

Allotments for Justice and Ministry

Joshua 20-21

I. Allotments of Cities of Refuge: Places for Justice (Joshua 20)

- A. The Accessibility of Yahweh's Justice.¹
- B. The Values of Yahweh's Justice (see Gen. 9:6, Num. 35:20-24)
- C. The Satisfaction of Justice (see Num. 35:32-34)

II. Allotments for Levites: Places for God's Truth to be Accessible (Josh. 21:1-42)

- A. Why are the Levites spread out in the land? (Josh. 18:7, Deut. 33:8, 10)
- B. Applications for us:
 - 1. In the New Covenant, we are to all serve in instructing each other in the word of God (Col. 3:16).
 - 2. Those who minister the Word full-time still have physical needs (1 Cor. 9:13-14)
 - 3. The way the Levites ask for what God has promised could serve us as a model for prayer.

III. A Lot of Faithfulness (Josh. 21:43-45)

- A. The Biblical storyline is one of promise and fulfillment. Joshua is one part of that.
- B. Does this mean that the promise of land is concluded for Israel at this point in the biblical storyline? (see Deut. 30:1-10)
 - 1. God has fulfilled much. They have been given the land, broken the central control of the Canaanites, and have God's promise that He will fight for them as each tribe takes its land (Josh. 13:6-7).
 - 2. However, Joshua tells us they won't fully obey in taking the land (Josh. 13:1, 16:10, 17:12-13).
 - 3. Their disobedience (beyond what happens in Joshua) is foretold in Deuteronomy 30:1-10.
 - a. The curses of the Mosaic Covenant will come on them when they disobey its terms, and they will be exiled from the land (v. 1).
 - b. A future generation of Israelites will repent because the Lord will give them new hearts – i.e., The New Covenant (v. 6, cp with Ezk. 36:23-27, Jer. 31:33-34).
 - c. This occurs *after* their initial possession of the land. So, Joshua 21 is *not* the final installment of this promise of experiencing the blessings in the land.
 - d. Israel will be brought back into the land and be fruitful in it (v. 5. Being fruitful in childbearing indicates this will not be in the New Heavens and Earth. It will be the Millennial Kingdom).
- C. Application for us:
 - 1. God is faithful – the Bible is a storyline of His faithfulness unfolding over time, through covenants, by His power. Trust Him and His promises based on His past works.
 - 2. Rest for His people comes as God defeats those who continue in rebellion against his good rule (see Josh. 21:44 cp. 2 Thess. 1:5-8).

¹ Some of the headings in the section come from Dale Ralph Davis's commentary, *Joshua: No Falling Words*.

