

Let us begin the eighteenth lecture on Joshua. / The word for today comes from chapter 21. / This chapter is about the Levites receiving towns. / No land was given to them like the other tribes, but only towns.

/Their inheritance is God and they are to be loyal to the temple. Although He did not give them lands, He gave towns and pasturelands instead. /In verses 1-2, the Levites asked for their towns.

*/Please read verse 1. / Now the family heads of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the other tribal families of Israel*

/The Levites asked Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun for towns. / Eleazar was a priest, a spiritual leader, while Joshua was a political one. / In verse 2, we can read that they were asking for what God promised to give them.

*/Verse 2. / at Shiloh in Canaan and said to them, "The LORD commanded through Moses that you give us towns to live in, with pasturelands for our livestock."*

/"Give us towns to live in, with pasturelands for our livestock," they requested. / They were justly asking for what God promised to give them. /They were asking for what was promised to them.

/We should not ask according to our selfishness when we are asking for something. / We need to find out where His will is, then ask accordingly. / God does not answer our prayers when we ask out of selfish desires.

/We need to remember what He told us and ask accordingly. / Then He will surely grant our request. / Here, the Levites were not asking out of their selfish wants. / They were not trying to fill up their greed. / They asked what God promised to give them.

/God will grant our requests when we ask Him justly. / In verses 3-7, the towns were given after Joshua casted lots. / All of the portions of the land of Canaan were taken by other tribes already. / This is why the Levites were given towns that are within the land of other tribes.

*/Verse 3. / So, as the LORD had commanded, the Israelites gave the Levites the following towns and pasturelands out of their own inheritance:*

/The Israelites obeyed the Lord's command very well. / They gave the towns and pasturelands to the Levites out of their own inheritance. / If the Israelites were selfish, they would not have gave the towns to the Levites. / They let go of their selfishness to obey His command.

/Moreover, they loved their brothers by heart. / They were ready to sacrifice to obey His commands. /We also need to get rid of our greed first if we want to share with and give to others.

/The reason God gave us much today is for us to give much to others. / Why did God give us much grace and blessings to us again? / It is not for us to fill up our greed.

/He gave us much, so we can share much. / The greedy ones cannot share what they have with others. / But some at times sacrifice everything to obey His command.

/Our obedience to His command is not a loss because God will give us more grace and blessing. / This is why we need to learn to cast away of our selfish desires to obey His will / and to sacrifice ourselves.

/Next in verse 4, they casted lots. / Why? / Because otherwise people would try to grab the towns by their own greed. /They casted lots so that distribution will go according to the will of God.

/They casted lots not for their greed. / They did so to find out His will and obey it. / They were ready to believe that the results out of the lots are His will, whether the towns are bad or not.

/Our God is absolutely sovereign. / The results of the lots are in His hands. / We need to believe that all of the things are happening in our life because God allowed them to happen.

/He is the master of history / and human life. /The country we live in / and the place we live are all determined by God. /Therefore, the Levites were to take the results as God's will and give thanks to Him.

/Verses 4-5, the first lot came out for the descendants of Aaron. / They are the family of priests. / Why them first? /They had the duty to offer sacrifices in the temple of God.

/They had the special calling to prioritize God above all else/ and bless the people. / Today, we can receive blessings from God when we live a church-oriented life. / All the things that we do for the Lord never go to waste.

/He is going to repay our devotion and sacrifice to God with the best blessing. / The descendants of Aaron received the best towns. / Thus, when we serve our church / and live a church-centered life, / God will meet all of our needs abundantly.

/The descendants of Gershon received 13 towns, as written in verse 6. / Even though Gershon was the firstborn, / the younger one Kohath received the allotment first. / Why was this the case? / The descendants of Kohath were faithful in serving God.

/It is very precious to worship God. / God gave priority to those who served Him faithfully. / It is the same in our churches today. / God is a God of righteousness.

/God lets us reap what we sow. / He pays according to the work we have done, / according to the degree of our loyalty. / After Gershon, the descendants of Merari received the towns, just as written in verse 7.

/The descendants of Merari were in charge of taking care of the panels, foundations, and utensils of the temple in the wilderness. / They were in charge of taking all of the utensils in the temple.

/From verses 8-42, the names of 48 towns the Levites received are recorded. / God allowed them 48 towns. / But they did not take them for their selfish wants.

*/Verse 8. / So the Israelites allotted to the Levites these towns and their pasturelands, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.*

/They obeyed God who commanded through Moses. / God appointed leaders and led the people. / Then the leaders obeyed His command and distributed the towns and pasturelands faithfully and accurately.

/Obeying the commands of Moses was the same as obeying God. /The lands were clearly distributed because God is faithful. / In verses 7-26, the Kohath descendants received the towns.

/All the towns and pasturelands that were given to the descendants of Kohath are recorded in verses 7-26. / Truly God distributed in an accurate way. / If the other tribes were selfish, they would not have been able to give the towns to the Levites. / This is why we need to empty our greed before obeying His will.

/The greedy ones in the world / cannot obey His will. / We need to put our hope in God / and live an obedient life to His commands. / If other tribes were self-seeking, they would not have willed to give the towns / to the Levites when they asked for it.

/Everything in this world belongs to God. / Everything was entrusted to us just temporarily. / This is the reason why we have to live an obedient life, following His will. / Verses 27-33 record the names of towns and pasturelands the descendants of Gershon received. / How many towns did they receive?

*/Verse 33. / The total number of towns of the Gershonite clans came to thirteen, together with their pasturelands.*

/They received 13 towns. / Again, they did not take it out of their selfish-interest. / These towns and pasturelands were allowed by God. /A man cannot take everything by greed, even if he attempts to take everything.

/We can be blessed only when God gives us. / We can take only when God allows us. /And in verses 34-40, we can read about the towns the descendants of Merari received.

*/Verse 34. / The Merarite clans (the rest of the Levites) were given: from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam, Kartah,*

/God allowed them towns as well. / They did not take it based on their greed. / They took it through obedience and faith in God. / How many towns are mentioned in verse 40?

*/Verse 40. / The total number of towns allotted to the Merarite clans, who were the rest of the Levites, came to twelve.*

/The Merarites received the towns according to their clans. / How many towns did they take? / 12. / Once again, they did not seek out of greed in their heart for such number of towns. / The just God distributed the towns the most fitting way possible. / Thus, the Levites took total of 48 towns.

*/Verse 41. / The towns of the Levites in the territory held by the Israelites were forty-eight in all, together with their pasturelands.*

/The Levites received 48 towns out of the inheritance of the Israelites. / So, we

can say that 12 tribes gave four towns each.

*/Verse 42. / Each of these towns had pasturelands surrounding it; this was true for all these towns.*

/The Levites received total of 48 towns and lived all across the land. / Why? / In order for them to serve God well / and for them to handle their job as priests, all spread out in the nation.

/ They taught His words and took up their calling in various places. / Today's church should be / like the early church, people coming together / and dispersed around the world.

/We should be armed with His words and prayer in our church, / then go back to our daily life to serve Him in our places. / As we can see in Acts chapter 13, / the church that handled the world mission was the church of Antioch.

/How were they able to handle that? / Jerusalem church was being persecuted. / It was the church disciples gathered to serve God. / But they had no mind to go on missions.

/Therefore, God dispersed them through persecution. / The church of Antioch is the church that was built in Syria after the dispersing of the believers. / God used Antioch church / more than Jerusalem to evangelize to the world.

/Today, God's people / need to gather and pray, / learn His words, /and equip ourselves spiritually. / Then we should return to our daily lives and witness Him to others there.

/God dispersed the Levites all throughout because each had their own missions to do. /God also gave the portions of twelve tribes' inheritance to them. /The tribes wouldn't have given the towns if they were greedy.

/God is the owner of everything in the universe. / The town were merely entrusted to the tribes just for temporary. / Why did He do that? / For them to serve the people who work in the temple of God. .

/So it is right for the people who work in the temple to be respected and well-treated. / The same goes for our churches. / What does the Bible say? / "Do not muzzle an ox that is treading out the grain."

/The servants of God / deserve to be well-respected / and helped by us. / The twelve tribes gave portions of the inheritance they received / to the Levites.

/The members of the early church were very generous to each other. / We need to use the grace and blessings God gave us / for the advancement of the Gospel. / We need to not only serve our pastors, / but also sacrifice ourselves for the Gospel.

/When the twelve tribes offered their lands, they casted lots for distribution of the towns and pasturelands. / Why cast lots? / To prevent people from being so selfish. / To prevent people from taking the good ones while leaving the bad ones to others.

/God distributed the towns and pasturelands the best way there was. / Next, God gave six Cities of Refuge to the Levites. / Three were at the eastern side of the Jordan River, / while the other three were at the west side of the river.

/Why did God make such a system? / To protect people who accidentally killed other people. / Jesus is our eternal City of Refuge today. / Jesus is our high priest. / Anybody who is in Jesus receives forgiveness of sin.

/God also gave them 48 towns / in order for them to build houses and raise livestock. / The pastors are to consider the works of God more important than their worldly affairs. / What does this teach us?

/It teaches us that those who live a church-centered life / and those who are loyal to Him will receive provisions from God. / God fills our needs.

/This is why the pastors do not need to be anxious about what to eat / but sacrifice for God's church. / He will fill the needs and bless them. / Next in verses 43-45, / God gave the land and rest to the Israelites just as He promised.

*/Verse 43. / So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there.*

/It is written, "So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, / and they took possession of it and settled there." / God gave them what He sworn to give them.

/God promised Abraham, / Isaac, / and Jacob. / We need to believe that God's words come true no matter what.

/Our God is a God of covenant, / faithful God, / and keeper of His promises. / So let us firmly hold onto His words and press on with our calling.

/The Bible today is His promised words. / The world may end, but His words of promise will never fail. / It will be fulfilled. / To what people will God fulfill the promises of His words?

/To those who trust it without any doubts and who obey it. / We need to believe His words as they are. / And if we believe His words, we need to obey it in our daily lives.

/Our obedience to His words will be our proof that our faith is alive and will show the works of our faith. / There are some people today who only know His words. / They only know, without any obedience.

/But what God requires of us / is to trust His words as they are once we received it. / We can bear the fruit of His words once we trust the Bible as it is. / We can say we are doing a good job in our spiritual life / when we daily live holding to His words.

/We need to learn His words well / and live out His words in our daily lives. / He blesses those who obey His words.

/Abraham believed the words of His promise and obeyed it without any doubts. / He then received the promise and became the father of faith.

/God let Jesus come through the line of Abraham, / and He opened the path of salvation through Jesus. / Thus, we must believe that His promises will come true and obey them.

*/Verses 44-45. / The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their ancestors. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD gave all their enemies into their hands. Not one of all the LORD's good promises to Israel failed; everyone was fulfilled.*

/God gave peace in that land and blessed them as He had sworn. / Genesis 12:1-3 / Exodus 3:8 / The same goes for us. If we obey His words and do everything right, / He will drive out our enemies / and grant us true rest and peace, as well as give us all of the blessing He promised.

/With this I end the eighteenth lecture on Joshua. / Thank you.