

Joshua Chapter Twenty-One – Teaching Notes

Introduction: A key idea in the book of Joshua is God bless obedience. Today, we hope to discuss the towns of the Levites.

Body:

Read Joshua 21:1-45

E. Towns of the Levites. The Levites receive towns and pasture land from the various tribes. The Levites are broken into three clans. There is an itemization of which clan received which towns from which tribe of Israel. There were 48 towns given to the Levites throughout the land given to Israel. No one lived more than 10 miles from a Levite. The text ends with mention that God has kept His promise.

Applications –

- **Compensating church staff.** Notice in vss. 1-3 that Levites asked for and received the land that was promised to them. First, we should not abuse anyone. Those who go over and beyond should receive some kind of compensation. Those who normally go over and beyond should be compensated normally and generously. Second, the compensation of church staff is tied to church revenue. The more the church receives, the more it can give. *Let's work on being generous with our church staff.* This will become more important as the church needs more and more staff because of fewer and fewer volunteers, while the demands on the church are increasing.

- **Be thankful.** Notice in vs. 20 that all of God's people got something. There are some who would miss out on enjoying their blessings, because they would have been too busy comparing themselves to others. Some would have been upset about being last. Some would have been upset about being referred to as the "rest of the Kohathite clans." *Let's work on being thankful for whatever God gives us.* Think about how this application fits into family, church, job, and community.

- **Getting along with one another.** Notice in vs. 12 that some of the land was near Caleb's inheritance. Remember that Caleb was one of the seniors among the people. The location of the land meant that they had to get along with one another. This is true today. We have to learn to get along with one another, so we can enjoy what God has given us. This getting along with one another includes generational issues. The old, middle aged, and young have to get along with one another, instead of demonizing or ignoring one another. *Let's work on getting along with one another, so we can enjoy what God has placed in our trust.*

- **God's multiple purposes.** Notice in vss. 13, 21, 27, 32, 38 some of the Levites towns are also cities of refuge. Again, instead of complaining, we should be thankful. Perhaps one of the reasons for the dual role is to make sure that there were some Levites or spiritual leaders around to help discern issues related to city of refugee issues. In like manner, we never know all of the reasons that God places us and our blessings where He places them. *Let's learn to simply be thankful for God giving us whatever He gives us.*

- **Staying close to the man/woman of God.** Notice in this chapter that the Levite towns were situated in such a way that none of God's people were more than 10 miles away from one of them. In like manner, we should strive to stay near a man/woman of God. We should strive to stay near a family of God (i.e., church family). Having houses and land but no significant connection with God and His people is a mistake. *Let's work on staying close to God and His people especially a man/woman of God.*

- **God the promise keeper.** Notice in vss. 43-45 that God is a promise keeper. This is great news. God promises all kinds of blessings to those who obey His will. And God promises punishment to those who don't obey His will. *Let's live like we believe that God is a promise keeper.* Such living should include obedience that anticipates the blessings of God. Such living should be known for avoiding sins because of God's promises to punish.

Conclusion: Let's work on obeying God. God has much for those who obey His will.