

# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Seventeen – Joshua 17:1-18

Now the book of Joshua is basically divided into four parts. Here's our outline:

#### I. The INVASION of the land—chapters 1-5.

Joshua comes on the scene in chapter 1—Moses dies.

In chapter 2 his first act as a general is to send the spies into Jericho and they meet Rahab. It's a beautiful story of a woman of faith in a pagan society. She hides them and of course liberates herself because of her faith when the time for the battle of Jericho comes.

In chapter 3 they cross the river.

In chapter 4 they set up the memorials. They put rocks in the river and they put rocks at Gilgal as a memorial of what they have done.

Now before God is going to entrust them with any victory, in chapter 5 he has several things he has to do before he dies.

One thing we find that when we live in carnality and we walk

out of fellowship with God, basically what happens is we lose our spiritual disciplines. We stop praying, we stop reading the Word and we get out of fellowship with God.

And that's what the children of Israel did for 40 years while they wandered in the wilderness. For instance, they forgot the rite of circumcision for the little 8-day old boys. That was the mark of the Abrahamic covenant. Now they're in the land that's an issue.

They hadn't celebrated the Passover but once during all these years while they were out there in the wilderness. And so, the Lord reinstitutes these things in chapter 5. We call it:

## CLEANSING BEFORE CONQUEST.

God is going to deal with them as individuals so that cleansing takes place before He will ever trust them with a victory. And that's true in each of our lives. We will experience defeat in our lives until we clean up our act. And when our acts are cleansed, then God is ready to use a clean instrument to make an effective impact wherever we might go.

Now that leads us then from the INVASION of the land to:

## II. The SUBJECTION of the land—chapters 6-12.

Chapter 6 it's JERICHO.

Chapter 7 it is Ai—but they're defeated because of the sin of

ACHAN.

When that's dealt with, they get the VICTORY in chapter 8.

Chapter 9 they make a TREATY WITH THE GIBEONITES, which is a sad, sad story of not inquiring of the Lord before they made some decisions.

Chapter 10, General Joshua's philosophy is to drive a wedge in the land, then take the south and then take the north. Chapter 10 is the SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN.

Chapter 11 is the NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.

And then Chapter 12 we've called the ROSTER. Some of my good friends call it the Baskin Robbins chapter because there are just 31 kings.

And we're going to find that same thing true in chapter 17. The first time we look at it we'll probably say, "Oh my, it's a boring real estate deed." But when we get through our hope is that it's clothed with flesh and blood and is very meaningful.

When we get to chapter 13, we move from INVASION and SUBJECTION to:

III. The DIVISION of the land.

In Chapter 13 the two-and-a-half tribes that settled short of the will of God on the east side—the Reubenites, the Gadites

and the half-tribe of Manasseh—get their INHERITANCE on the east side.

Chapter 14 Caleb—that crusty old soldier who stood with Joshua at the time when they were ready to go into the land from Kadesh Barnea—gets his INHERITANCE.

Then in Chapter 15 the tribe of JUDAH gets theirs.

In Chapter 16 EPHRAIM gets his.

Ephraim and Manasseh are the two sons of Joseph. There is no tribe of Joseph. The two boys represent their father.

And Jacob, when he blessed them in Genesis 48, put the younger ahead of the older. Ephraim's the youngest one gets his in Chapter 16.

MANASSEH'S the older one, gets his in Chapter 17.

Now what we have discovered in our study of these inheritances is that if we take out a Hebrew Bible and a Lexicon and start studying the meaning of these Hebrew names, it's an amazing thing how the reflection of the name of the tribe teaches us some lessons.

For instance, when Joseph finally became 30 years of age he was elevated to the palace. He'd spent 13 years serving in Potiphar's house and prison combined. Now all of a sudden, he's a great leader in the land and God is blessing him.

On top of that, God brings a wonderful little girl by the name of Asenath into his life and they get married and they have two boys. And their boys are Manasseh and Ephraim.

Manasseh means “forget my troubles.” He’s so excited about having his son he wants to forget everything that happened when he was home. He wants to forget all the troubles of thirteen years and he wants to get on with living his life—and we’re going to talk about that.

Ephraim means “fruitful in the land of my affliction.” We can tell by the name of the two boys Joseph’s feelings at the time these boys are born.

Now with Manasseh we’re going to talk about the whole subject of suffering, how we handle it and how we get on with it. For instance, most of us probably have the philosophy of a lot of folks with regard to suffering, and that is “I must have done something really bad for God to treat me that way.”

Most people think of suffering like that. We need to recognize that Suffering 101 is a required course in God’s divine curriculum. We don’t even have a chance to sign up for it. We’re going to get it.

Philippians 1:29 says: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake...”

Suffering is God's means of conforming us to the image of His own Son, Jesus Christ. And suffering is going to be a vital part of that curriculum and we need to properly relate to it.

Mrs. Cowman in her book *Streams in the Desert* says this:

(Streams in the Desert by Mrs. Charles Cowman)

Sorrow came to you yesterday, and emptied your home. Your first impulse now is to give up, and sit down in despair amid the wrecks of your hopes. But you dare not do it. You are in the line of battle, and the crisis is at hand. To falter a moment would be to imperil some holy interest. Other lives would be harmed by your pausing, holy interests would suffer, should your hands be folded. You must not linger even to indulge your grief...

Weeping inconsolably beside a grave can never give back love's banished treasure, nor can any blessing come out of such sadness. Sorrow makes deep scars; it writes its record ineffaceably on the heart which suffers. We really never get over our great griefs; we are never altogether the same after we have passed through them as we were before. Yet there is a humanizing and fertilizing influence in sorrow which has been rightly accepted and cheerfully borne. Indeed, they are poor who have never suffered...

(source unknown)

What are the benefits from suffering? The benefits from the bad? The triumph in the trial? The satisfaction that comes in the midst of the storm?

These are the things we're going to address in this particular section.

Let's outline our passage. We have 4 points:

1. The ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE'S DECISION—verses 1-6.
2. The BOUNDARIES OF THE INHERITANCE—verses 7-11.
3. The TRAGIC COMPROMISE—verses 12 and 13.
4. WANTING MORE or GREED—verses 14-18.

This map is designed to help us get a handle on where the inheritances are and what we're talking about.

Now see Manasseh right up there in the middle of the heart of it? Manasseh has a huge chunk on the east side and they have a big chunk on the west side. We're going to talk about both of those.

We're going to talk about the EAST SIDE in verse 1 and the WEST SIDE in verse 2 and the rest of the chapter. Because under Moses' leadership that half-tribe of Manasseh—basically Makir's clan—was given the east side during that time. And now Joshua and the committee are going to give the folks theirs on the west side.

Let's dig into the text—the allotment committee's decision.

**v. 1 This was the allotment for the tribe of Manasseh as Joseph's firstborn, that is, for Makir, Manasseh's firstborn. Makir was the ancestor of the Gileadites, who had received Gilead and Bashan because the Makirites were great soldiers.**

“This was the allotment for the tribe of Manasseh as Joseph's firstborn, that is, for Makir, Manasseh's firstborn. Makir was the ancestor of the Gileadites, who had received Gilead and Bashan because the Makirites were great soldiers.”

Now these two-and-a-half tribes decided they wanted to settle short of the will of God.

And the name “Makir” means “sold.” He sold himself short of what God had for him.

We can plan on two things when we settle short of the will of God for our life. We can plan on a lot of suffering and a lot of tears. They just go together.

When we decide, when we know what the will of God is and we decide to settle far short of it and do our own thing and go our own way, we're going to cry a lot and we're going to hurt a lot. And these two-and-a-half tribes, they hurt in their history. Because anybody who was attacked in Israel always hit the east side first and so they got it first.

It's very fortunate that Makir is a good soldier. He needs to be because settling to stay on this side rather than being in the land under the protection of God's original intention for them is going to create an awful lot of problems in their lives in the future.

Now as we see this then, we have half of them over there. All the rest of them are described in verse 2. This is the rest of the tribe of Manasseh that's settling on the west side.

**v. 2 So this allotment was for the rest of the people of Manasseh—the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher and Shemida. These are the other male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans.**

“So this allotment was for the rest of the people of Manasseh—the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher and Shemida. These are the other male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans.”

Now emphasize the word “male” because we have the “male descendants” in verse 2 and the female descendants in verse 3. We're not leaving the girls out. They're going to get their part in the whole deal.

Now remember Manasseh's name means “one who forgets his troubles.” The key to dynamic, vibrant, living Christianity is to forget the troubles of yesterday with the beginning of every

brand-new day! Don't sit around having a pity party and ruining today by what happened yesterday. That's where the evil one really nails our hide to the wall. Every time he gets us thinking about the past, he gets us in a position where we're ineffective and we're a poor witness for him. So forget our troubles is what Joseph's saying—"I'm forgetting it! I'm excited about the fact that I've got a new son!" And he named him this and that's one of the keys to handling suffering.

Now if that's true then all of these other words—when we understand them from the Hebrew text—will make some contribution to how we do that. Okay? And guess what? They do! Let's get into them.

1. The first word is "Abiezer." He is one of the sons and part of the clan. What does "Abiezer" mean? That means "father of help."

Does that ring a bell in any place in the scripture when it talks about suffering? What about 2 Corinthians 1:3 and 4:

### 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4

I thank my God, the God of our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; who comforts us in all of our afflictions so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God.

It is "God is our help." He's saying, "I know you're hurting! I

want to help you!”

What did He tell the disciplines in the Upper Room just a few hours before He was hanging on the Cross?

“I am going to send the Comforter”—the Paraclete—the One who is going to come alongside. And right away the Father knows the curriculum’s tough but He knows we need it too. And it’s never going to hit our life before it passes His desk and gets His stamp of approval.

So, with that being the case, He also comes alongside and puts His arm around us and says, “Hey, I would like to be your help. I would like to comfort you in this so that you can turn around and not be comfortable, but comfort others who likewise have real needs. And this could be the foundation for your ministry by what I’m entrusting you with on this occasion.”

2. “Helek” the second word means “smoothness” or “lot or portion.”

How does that fit? Well, when somebody says it’s rough, they say the road is rocky. It’s crooked, it’s hard.

God’s able to take the crooked places and make them straight. He’s to make the rocky places smooth.

But the words “lot” and “portion” also have a real meaning in it. When we recognize that suffering is our lot, it is our

portion, it is the hand that has been dealt to us, then we are ready to relate to it and accept it.

Now that doesn't mean that with our humanity sometimes we don't want to accept it. Jesus was like that wasn't He?

In the Garden of Gethsemane basically He said, "Father if it be possible, let My lot or my portion or this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but Yours be done. I'll submit to it but I really don't like it."

And so there is that human element where we do fight it, but ultimately we have to come to victory when we accept it as part of God's program for us.

3. The third word is "Asriel." What does that word mean? It means "vow of God"—the vow of God.

What does the vow of God mean to us? It is any promise in the Book that we can claim as our own. Stop and think about it. Have we ever, when we've been hurting real bad, turn to our Father and said, "Now Father, I know the Word says all things work together for God and I'm claiming that right now. You have vowed that to me. You have promised that to me."

Or have we ever said Hebrews 13:5: "Now You said You'd never leave me nor forsake me." Or "You said You'd walk with me though that valley of the shadow. Father, You also said that Your grace was sufficient for me and Your strength is made perfect in my weakness. Lord, I really need You." Or

“You told us through the prophet Isaiah, ‘Fear thou not for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, I am your God. I will strengthen thee. I will help thee. Yeah, I will uphold thee.’ I claim that! I come to You, holding You to Your vow to me in the midst of the suffering.”

This fourth word is so great.

4. It’s the word “Shechem.” Now we’re going to run into this a few times in these chapters. “Shechem” means “shoulder.”

What do we use the shoulder for? Well, the shoulder has two things. Basically “Shechem” refers to the spot right between the two shoulder blades. What do we put on there? That’s where we put our backpack isn’t it?

It’s our burden. We carry it there. But the back is also the place for the blows. When we get scourged, when we get whipped, they get it on the back.

And the Father comes to us in our suffering and He says, “I want to be your Shechem. I want to take those blows. I want to carry that burden. Just give it to Me! You’re so tired and so worn out! Just put it over on Me and turn loose of it and let Me have it. I want to be your Shechem.”

That word occurs in Isaiah 9:6—that very familiar passage:

Isaiah 9:6

...and the government shall be on his “Shechem”—on his shoulder.

David caught hold of this. In Psalm 81 there is a beautiful passage in verses 6 and 7 that says:

### Psalm 81:6, 7

“I removed the burden from their shoulders; their hands were set free from the basket...

God says, “I come along and I’ll take it.”

### 1 Peter 5:7

Casting all your care upon him, for he cares for you.

One lady said, “I always come in my prayer life, spread out all my burdens and problems before Him, give them to Him and then I pack them up and take them away.”

That’s the way sometimes we feel about it, but the Lord wants to take it. He wants to carry that burden and concern.

5. The fifth word is “Hepher.” Now that doesn’t refer to a cow. That word means “pit” or “well.”

Is there anybody in the Bible who ends up in a pit? Joseph himself did at 17. When he was sold by his brothers he was thrown into a pit where there was no water in the well.

Finally they took him out of there and sold him to the Ishmaelites. So, he was in a pit.

Was David ever in a pit? Psalm 40 describes it graphically:

Psalm 40:1, 2

I waited patiently for the Lord;  
    he turned to me and heard my cry.  
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,  
    out of the mud and mire;  
he set my feet on a rock  
    and gave me a firm place to stand.

Who else is in a pit? Remember Jeremiah in Jeremiah 38? He was in the muck and the mire clear up to his armpits before they got him out of there. Was he intimidated by that?

As Jeremiah 38 says, he went right back to Zedekiah and preached and never missed a word. Just went right back to him. Gave him the very same message he did before he went in the pit.

The Lord knows we're in the pit a lot of times, but He's promised to take us out and to put our feet on solid rock.

6. The sixth word is "Shemida." And "Shemida" means "the fame of wisdom."

What's the one thing we need more than anything else when

we're suffering?

### James 1:5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.

It's wisdom to relate to what the Lord has allowed. And we claim that and we seek His face. He will give us wisdom to relate. He might not give us all the answers, because we see through a glass darkly but then face to face we know in part, but then we're going to know even as we're known. (ref. 1 Corinthians 13:12)

Part of it we'll never understand but we don't need to. The Executive Director of the universe is not obligated to give us all the reasons why He ordered the curriculum for us. But when we get to glory, He'll show us that it's all consistent with His love.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer gave his life to Nazi Germany. He wrote *The Cost of Discipleship*. And this dear German said this about the will of God:

“I am in God's hands, not in men's. No earthly power can touch us without His will, and dangers and distresses can only drive us closer to Him.”  
(source unknown)

That's the right attitude to have. Don't let a wedge be driven between us and the Lord just because we're having a rough

time and running uphill into the wind right now. Whatever we do, don't let anything happen with our relationship with the Lord. Let it drive us closer rather than away, because that's the original intention for the suffering. The Lord loves to have us dependent upon Him and seeking His face to bring solutions to the problems and the difficulties that we face.

Now that's the male descendants. Let's turn it over and talk about the girls now for just a second in verse 3.

**v. 3 Now Zelophehad son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters, whose names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.**

“Now Zelophehad”

Know anyone named “Zelophehad?” The poor guy with a handle like that would have to have a complex of some sort.

What does “Zelophehad” mean? It means “fracture.”

And poor “Zelophehad”—the only way he lives up to his name is he has five girls—so he fractures the family line. There were no sons. He has a quiver full of girls. It's just like Fiddler on the Roof—five daughters. At least we have to give him credit. He tried five times here to get a boy and he didn't get any.

“Now Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh,”—great, great, great

grandson of Manasseh—“had no sons but only daughters, whose names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.”

Now that’s quite a group of girls. And their names tell us what he’s thinking while he has them too.

“Mahlah” means “disease.”

He realized that he didn’t get a son on the first go around so he tries again. We didn’t know there was a “Noah” female in the Bible?

That might be the \$64,000 question. There are two Noah’s in the Bible. One’s a boy and one’s a girl. We’ll straighten somebody out someday with that little bit of information.

“Noah” means “motion.”

So from “disease” to “motion.”

“Hoglah” means “partridge.”

Three girls are for the birds. He finally gets to that point. And then the next one’s very instructive.

“Milcah” means “counsel.”

He has to go for counseling. He seeks counsel.

He accepts the inevitable and so his fifth girl “Tirzah” is “pleasant.” And so he calls her “Tirzah.”

He has a quiver full of girls. Now what’s going to happen for the inheritance of these girls. Are they just going to be passed over? Or are they going to get some of the inheritance because they’re part of the tribe of Manasseh.

Now look at what happens. They come to the allotment committee. There are 14 members on this committee. Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and then 12 representatives—one from each of the 12 tribes.

**v. 4 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 brothers.” So Joshua gave them an inheritance along with the brothers of their father, according to the Lord’s command.**

“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 brothers.” So Joshua gave them an inheritance along with the brothers of their father, according to the Lord’s command.”

The one word, when it’s all boiled down and said, is the word OBEDIENCE. If we’re obedient, God’s blessing us. If not, He’s going to shut it off. And He’s going to pull in the rope.

Joshua is a man who, when we start in Joshua chapter 1, we meet the guy and we love him. He is obedient and the Lord says this “book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth. You meditate in it day and night, you’re careful to observe what’s written therein, then you’ll make your way prosperous and you’ll have good success.” (see Joshua 1:8)

And the guy believed it! And everywhere we see, he’s living comfortably with divine authority and he’s obedient to the Word as it’s being taught to him. And every time the Lord says something, it just says he does it. And there’s no mystery about that. There’s no secret. It is so simple, but we’re so stubborn and bull-headed and disobedient we’re missing everything God has for us! And we have to go to some conference to get our conscience salved and some new secret as to how to really get it together.

It’s right here. Obedience is the word.

Now verses 5 and 6 summarize it.

**v. 5 Manasseh’s share consisted of ten tracts of land besides Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan,**

“Manasseh’s share consisted of ten tracts of land besides Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan,”

**v. 6 because the daughters of the tribe of Manasseh received an inheritance among the sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the descendants of**

## Manasseh.

“because the daughters of the tribe of Manasseh received an inheritance among the sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.”

So that’s a SUMMARY now of the allotment committee’s work and decision about Manasseh.

Now when we get to verse 7 to verse 11, we get:

## II. THE BOUNDARIES OF THE INHERITANCE.

It’s really neat in these studies because the allotment committee meets first, gives us the basic parameters, then they come back and give us the geographical boundaries of the inheritance.

Those geographical boundaries will also contribute to our understanding of how to triumph in our suffering and how to benefit from the bad.

If we got up and took a look at the OVERVIEW OF THE LAND we would find:

Ephraim and Dan on the SOUTH,

the Mediterranean Sea on the WEST,

the Jordan River on the EAST, and then

Asher and Issachar and Zebulun—all northern neighbors—up NORTH of the property.

But now we're going to get down to the specifics and talk again about some words—verse 7.

**v. 7 The territory of Manasseh extended from Asher to Micmethath east of Shechem. The boundary ran southward from there to include the people living at En Tappuah.**

“The territory of Manasseh extended from Asher to Micmethath east of Shechem. The boundary ran southward from there to include the people living at En Tappuah.”

What's our first word?

1. Our first word is “Asher.” Now “Asher” is the name of a tribe, and we're going to see that tribe in our next study. But it is also the name of a geographical location—and that's what's referred to here. “Asher” means “fortunate” or “happy.”

We're saying that every grateful person is happy. And really what makes us unhappy is our pride when we suffer.

If we really believe that God is working in our life through the suffering, then our happiness and feeling fortunate is that God cares enough about us to spend the time with us to make us into His Son—to a likeness to His Son.

And James 1:2 says “count it all joy” when we fall into these diverse trials and testing. That doesn’t mean a hypocritical smile. It means deep down inside that there’s an expectation and an anticipation that God is going to use this in some way to enrich our life and so we ought to be excited about it.

Sometimes we say, “This too shall pass.” That is saying it’s temporary and there’s light at the other end and it’s going to be alright eventually. We’re going to learn something out of it so there can be stability in the midst of the storm knowing that God’s going to use it somewhere and somehow—even though we’ve got a lot of questions about it.

Now the next word is:

2. “Micmethath”—“Micmethath” means “hiding place.”

The Father says, “I want to be your hiding place. Just let me shelter you.”

Remember Jesus? “Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how oft would I have gathered you as a hen would gather her chickens under her wings and you would not.” (see Matthew 23:37)

We want to be that hiding place, that source of refuge to us and shelter in the time of the storm.

The third word is:

3. “Shechem.” We’ve already got that. “I want to be your ‘shoulder.’ I want to carry your burden.”

The fourth word is:

4. “En Tappuah.”

Now the little word “En,” whenever it occurs on a geographical location in the Old Testament means “fountain.” That means that there’s water in that city—some kind of a fountain. We’ll find “En Tappuah” and “En Dor” and so on and so forth.

The fountain of Tappuah—if we took that literally, that’s what we’d be saying. There is a fountain in Tappuah.

Jesus said that out of our innermost being would flow rivers of living water. (see John 7:38)

The water doesn’t stop when we’re in the midst of the storm. We’re still a fountain—probably greater than ever before, because here’s our greatest opportunity for ministry while we’re in the midst of this difficulty.

The next word is “Tappuah” and that means “fruitful” in apples. God is greatly blessed when there is fruit from our suffering.

John 15 describes it, doesn’t it? The Father is the vinedresser. He comes along and He clips the branches. Why? So they’ll bear fruit. Suffering is part of that. And the Father is glorified

when we bear a lot of fruit. If He's spending time working in our life, think of "En Tappuah"—a place fruitful in apples.

Now verse 8 is a parenthesis. It's because Manasseh's southern neighbor is the younger brother Ephraim. "Tappuah" happens to be on the border, so it's a border town. That's basically what we have in verse 8.

**v. 8 (Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah itself, on the boundary of Manasseh, belonged to the Ephraimites.)**

"(Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah itself, on the boundary of Manasseh, belonged to the Ephraimites.)"

The city itself belonged to the inheritance of Ephraim, but the land around it belonged to the tribe of Manasseh.

**v. 9 Then the boundary continued south to the Kanah Ravine. There were towns belonging to Ephraim lying among the towns of Manasseh, but the boundary of Manasseh was the northern side of the ravine and ended at the sea.**

"Then the boundary continued south to the Kanah Ravine. There were towns belonging to Ephraim lying among the towns of Manasseh, but the boundary of Manasseh was the northern side of the ravine and ended at the sea."

Let's have some fun with the "Kanah Ravine."

The word “Kahah” means “reeds”—R-E-E-D-S. When we think of reeds we think of water don't we? The reeds in the water in the ravine.

Alright, where is the other place in the Bible where reeds occur?

MOSES—anybody else got any ideas? Moses.

How does the birth of Moses contribute to our understanding of suffering? When we go to the place of the reeds? What did she do? She had a wonderful little baby boy. What did the Pharaoh say? “Kill all the baby boys. There's too many Israelites!”

So what'd she do? She hides him for three months because he's a good boy. In fact, his name is Moses.

So what'd she do with that baby when he's three months? She makes a little ark, puts the baby in the ark, takes him down and puts him in the place of the reeds.

What happens as soon as she turns loose? Pharaoh's daughter has to take a bath. She comes down, finds the baby, finds the mother, lets the mother feed and take care of the baby then brings him over here. Going to give him a full scholarship for his education. Going to learn some high living here in the courts of Pharaoh. Moses the leader.

What's the principle? When we turn loose and trust, God starts to work. She had to take that little baby and literally turn loose of him and put him in the reeds and trust God to work.

Anybody else have experiences like that in the Bible? Esther did in Esther chapter 4. The whole Jewish seed was going to be wiped out. She says, "Pray and fast for me. If I perish, I perish but I'm going in!" She did. God blessed her. She turned loose of her life literally. (see Esther 4:16)

What about Jacob? Jacob's son Simeon's a hostage in Egypt and Joseph is dead and now this guy down there wants Benjamin. "You aren't taking Benjamin" He's a stubborn old goat and he lived most of his life like that.

Finally, they're starving to death and the boys come and say, "Listen, if you don't give us Benjamin, we're all going to die!" So finally old Jacob says, "I'm going to turn loose and trust. If I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved. Take him and go!" (see Genesis 43:13, 14)

What happens? About six weeks later Air Force One's sitting out in the driveway. Said, "Guess what? Simeon's here, Benjamin's here and Joseph's alive and he wants us to come down there and live the rest of our lives down there for the next 17 years." Boy it's on easy street for Jacob simply because he was willing to turn loose and trust God.

And when we do that, it brings triumphant victoriousness into

our life as a believer. Just simply to trust Him.

Frances Roberts has this to say:

(Come Away My Beloved by Frances J. Roberts)

Release Thy Grief

My child, lean [your] head upon My bosom. Well I know [your] weariness, and every burden I would lift. Never bury [your] griefs; but offer them up to Me. [You will] relieve [your] soul of much strain if [you] can lay every care in My hand. Never cling to any trouble, hoping to resolve it [yourself], but turn it over to Me; and in doing so, [you] shall free Me to work it out.  
p. 18

That's good! That's what it is. Turn loose and trust at the "Kanan Ravine."

**v. 10 On the south the land belonged to Ephraim, on the north to Manasseh. The territory of Manasseh reached the sea and bordered Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.**

"On the south the land belonged to Ephraim, on the north to Manasseh. The territory of Manasseh reached the sea and bordered Asher on the north and Issachar on the east."

Those are the other tribes that are surrounding them.

**v. 11 Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh also had**

**Beth Shan, Ibleam and the people of Dor, Endor, Taanach and Megiddo, together with their surrounding settlements (the third in the list is Naphoth).**

“Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh also had”—and here are some more cities—“Beth Shan, Ibleam and the people of Dor, Endor, Taanach and Megiddo, together with their surrounding settlements (the third in the list is Naphoth).”

The third one is “Dor” so it’s “Naphoth Dor.”.

Now let’s see if there’s any profit that comes from our problems in these last words in our text.

1. “Beth Shan” means “house of rest.”

Isn’t that good?

(Come Away My Beloved by Frances J. Roberts)

O My child, rest in Me.  
Yea, quietly settle down in My care,  
as a bird settles in a nest.  
For I am watching over thee,  
and in love will I care for thee.  
p. 90

Matthew 11:28-30

Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy-laden, I will give you rest...

Coming to “Beth Shan.”

2. The next word is “Ibleam” and that means “devouring the people.”

Here is how Satan fits into suffering.

1 Peter 5:8

...he’s like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

He’s the one that got the whole thing started on Job. “God take down the hedge and let me do everything I can do to him.” And as a result of that, suffering takes place.

Are there any verses in the New Testament that could help us with that? How about this one:

Luke 22:31, 32

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, might strengthen your brothers.”

3. The third word is the word “Dor”—D-O-R. That word means “age” or “generation.”

It's a period, it's a circuit of the years of our lives. It's the word that would occur in the book of Ecclesiastes. It is "meaningless, meaningless, utterly meaningless." (see Ecclesiastes 1:1)

It's the routine of life. And for some people that's the hardest thing in the world to suffer. It's realizing the fact that we have to go to work every day. And why do we go to work every day? So we can make some money. Why do we make some money? So we can buy some food. Why do we buy some food? So we can get some strength. Why do we need some strength? So we can go to work so we can make some money so we can buy some food. And around and around we go.

William Barker's in his book *A Savior for All Seasons* says:

(*A Savior for All Seasons* by William P. Barker)

... a New York bus driver briefly became a folk hero. Weary of the job of steering his bus around the same route dozens of times each day, one afternoon he turned to his passengers and told them they'd have to get off. Then he headed his bus out of the city. The police finally caught up with him...in Florida. His superiors stated that they'd fired the driver. Public sympathy for the driver was so great, however, that they had to relent and give him [back his job]. It seemed everyone could identify with the bus driver's feelings about his job.

p. 42

He also says this:

(A Savior for All Seasons by William P. Barker)

...Bell Laboratories came up with a fascinating invention. It was a box slightly smaller than an ordinary breadbox. When a certain button was pushed, machinery started inside. The lid of the box would quietly open, then a hand would come up and slowly reach over the side of the box and shut off the mechanism. The hand would then go back into the box and the lid would close. The silly but interesting device had no useful purpose; it was merely a toy that turned itself off. Some people seem to be like that. They never let themselves find any useful purpose in life; they merely exist to turn themselves off.

p. 46

And then this last one was great:

(A Savior for All Seasons by William P. Barker)

A fourteen-year-old girl received a diary for her birthday. Her first entry read: "Got a diary from Grandma, but it's too late because everything has [already happened]."

p. 47

That's the way we feel at "Dor" isn't it? Round and around in circles we go. Oh mercy, what suffering that brings.

4. The next word is "Endor." Okay, it's "the fountain of Dor." It's "the fountain of habitation." It's "the fountain of

existence.”

What do we think about when we’re faced with our own mortality and suffering? We’re thinking this might be it. This might be the end. This might be the finish.

When we’re there we say:

“Why am I here?”

“Where am I going? What am I going to do?”

We’re made aware of that every time we come to the Valley of the Shadow. It’s the suffering that involves answering the questions of habitation! It’s being sure we’ve made proper preparation to meet our God. It’s a rearranging of our priorities. It’s praying on a daily basis:

“Oh Lord, teach us to number our days and apply our hearts to wisdom.” (see Psalm 90:12)

The fountain of habitation—we go to “Endor”—we think about it.

5. The fifth word is the word “Taanach.” “Taanach” means “sandy soil.”

And when we’re suffering we feel like it’s all bogged down, don’t we? When we’re suffering we also feel like it’s a desert. David says, “My moisture has turned into the drought of

summer.” (see Psalm 32:4)

There’s something else about sandy soil. Out of sandy soil come the prettiest flowers. Go to Tyler, Texas and you’ll see. Beautiful, beautiful roses come out of that sandy soil. God brings beautiful blossoms out of sandy soil.

And He wants to blossom us too. Just because we find ourselves at “Taanach” in the sandy soil, bogged down in something that we’d like to get out of. God wants to make that into something beautiful and blossom it for His glory.

### Galatians 6:9

And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not grow weary.

6. The sixth word is the word “Megiddo” and “Megiddo” means “the place of crowds.”

How does that fit with suffering? When we properly relate to suffering we are looking in compassion on the crowds. We want healing to our suffering, and start looking at the crowds

What about Jesus? He looked on them, we read in Matthew 9, and He saw the multitudes, He felt compassion for them. They were distressed and they were downcast like sheep without a shepherd. He said to the disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (see Matthew

9:36-38).

Oh, may God grant us that we go to “the place of the crowds.” As soon as we start ministering to others, our suffering really isn’t all that much. And great healing comes the minute we can turn around and minister to somebody else when we’re going through difficulty instead of selfishly withdrawing within and trying to find a solution there.

7. And the last word in our forging out a doctrine of suffering is the word “Naphoth.” “Naphoth” means “higher places.”

Yes I’m pressing on the upward way,  
New heights I’m gaining every day.  
Still praying as I onward bound,  
Lord plant my feet on higher ground.  
(source unknown)

Higher places means my Father has a better view than we do. He sees the whole picture from the beginning to the end so we can trust Him with whatever He feels is needful in our life. And therefore, we can be victorious in the time of our suffering.

Now we’ve looked at:

- I. The allotment committee’s decision.
- II. The boundaries of the inheritance.

But these last two things are very important, so hang on. We'll be brief in these two points.

### III. TRAGIC COMPROMISE—verses 12 and 13.

**v. 12 Yet the Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region.**

“Yet the Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region.”

Is it that they COULDN'T or they WOULDN'T?

They came up to Kadesh Barnea because they WOULDN'T. They could've if they would've gone into the land, but the giants were intimidating.

These Canaanites are intimidating and the Manassites are saying, “We can't! So we won't go in!” But if they had, God would have given them to them.

Caleb, 85-years-old, drives the giants out of Hebron. God is with him and the Lord is his help and his strength. But here again there is unbelief in the land. They don't do that.

Verse 13 says:

**v. 13 However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they**

**subjected the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out completely.**

“However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out completely.”

There’s our TRAGIC COMPROMISE.

Invariably these tribes are sowing seeds of defeat for their future by their compromise in the present. They’re not doing what God had said.

Now some of them have a materialistic bend about them. They’re making the Canaanites be forced labor. In other words, “We’re going to make a business deal out of this. We’re going to get somebody to mow our lawns and to chop our wood and carry our water. We’re going to force them into servitude.”

Watch it! When we force somebody into servitude, there will come a day when they’ll turn around and we will be their servants. And that’s exactly what happens in the book of Judges simply because they’re disobedient and they compromise at this point. It destroys the potential for a great future.

Now whenever we mention the word “inheritance” we always get GREEDY, don’t we?

Always got their hand out! Always want some more! Of all the

people who should not have their hand out, it ought to be Manasseh because they got the biggest chunk of land right in the heart of the land.

But it doesn't make any difference how much we give some people, they want more!

And here comes the hand in verses 14-18. It's great the way old General Joshua handles it. He's a crusty character and he can really take care of it. Watch this.

#### IV. WANTING MORE—verses 14-18

**v. 14 The people of Joseph said to Joshua, “Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We are a numerous people and the Lord has blessed us abundantly.”**

“The people of Joseph said to Joshua, “Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We are a numerous people and the Lord has blessed us abundantly.””

Boy isn't that a spiritual ploy? Enemies still entrenched in the land, but boy “We are blessed by the Lord abundantly. We are a big group!” And so, they have their hand out, begging for more.

**v. 15 “If you are so numerous,” Joshua answered, “and if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go up into the forest and clear land for yourselves**

**there in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites.”**

“If you are so numerous,”

Joshua comes right back at them. Now Joshua had been with these people just long enough. He knew them well so he comes right back at them.

“If you are so numerous,’ Joshua answered, ‘and if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go up into the forest and clear the land for yourselves there in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites.”

“Go up there and chop down some trees and make some log cabins and have all kinds of land. Just clear it out! It’s yours!”

That scares them to death when they say “Perizzites.” They’re the village dwellers. The “Rephaites” are the giants.

“We can’t do that!” So they’re resisting it.

Are we being a little tough on the Manassehites?

No, not at all. Our proof is this—what did he do with the five girls who came with a legitimate request earlier in the passage? The Lord commanded, “Yes, it’s yours! This is your inheritance. You’re going to take it.”

But now what about this request? He has a totally different attitude toward it. He says, “Come on you guys. You’ve got

what you're going to get. Go clear it and it's yours, but I'm not giving you some more because I don't feel that God is in this."

Notice in the very next verse he said:

**v. 16 The people of Joseph replied, "The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel."**

"The people of Joseph replied, "The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel."

Joshua's not intimidated by that either.

**v. 17 But Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—"You are numerous and very powerful. You will have not only one allotment**

"But Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—"You are numerous and very powerful."—you already told us that—"You will have not only one allotment"

**v. 18 but the forested hill country as well. Clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours; though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out."**

“but the forested hill country as well. Clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours; though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out.”

After all, remember Hazar hamstringing the horses and burned the chariots. It’s the same God that’s alive at Hazar who is alive now and He’s ready to work.

We’re going to leave the tribe of Manasseh with their nose out of joint here, not getting as much as they wanted—although they got a whole lot.

Now we have eleven lessons as we summarize the teaching of the chapter.

Lesson #1: When suffering comes, we must see it as from the hand of God to produce Christlike character.

Realize that’s why it’s there. He’s using it to produce Christlike character.

Lesson #2: In suffering God expects us to forget the past and to press on to the future.

Lesson #3: The Lord is waiting to assume the responsibility for our burdens and problems.

He wants to be our Shechem. He’s waiting to assume the responsibility for our burdens and problems.

Lesson #4: Happy anticipation can be ours when we are expecting something good from our suffering.

God is going to use it for good so we anticipate that with happy anticipation.

Lesson #5: The Lord himself is our hiding place in the midst of the storm.

We saw that in Micmethath in the study.

Lesson #6: The Father is glorified when we bear fruit as a result of our suffering.

Lesson #7: A vital principle for us to learn is to turn it over to God and to trust Him with the results.

That's the Kanah Ravine—a place of the reeds.

Lesson #8: He is the house of rest for His weary pilgrim.

Now these last three lessons have to do with those last verses

Lesson #9: Godliness with contentment is great gain.

That's 1 Timothy 6:6. They should have been content with what the Lord had given them but they wanted more.

Lesson #10: A compromise with Canaan now can kill the

blessing of a future.

We need to present that to young people today.

Lesson #11: With God there are no free lunches.

We just aren't going to find a bird nest on the ground waiting to be plopped into our hand. We're going to have to clear some timber and get after it—get on with it. That's the way we grow and develop in our lives.

Christine Wyrzten has an album called “For Those Who Hurt.” And in her last song she talks about suffering and here are the words of her song as we close:

(Words from Christine Wyrzten's album “For Those Who Hurt”)

Those of us who are God's children need not wander aimlessly when suffering comes. We've been given a pattern. Christ, who suffered for us, is our example. This musical collection is given to you in love. It is offered as an encouragement, for hope is born when we follow Christ and will be culminated on the glorious day when we shall, for the first time, see Him.

Lie down, find your rest.

In the loving arms of Jesus

Come build your happiness.

And the world can't harm you anymore,

You're protected by the blood of Christ, our Lord.

We know that we sin,  
But if you ask God's forgiveness  
There's perfect peace in Him.  
And the world can't harm you anymore,  
You're protected by the blood of Christ, our Lord.

And when a soul is born to Him  
The angels start to sing  
Alleluia, Allelu...Give glory to the King.

So let the angels sing once more.  
Will you acknowledge Jesus  
As your one and only Lord?  
And the world can't harm you anymore,  
You're protected by the blood of Christ, our Lord.

And when a soul is born to Him  
The angels start to sing  
Alleluia, Allelu...Give glory to the King.

So let the angels sing once more.  
Will you acknowledge Jesus  
As your one and only Lord?  
And the world can't harm you anymore,  
You're protected by the blood of Christ, our Lord.  
Delivered by the blood of Christ, our Lord.  
(source unknown)

Father, we thank You that the words of John come forth to us

in thought and meditation, that soon we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. Lord, haste the day when we will come into that full realization of being like Christ and the work completely done. Thank You that with the letter to the Philippians written by the apostle Paul under divine inspiration, we can be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in us will continue to perform it till the day of Jesus Christ. We love You and we thank You that You are at work in each of our lives as believers to mold us into the image of Your Son. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Seventeen – Joshua 17:1-18

### NOTES

v. 1 This was the allotment for the tribe of Manasseh as Joseph’s firstborn, that is, for Makir, Manasseh’s firstborn. Makir was the ancestor of the Gileadites, who had received Gilead and Bashan because the Makirites were great soldiers.

v. 2 So this allotment was for the rest of the people of Manasseh—the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher and Shemida. These are the other male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans.

v. 3 Now Zelophehad son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters, whose names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.

v. 4 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 brothers.” So Joshua gave them an inheritance along with the brothers of their father, according to the Lord’s command.

v. 5 Manasseh’s share consisted of ten tracts of land besides Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan,

v. 6 because the daughters of the tribe of Manasseh received an inheritance among the sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

v. 7 The territory of Manasseh extended from Asher to Micmethath east of Shechem. The boundary ran southward from there to include the people living at En Tappuah.

v. 8 (Manasseh had the land of Tappuah, but Tappuah itself, on the boundary of Manasseh, belonged to the Ephraimites.)

v. 9 Then the boundary continued south to the Kanah Ravine. There were towns belonging to Ephraim lying among the towns of Manasseh, but the boundary of Manasseh was the northern side of the ravine and ended at the sea.

## NOTES

v. 10 On the south the land belonged to Ephraim, on the north to Manasseh. The territory of Manasseh reached the sea and bordered Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.

v. 11 Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh also had Beth Shan, Ibleam and the people of Dor, Endor, Taanach and Megiddo, together with their surrounding settlements (the third in the list is Naphoth).

v. 12 Yet the Manassites were not able to occupy these towns, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that region.

v. 13 However, when the Israelites grew stronger, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out completely.

v. 14 The people of Joseph said to Joshua, “Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We are a numerous people and the Lord has blessed us abundantly.”

v. 15 “If you are so numerous,” Joshua answered, “and if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go up into the forest and clear land for yourselves there in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites.”

v. 16 The people of Joseph replied, “The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel.”

v. 17 But Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh—“You are numerous and very powerful. You will have not only one allotment

v. 18 but the forested hill country as well. Clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours; though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out.”

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read Joshua 17:1-18 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. Whose allotment are we dealing with in chapter 17?

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3. How are the Gileadites related to Joseph?

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4. Locate, on a good biblical map, as many of these boundaries for Manasseh as possible.

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5. Who were Manasseh's neighbors on the north and the east, according to verse 10?

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6. What were the Manassites unable to do, according to verse 12?

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7. What request do the people of Joseph make of Joshua in verse 14?

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8. What decision does Joshua make in verses 17 & 18?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

**LESSON #1:** When suffering comes, we must see it as from the hand of God to produce Christlike character.

LESSON #2: In suffering, God expects us to forget the past and to press on to the future.

LESSON #3: The Lord is waiting to assume the responsibility for our burdens and problems.

LESSON #4: Happy anticipation can be ours when we are expecting something good from our suffering.

LESSON #5: The Lord Himself is our hiding place in the midst of the storm.

LESSON #6: The Father is glorified when we bear fruit as a result of our suffering.

LESSON #7: A vital principle for us to learn is to turn it over to God and to trust Him with the results.

LESSON #8: He is that house of rest for His weary pilgrims.

LESSON #9: Godliness with contentment is great gain.

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LESSON #11: With God there are no free lunches.

