

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
3-29-23

Joshua 15

The Borders Of The Province Of Judah – Verses 1-4

¹ The allotment for the tribe of Judah, according to its clans, extended down to the territory of Edom, to the Desert of Zin in the extreme south. ² Their southern boundary started from the bay at the southern end of the Dead Sea, ³ crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to Zin and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it ran past Hezron up to Addar and curved around to Karka. ⁴ It then passed along to Azmon and joined the Wadi of Egypt, ending at the Mediterranean Sea. This is their southern boundary.

15:1-4 Joshua gave this land to the *tribe of Judah. Judah was the largest *tribe. It was also the most important one. Genesis 49:10 tells us that the king would come from Judah. This refers to Jesus, although Moses wrote the Book of Genesis long before Jesus. Jesus belonged to the *tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14).

15:4 Notice that these boundaries and descriptions of the Promised Land are very specific. The east edge of this land was at the Dead Sea (also called the Salt Sea). And the western edge was at the Mediterranean Sea (also called the Great Sea). It included all the land in between. God was telling Israel exactly what to do, and he was giving them just what they needed. They had no excuse for disobedience.

The Borders Of The Province Of Judah – Verses 5-12

⁵ The eastern boundary is the Dead Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. The northern boundary started from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan, ⁶ went up to Beth Hoglah and continued north of Beth Arabah to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. ⁷ The boundary then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor and turned north to Gilgal, which faces the Pass of Adummim south of the gorge. It continued along to the waters of En Shemesh and came out at En Rogel. ⁸ Then it ran up the Valley of Ben Hinnom along the southern slope of the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem). From there it climbed to the top of the hill west of the Hinnom Valley at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. ⁹ From the hilltop the boundary headed toward the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, came out at the towns of Mount Ephron and went down toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath Jearim). ¹⁰ Then it curved westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, ran along the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Kesalon), continued down to Beth Shemesh and crossed to Timnah. ¹¹ It went to the northern slope of Ekron, turned toward Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah and reached Jabneel. The boundary ended at the sea. ¹² The western boundary is the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea. These are the boundaries around the people of Judah by their clans.

15:5-12 The description of the east border and the west border of Judah is simple. These borders are indicated by two waters: 'the Salt Sea', or the Dead Sea, 'as far as the mouth of the Jordan River' in the east (Joshua 15:5) and 'the Great Sea', or the Mediterranean Sea, in the west (Joshua 15:12). The north border is described in detail (Joshua 15:5-1 Kings :) because it delimits Judah's territory from the other tribes.

The Land Allotted To Caleb And His Family – Verses 13-19

¹³ In accordance with the LORD's command to him, Joshua gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh a portion in Judah—Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) ¹⁴ From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, the sons of Anak. ¹⁵ From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher). ¹⁶ And Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Aksah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher." ¹⁷ Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took it; so Caleb gave his daughter Aksah to him in marriage. ¹⁸ One day when she came to Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What can I do for you?" ¹⁹ She replied, "Do me a special favor. Since you have given me land in the Negev, give me also springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

15:13-16 He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife: Caleb was not only a man of great and bold deeds (the driving out of the children of Anak) but also a man who encouraged others to great and bold deeds. He did this by offering his daughter in marriage to the man who was bold enough to conquer a city to have her.

15:16-19 Othniel became Israel's first judge after Joshua's death (Judges 1:13; 3:9-11). He played an important role in reforming Israel by chasing away an oppressive enemy army and bringing peace back to the land. Thus Caleb's legacy of faithfulness continued to the next generation.

15:13-19 Caleb provided for his children. It is important that we provide for our children. We give physical provisions to them. We must also provide for their *spiritual needs. We should read the Bible with them. We should pray with them. We should also pray for them.

15:19 Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water: As well, Caleb's daughter imitated her father's boldness in asking for a blessing. She did not hesitate to ask her father for some choice springs.

The Cities, Villages, And Regions Occupied By The Tribe Of Judah – Verses 20-32

20 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, according to its clans: 21 The southernmost towns of the tribe of Judah in the Negev toward the boundary of Edom were: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, 22 Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, 23 Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, 24 Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, 25 Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (that is, Hazor), 26 Amam, Shema, Moladah, 27 Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, 28 Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, 29 Baalah, Iyim, Ezem, 30 Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, 31 Ziklag, Madmanah, Sansannah, 32 Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain and Rimmon—a total of twenty-nine towns and their villages.

15:20 Here the towns and villages are named according to the different territories in which they are located. In this way, the inheritance is enjoyed, in these different contexts. A village is not what we understand by it. It is more like a hamlet consisting of one or two families living and working together. It speaks of individual believers who share blessings with each other in a smaller context, for example a family context.

15:20-30 A city speaks more of a local church. Every family is different, as is every local church. We notice this when we read the letters to the various churches in the New Testament. Taking possession of the land is not something of the study room, to enjoy those things only for ourselves.

It is something we share with our families, fathers, mothers and children or also with the brothers and sisters with whom we form a local church.

15:31 Of these tribes only the men have captured the inheritance. Although, they did not do this for themselves, but for others. Their wives and children have never seen the inheritance. Not sharing with others what we have taken possession of is also visible in Ephraim and Manasseh: there are hardly any villages and towns mentioned of them. Judah really is a tribe after the thoughts of God.

15:32 Spiritually speaking, the border of Judah is a curious border. No tribe has a view like Judah. Those who live in the south have the view on Edom (Joshua 15:21-Jonah :). Edom is a brother nation and at the same time the most hateful enemy. Edom speaks of the flesh in the believer. That limit may not be crossed, that is to say that the flesh may not have the opportunity to enter the inheritance, because that will result in destruction of (the enjoyment of) the inheritance.

The Western Foothills – Verses 33-47

33 In the western foothills: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, **34** Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, **35** Jarmuth, Adullam, Sokoh, Azekah, **36** Shaaraim, Adithaim and Gederah (or Gederothaim)—fourteen towns and their villages. **37** Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, **38** Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, **39** Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, **40** Kabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, **41** Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah and Makedah—sixteen towns and their villages. **42** Libnah, Ether, Ashan, **43** Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, **44** Keilah, Akzib and Mareshah—nine towns and their villages. **45** Ekron, with its surrounding settlements and villages; **46** west of Ekron, all that were in the vicinity of Ashdod, together with their villages; **47** Ashdod, its surrounding settlements and villages; and Gaza, its settlements and villages, as far as the Wadi of Egypt and the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.

15:33-47 Then Joshua 15:33-2 Corinthians : mention the cities in the lowland. That is the low part of the land between the sea and the mountains of Judea. The low speaks of the realm of Christian life where heavenly blessings are shown, the practical life of faith of every day. In the letter to the Ephesians, those territories are seen in marriages and families and working environment. Women and men, children and parents, slaves and gentlemen are all addressed (Ephesians 5:22-Micah :: Ephesians 6:1-Numbers :Ephesians 6:5-1 Samuel :).

The Hill Country – Verses 48-61

48 In the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Sokoh, **49** Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir), **50** Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, **51** Goshen, Holon and Giloh—eleven towns and their villages. **52** Arab, Dumah, Eshan, **53** Janim, Beth Tappuah, Apekah, **54** Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) and Zior—nine towns and their villages. **55** Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, **56** Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, **57** Kain, Gibeah and Timnah—ten towns and their villages. **58** Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, **59** Maarath, Beth Anoth and Eltekon—six towns and their villages. **60** Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim) and Rabbah—two towns and their villages. **61** In the wilderness: Beth Arabah, Middin, Sekakah, **62** Nibshan, the City of Salt and En Gedi—six towns and their villages.

15:48 There are also cities in the hill country (Joshua 15:48-1 Peter :). This relates to knowing the victories in Christ in the heavenly places. Paul prays for the believers in Ephesus that they will know their blessings (Ephesians 1:17-Ecclesiastes :). John is taken “in the spirit to a great and high mountain” to see the new Jerusalem, that is the church (Revelation 21:10). Churches like Ephesus are located “in the hill country”. Are there still such churches in Christianity today?

15:61-62 Finally, the cities are mentioned in the wilderness of Judea, east of the mountains to the Dead Sea (Joshua 15:61-1 John :). Judea is constantly reminded of the wilderness, its aridity. The awareness of all the blessings in heaven also includes the awareness that this world has nothing to offer for faith. In the kingdom of peace, however, the wilderness will “blossom like a crocus” (Isaiah 35:1). That is what faith looks forward to.

Enemies That Judah Could Not Drive Out – Verse 63

⁶³ Judah could not dislodge the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem; to this day the Jebusites live there with the people of Judah.

15:63 However much the Judeans may occupy a special place in God’s heart, it is no guarantee that the people will have complete faithfulness. As a tribe they lack the strength (faith) to drive the enemy out to the last man.

15:63 Every testimony, every family has the responsibility to ensure that every enemy is driven out and that the land is possessed, so that all are saturated. The history of the church on earth unfortunately shows that the enemy has not been completely eliminated.