

## Group Study Outline

### LAUNCH QUESTIONS

What do you think of when people talk about our inheritance as Christians?  
Do you find this easy to look forward to?  
What makes it hard to look forward to it?

*Today we're looking at the people of Israel receiving their inheritance in Canaan...*

### SCAN Joshua 13:1-14:5

### QUESTIONS

Why do you think the bible records such detailed information about the land Israel conquered? What is God trying to teach us?

Why do the Levites receive no territory? What is their inheritance instead?  
What should this remind the people of? (See Psalm 16:5-6, 73:25-28, 142:5 note portion in this context means inheritance)  
What is their true hope/inheritance?  
How does this help us look forward to the new creation?

### READ Joshua 14:6-15

Why do you think Caleb gets mentioned right at the start of this section, before the land is divided out?  
In what ways is he a good example to the Israelites?  
What does he teach us about what it means to 'wholly serve the Lord'?  
Consider your conversations with other believers over the past week. Have you wholly served the Lord, or are you at risk of causing the hearts of others to melt (v8)?  
How can we be sure to encourage one another as the day of Jesus return approaches (Heb 10:24-25).  
Do you trust God more today than you did five/ten/fifty-five years ago (v10-11)?  
Are you serving him as wholeheartedly today as you did then? Why/why not?  
How does this passage encourage us to keep trusting God?

### READ Hebrews 12:1-2.

How should we respond to the witness of Old Testament saints like Caleb?  
What do you need to lay aside at the moment in order to run the race as Caleb did?

### PRAY

Thank God for the inheritance that we have been promised  
Say sorry for the times we have failed to trust him, discouraged others, or lost our enthusiasm for him over the years.  
Ask God to help us serve him wholly as Caleb did. Pray especially for those who are finding it hard to trust him in their current circumstances.

# Joshua 13:8-14:15



## 'Joshua' at a glance

Ever since Adam and Eve were evicted from Eden, God's people had been homeless. He promised Abraham a land for his descendants where they could live securely, telling him in Genesis 15:13-16 that they would be slaves for 400 years before finally receiving the land. Abraham's family grew and moved to Egypt. After their slavery, God brought the people out through Moses and got them to the border of this Promised Land. Moses then died and it was down to Joshua to take them into the land God was giving them.

The book of Joshua follows the adventures of Israel as they enter the land, judge the people living there, and settle into their allotted inheritances. It's a remarkably upbeat book, with only the occasional hint that all is not well with God's people. The punchline of the story comes in Joshua 21:45, "Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed: all came to pass."

## Where this passage fits in...

The land has been subdued and now needs to be divided amongst the tribes. Chapters 13-19 describe this division. Chapter 13:8ff describe the land that has already been allocated. Chapter 14 focuses on the request of Caleb.

## Theme Sentence

God is giving his people the land, Caleb is a witness to God's faithfulness.

## Application

- The inheritance of the Levites reminds us that our ultimate inheritance is the Lord.
- The example of Caleb encourages us to wholly follow the Lord.
- The witness of Caleb encourages us to trust that God will keep his promises, and points us to the greater witness of Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-4).

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## Commentary

*[these notes follow the 22 February 2015 sermon at Emmanuel]*

Chapters 13-21 of Joshua recount in great detail the allocation of the land to the people of Israel. The long lists of names and places mean it's not the most exciting read. But it's important to see that these are actual physical places that the Israelites really did inherit. God's promises are not vague theoretical hopes. They are true words with concrete fulfillment. This detailed evidence that God keeps his promises might not be easy to read, but it should fill us with hope.

13:8

We start this section with a recap of the situation so far. Two tribes, Reuben and Gad, together with half of the tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the East side of the Jordan. The story is told in the Numbers 21:21-35. In the days of Moses, when Israel was approaching the land from the East, they were attacked by the two local kings, Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan. They defeated these kings. Then (Numbers 32) the two and a half tribes asked Moses if they could settle in the territory of these two defeated kings. Moses agreed on the condition that they crossed the Jordan with the rest of Israel to help clear the land in the West. This is the background to the discussion with Joshua in Joshua 1, and the episode in Joshua 22.

13:9-13

The extent of the land on the East of the Jordan. Note the negative in verse 13. The Israelites hadn't managed to completely clear the land. This becomes a problem later on.

13:14

The Levites get no land (see also verse 33, and 14:3-4). They were chosen by God to serve him and have no territory of their own. The background to this is the rebellion of Israel in worshipping the golden calf (Exodus 32) and the faithfulness of the Levites. So instead of receiving a portion of territory, the Lord is the inheritance for the Levites. In this they remind Israel of what the real inheritance is: a covenant relationship with God.

13:15-23

Territory of Reuben

13:24-28

Territory of Gad

13:29-31

Territory of (half of) Manasseh

13:32-33

Summary

14:1-5

These verses open the section outlining the division of the land (note the similar wording at the end of this section of Joshua - 19:51). They recap for us why there are only 9½ tribes still waiting for an inheritance. Because 2½ tribes had already received their portion (v3) and whilst Joseph was counted as two tribes (v4), thereby taking the total number of tribes to 13, one of the other tribes, Levi, was to receive no land (v3,4). So all the tribes are accounted for.

14:6-9

The division of the land starts with Judah, and the allocation to Judah begins with Caleb. This parallels the granting of land to Joshua at the end of this section (19:49-50).

Caleb is the model Israelite in that he 'wholly followed the Lord' (v8,9 &14). He was the model of faith that the previous generation of Israel should have followed in the wilderness, but didn't. The background to this is Numbers 13&14. The other spies made the 'hearts of the people melt' (v8). This is Joshua language, see 2:11, 5:1 referring to the fear experienced by God's enemies in the land when they hear of the triumph of Israel's God. But it also refers to Israel when they sin against God, as in the episode with Achan (7:5). Here the spies have made Israel believe that God is not with them - in contrast to Caleb. The spies die of plague, and the Israelites of that generation over the age of 20 are told they will not inherit the land, but will die in the wilderness. But because Caleb wholly followed the Lord, Moses promised him that he would inherit the very land that he had spied out. Whilst the rest of his generation died in the desert, he (and Joshua) would remain alive to receive the inheritance.

14:10-12

So now the day has come for Caleb to claim his inheritance. God has promised him and he is trusting in that promise (see the repeated references to God's words in v6, 10, 12). Despite being eighty-five, he testifies that God has kept him alive and maintained his strength for war, so that he is keen to go and claim the inheritance he has been promised. He is still wholly following the Lord. As such he is a model to the current generation of Israelites who should be going forth in faith to claim the land that God has promised to them.

14:13-15

Joshua grants Caleb his request, and we're told that Hebron became Caleb's. We get the story of how this happened in 15:13-19. Note the reference to the Anakim here and verse 12. These were large warriors who made the Israelites feel small (like grasshoppers, Num 13:33!). But Caleb is not bothered by their presence in Hebron, and drives them out.