Part 8/33 – **The Land of Promise**

*10/25/15* – Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua

Key thought: God keeps His promises to Abraham that the land of Canaan will belong to His descendants. The Israelites receive this land as God’s gift. Now the question arises: Will they show their thankfulness by remaining faithful?

*After the Israelites left Mount Sinai, God led them to the borders of Canaan, and told them to go in and conquer it. But the Israelites were afraid of the inhabitants of Canaan; they did not trust God's promise to* ***give*** *them the land, and murmured against Him.*

*As punishment, they had to wander in the desert for many years like refugees. Yet God had planned to keep His promise to Abraham and to* ***give*** *His chosen people a land where they could live as a separate nation. Forty years later, Joshua led a new generation of Israelites across the Jordan into Canaan. Under his strong leadership, and with the constant help and intervention of God, they conquered the land and divided it among the twelve tribes.*

*The Israelites received this land as* ***God’s gift****, according to His plan to keep them as a separate people. He expected them to serve Him as their God, and to care for the land He had given them. Again and again He reminded them that they belong to Him, and warn them of the danger of becoming like the heathen tribes around them. The big question was: Would the Israelites remain faithful to God?*

1. What was the pattern of Israel's wandering in the desert?
2. The Book of Joshua has several different accounts that are meant to remind us of what central truth?
3. What is stewardship actually about?
4. Stewardship is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Is stewardship a spiritual matter? Why?
6. What is the difference between the way that we give gifts and the way that God gives gifts?

Main takeaways:

* Realizing the important step God took in giving the people land, and the responsibility this gift placed on the Israelites
* Thanking God for all of the gifts that He has given to you, and considering how you can be good stewards of them

Key Bible passage:

**Deuteronomy 26:1–11, 18, 19** – This passage in Deuteronomy reads like an ancient creed. It even has three articles. It is a harvest festival confession of God’s great acts in the past, leading up to the present enjoyment of the fruitfulness of the land. The three themes are: the election of the patriarchs; the rescue of Israel from slavery in Egypt; the gift of the Promised Land – all God’s doing.

Verses 18 and 19 not only highlight God’s grace in making Israel a specially blessed nation; they also show that God can rightfully expect obedience and holiness in response. Note how God’s gift precedes His demands! He makes Israel into a special people – and then He expects that they live as such.

For reflection

We who are God’s New Testament people have a story to tell of how God made us His own and did great things for us. How do we remember our history as God’s people, and celebrate the fact that God has made us His own?

Part 8/33 – **The Land of Promise** – **Bible Study**

Bible search

1. **Numbers 13:1 – 14:25**: God's punishment fell on the Israelites when they listened to the discouraging report of the spies and rebelled against Moses and God's command to conquer the land.

*Why did the people believe the adverse report of the spies? Discuss the punishment that came on them.*

2. **Numbers 21:4-9**: In a remarkable way, God delivered the rebellious Israelites after He punished them for complaining against Him.

*Why is God’s way of saving the Israelites so significant? What impression of the Israelites do we gain from the accounts of their desert wanderings? Why has this been recorded?*

3. **Numbers 27:12–14** and **Deuteronomy 34**: Moses did not live to see the conquest of Canaan, but died on Mount Nebo, in sight of the Promised Land.

*Discuss why God did not let Moses enter the land of Canaan. “There has never been a prophet in Israel like Moses.”  Discuss*

4. **Joshua 1:1–9**: God gave the Israelites a strong, new leader, and prepared him for his task of leading them in the conquest of the land.

*Why could Joshua be confident as he prepared for the coming battles? Why was it important that the Israelites continue to hear God’s Word?*

5. **Joshua 12**: Under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, God kept His promise to Abraham by giving the Israelites all the land He had promised.

*How did God continually show that the land was His gift to the Israelites? (Joshua 10:10–13) Trace on a map the extent of the land occupied by the Israelites.*

6. **Joshua 24:1–28**: Before he died, Joshua assembled the Israelites, and made them promise to serve the true God and to remember His covenant.

*What was Joshua's final reminder and warning? How did he try to keep the Israelites faithful?*

For discussion

1. The heathen tribes of Canaan were destroyed by the Israelites. This was God's punishment of those wicked people and part of His plan for the Israelites. Read **Joshua 10:40–42** and **Deuteronomy 18:9–12**.

2. Why was the destruction of the Canaanites necessary so that God could carry out His plans to bless the whole world? Does this destruction of heathen nations mean that “holy wars” are acceptable to God?

3. God has given us a land filled with good things. How can we be good caretakers of our country, and of the good things God gives us?

For reflection

Read **Deuteronomy 26:1–11, 18, 19**.

We who are God's New Testament people have a story to tell of how God made us His own and did great things for us. How do we remember our history as God’s people, and celebrate the fact that God has made us His own?