

Title: Opportunities Not Excuses - Joshua 17 1-18

Read:

¹⁻² This is the lot that fell to the people of Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn. (Gilead and Bashan had already been given to Makir, Manasseh's firstborn and father of Gilead, because he was an outstanding fighter.) So the lot that follows went to the rest of the people of Manasseh and their clans, the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hopher, and Shemida. These are the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph by their clans. ³⁻⁴ Zelophehad son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, only daughters. Their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. They went to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders and said, "God commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our kinsmen." And Joshua did it; he gave them, as God commanded, an inheritance amid their father's brothers. ⁵⁻⁶ Manasseh's lot came to ten portions, in addition to the land of Gilead and Bashan on the other side of the Jordan, because Manasseh's daughters got an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the people of Manasseh. ⁷⁻¹⁰ The boundary of Manasseh went from Asher all the way to Micmethath, just opposite Shechem, then ran southward to the people living at En Tappuah. (The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah itself on the border of Manasseh belonged to the Ephraimites.) The boundary continued south to the Brook Kanah. (The cities there belonged to Ephraim although they lay among the cities of Manasseh.) The boundary of Manasseh ran north of the brook and ended at the Sea. The land to the south belonged to Ephraim; the land to the north to Manasseh, with the Sea as their western border; they meet Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. ¹¹ Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh also held Beth Shan, Ibleam, and the people of Dor, Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo, together with their villages, and the third in the list is Naphoth. ¹²⁻¹³ The people of Manasseh never were able to take over these towns—the Canaanites wouldn't budge. But later, when the Israelites got stronger, they put the Canaanites to forced labor. But they never did get rid of them. ¹⁴ The people of Joseph spoke to Joshua: "Why did you give us just one allotment, one solitary share? There are a lot of us, and growing—God has extravagantly blessed us." ¹⁵ Joshua responded, "Since there are so many of you, and you find the hill country of Ephraim too confining, climb into the forest and clear ground there for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim." ¹⁶ But the people of Joseph said, "There's not enough hill country for us; and the Canaanites who live down in the plain, both those in Beth Shan and its villages and in the Valley of Jezreel, have iron chariots." ¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Joshua said to the family of Joseph (to Ephraim and Manasseh): "Yes, there are a lot of you, and you are very strong. One lot is not enough for you. You also get the hill country. It's nothing but trees now, but you will clear the land and make it your own from one end to the other. The powerful Canaanites, even with their iron chariots, won't stand a chance against you."

Think:

These people are a moany old bunch aren't they? They get given a great opportunity to build a homeland and what's their answer. "But it's hard to cut down the trees and there are some mean people over there." I'm glad Joshua told them to get on with it. God puts so many opportunities in front of us, but we do have to do something about them to reap the blessings that God wants us to have. If God just delivered the end result then we would be no more than his pets. Just like a dog waits for its owner to put down the food we would be waiting for our God to deliver our every need. Our God doesn't deliver our every need but he does provide for our every need. He provides opportunities for us to use the talents that he us given us and then it is down to us. So maybe it's time we just got on with it.

Pray:

Lord please give me the strength to get on with things that you want me to do rather than make excuses. Amen.

Action:

What have you been making excuses about? Take a step to get on with it today. Bye.