sometimes God reprimands us through the words shared in our church / or

through the Holy Spirit. / Sometimes He does so through our good conscience.

/Sometimes He does through His servants. / Blessed are those who take heart of the reproaches. / For what did He reproach the Israelites? / They were supposed to take the land.

/But they were lazy, / and they were enjoying their comforts. / They had no heart to fight for something. / We should fix our gaze upon God's promise and do our best continuously.

/We should listen to the words of reproach of God today. / Laziness is evil. / Getting lukewarm is something God would rebuke us for. / We should examine our heart today to see whether there is something to be corrected in us.

/Let us hear the words of God every day / and correct what needs to be corrected, / moving forward as we look at His promise. / Our Lord reproaches us at the right time.

/Does He rebuke us because He hates us? / Does He do so in order to punish us? / He reprimands us because He loves us and because He wants us to live a good life. / He reproached the Israelites, "Why are you waiting, not taking the land I promised to give?"

/We should not remain stagnant in our place. / Everyday, our faith has to grow / towards maturity. / We should work hard every day with our gaze fixed at His promise. / Why did the Israelites delay in taking the land?

/That was because they were afraid of the Canaanites. / They were asking themselves, "Can we really win against the Canaanites?" / Instead of giving their ears to human thoughts, /if they listen to the promise of God, they can be victorious and take the land.

/No matter how strong the enemy seems, / they can take it since God allowed it. / So let us not be afraid of our circumstance or enemy. / Let us trust Him. / Everything that He allowed it to happen will take place.

/God left the land of Canaan in the hands of the enemies temporarily, / but now He took it and promised to give it to the Israelites. / They can take it when they obey with faith.

/No matter how strong the Canaanites are, / they can defeat them because God allowed it. / God is not requiring them to ask for the sake of their greed. / He ordered them to take the land because it was promised since the time of Abraham.

/The strength of the Canaanites does not matter in the battle / because God promised to give the land to the Israelites. / This is the reason why we do not have to look at our circumstances. / We simply have to look at His promise / and God while moving forward. Then we can win. / Next in verses 4-6, the land was distributed after three men from each tribe were sent to survey the land.

*/Verse 4. / 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.*

/Each tribe appointed three men to survey the land. / They were asked to write a description of it. / This was to see what the land was like. / How will they fairly distribute the land God promised?

/Joshua sent three men from each tribe to figure out what the lands were like. /How did they distribute the land?

*/Verse 6. / After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God.*

/God told through Joshua to write descriptions of the seven parts of the land and bring them here. / Joshua then drew lots to divide the land. / God's command is / for our own good. / Why should we obey His words?

/God did not give His commands to burden us / nor to oppress us. / He asks us to obey His words to bless us.

/They were to draw seven parts of the land, / so that God can distribute the best lands. / No matter how strong the Canaanites are, / obedience to His words will bring victory to take the land.

/We are saved through our faith in Jesus. / But we saved believers receive blessing by obeying His words. / When we obey His words, /God will drive out our enemies / and give us the Promise Land.

/Today, if we obey His word, / it will come true / and we will receive the promise. / We get closer to knowing Him, / and His words become our fruit. / This is why the lands were fairly distributed by drawing lots. / But no land was given to the Levites.

*/Verse 7. / The Levites, however, do not get a portion among you, because the priestly service of the LORD is their inheritance. And Gad, Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan. Moses the servant of the LORD gave it to them."*

/The verse says, "the Levites, however, do not get a portion among you." / Why? / The Levites are the priests in the Lord's temple.

/If they serve Him well in the temple, / they can live on with the offerings of other tribes brought to the Lord. / They do not have any inheritance because God is their inheritance. / He is the source of all blessings, / ruler of everything, / and master of the universe.

/Thus, God fills every need / of the obedient servants. / Even though the Levites had nothing, / if they obey His words well / and serve Him faithfully, He will take care of their needs.

/In the New Testament, all of the believers are priests. / We can go before God on our own and serve Him. / Just like the Old Testament, God blesses those who serve Him faithfully.

/God does not forget those who live God-centered life. / No matter how hardworking a man is, he won't be successful without His blessing. / All of the

believers are priests. / As priests, we should serve Him well.

/We should be loyal and serving to God. / He will take care of our needs when we faithfully serve Him. / Thus it is said in the Scripture not to muzzle an ox that is treading out the grain.

/Who will provide for the hardworking ox? / The owner does. / The owner gives food to the ox / and provides comfortable shelter. / And in winter, he places a haystack that is weaved together on its back to warm the animal.

/We are His servants. / We are His holy people, His children. / Thus, when we serve Him faithfully, / work for Him, / and live in faith, He will never forget us.

/Even if we do not have much money / or even though we do not own any piece of land, / God will provide our needs when we live by faith.

/The Israelites obeyed the commands God gave them through Joshua. / In verses 8-10, / the lands that were distributed after they drew lots are mentioned.

*/Verse 8. / As the men started on their way to map out the land, Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land and write a description of it. Then return to me, and I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD."*

/Joshua told the people to bring what they wrote. / Then he started to distribute the land in Shiloh. / He said, "I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD." / Why did he say he is going to do so in front of the Lord?

/To do it right before God. / To not deceive anyone but to do it honestly before God. / We can never deceive the Lord. / We may deceive humans, / but not God.

/This is the reason why we should do everything before God. / We should ask questions like, "Is this right before God?" / "Is it wrong?" / We should always be mindful of His presence and live as though He is right before us.

/The people obeyed Joshua's words. / Just as he commanded. / We should also obey when God commands us through His servants.

*/Verse 10. / Joshua then cast lots for them in Shiloh in the presence of the LORD, and there he distributed the land to the Israelites according to their tribal divisions.*

/Joshua drew lots and distributed the land, just as God commanded. / Why cast lots? / To find out His will. / The people in the Old Testament at times used to cast lots to find out His will.

/But not today. / These days, God reveals His will / through our sincere prayer. / Then we can walk the path God wants us to walk.

/The people will trust in His sovereignty / once they receive their land after the lots are casted. /It is said that casting lots is in the hands of humans, but its result is in God's hands. / They are not to blame, / "Why did He give us such lands?" after they received the land.

/They should believe that the lands are given by Him. / When we trust in His sovereignty, everything will be easy. / Not believing in His sovereignty / causes

conflicts among people.

/Another reason Joshua casted lots / is to prevent them from taking the land out of their own greed. / We should learn to get rid of our greed and always live a content life before God.

/We should trust that the place God allowed us to be is the best place. / Psalms 16:6. / So there is no need to compare ourselves with other people.

/In verses 11-20, / we can read about the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.

*/Verse 11. / The first lot came up for the tribe of Benjamin according to its clans. Their allotted territory lay between the tribes of Judah and Joseph:*

/The first lot came up for the Benjamin tribe, which was distributed according to its clans. / Where was their territory? / It was between the tribes of Judah and Joseph. / Why did He give such a land to the Benjamin tribe?

/This was a fulfillment of His words spoken in the past. / He said in Deuteronomy chapter 33 / and Genesis chapter 49. / He said it through Jacob's blessing / and prophesied it through Moses.

/It happened just as God said. / Why did He set such borders? / It was not to cross to other borders. / God meant them to live in the land He provided

/This teaches us that we should live our best, faithfully in our place. / There are places meant for us. / Even in our churches, God has ordained places for everyone.

/In verses 24-28, we can read about the towns and villages of the tribe of Benjamin.

*/Verse 24. / Kephrah Ammoni, Ophni and Geba—twelve towns and their villages.*

/The names of the towns and villages are recorded here. / Why? / To illustrate that the Bible is not a myth or legend, / but fact and true.

/The Bible is historical. / It records true events the Israelites experienced. / Thus, the authors wrote every inheritance God gave, without any exceptions. / In verse 28, it says, "This was the inheritance of Benjamin for its clans."

*/Verse 28. / Zelah, Haeleph, the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah and Kiriath—fourteen towns and their villages. This was the inheritance of Benjamin for its clans.*

/It is written, "This was the inheritance of Benjamin for its clans." / God's inheritance is very important. / Even a little position in our church is the inheritance He gave. / Therefore, we should not think less of any position we may have in our church.

/We should faithfully do our best in our given job. / We can possess His eternal inheritance as much as our obedience to His words. / His words are eternal.

/I will now end the sixteenth lecture on Joshua. / Thank you.