

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**April 26, 2016**

- ✓ **Joshua 16:1-17:18.** The Joseph tribes and territories of Ephraim and Manasseh.
- ✓ **2 Corinthians 11:24-33.** Paul’s suffering for righteousness sake.
- ✓ **Psalms 55.** Persecution and testing.

**COMMENTS:**

**Joshua 16:1-17:18.** In chapter 16 we have the allotments in the territory of Ephraim for the tribes of Joseph and in chapter 17 we have their allotments in the territory of Manasseh. Note in this section the failure to drive out all of the Canaanites. At the end of this section we see the Joseph tribes exhibit a degree of arrogance and greed in their confrontation with Joshua. They give no objective reason for the request; they simply provide their subjective evaluation that their great numbers justified the request. Moreover, they challenged the outcome of the lot, which was controlled by God. Therefore, in their request they were challenging the very workings of God Himself. Joshua responded with a challenge of his own in 17:15: if they were too constricted, then they should clear the land from the forests. They responded that even the entire hill country was not enough for them (17:16). Furthermore, there was fear of the Canaanites who had iron chariots. Of course, iron chariots would not be effective in the hills, especially in forested areas. This whole attitude of complaining about the Canaanites strikes a tone very reminiscent of the tone when the 10 spies came back from the land in Moses’ day. Any and all complaining is a sign of disorientation to life and the plan of God, and probably a sign that the believer is living under divine discipline. Note how Joshua turns the tables on the Joseph tribes in 17:17-18: ‘if you are so numerous and powerful, then you should be able to drive out the Canaanites and take the forested hill country to its extreme edges.’ Another way of putting it: if a believer thinks he is so great that he ought to have this or that, then being so great then he should be able to get this or that for himself instead of whining about it. Complaints are always a sign of spiritual weakness and disorientation in the Word of God.



**2 Corinthians 11:24-33.** We have the continuation of Paul's "foolish boasting" as he recounts his suffering for righteousness sake. Note that these testings/sufferings did not come from God. Christians need to stop saying that God is testing them. God tests no man with evil suffering (James 1:13). The tests and sufferings come from this world and God is there to deliver the person. God is not the author of evil and does not need evil suffering to advance the believer as we have studied in our last series. It is not like God is the Boy Scout who pushes the little old lady in traffic only to rescue her. If you look at your sufferings, you will see that they all come from a broken world, a broken world of disease as well as broken free wills. Yes, God does permit them and you can turn to God for deliverance, but that is not the same as saying God is sending the test, which the Bible says to stop doing. Moreover, all of this talk about God sending evil but not to tempt you is at best incoherent and at worst blasphemous as it still sees God as the Author of Evil, resembling the Devil more than the God who is the source of *goodness* as per James 1:17. More in our next Bible class.

**Psalms 55.** This psalm records David's experience of persecution through the betrayal of an intimate friend. Note how David cries out to God for help (1-2). Observe how he longs to escape the hostility (6-8). See how David asks God to destroy the wicked. All would agree that this is a test. But did God make David's friend betray him so God could then turn around and have David seek him? In all of these psalms of "testing" is there any indication that God is behind the evil? No! God allows evil to play out on different levels and this constitutes the test, not God arbitrarily sending evil testing our way. Again, God never sends evil suffering as a test. Take a look around at your tests and you will likely be able to trace every one of them to some part of this cursed, thorn and thistle world, be it cancer, heart disease, or arthritis as part of family history, *or* the broken volitions of people who love evil, or even the misunderstandings from broken understandings and lack of sympathy at times from our loved ones. Again, it is the broken world that is the source of evil testing, not God! Stop blaming God with bringing evil suffering into the life to make you better. God does not need evil to make you better even though He is always there to be the Solution. We really need to stop the victimology and pursue the theology—the Whole Truth, Total Truth!

**Romans 11:36** For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don