

THE FINAL POSSESSION OF CANAAN

BIBLE TEXT : Joshua 14:6-15; 19:49, 50; 21:43-45; 23:1-16

LESSON 177 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you" (Joshua 23:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Joshua 14:6-15

⁶ Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea.

⁷ Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart.

⁸ Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God.

⁹ And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.

¹⁰ And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while *the children of* Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I *am* this day fourscore and five years old.

¹¹ As yet I *am as* strong this day as *I was* in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so *is* my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

¹² Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims *were* there, and *that* the cities *were*

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Caleb's Inheritance

1 Caleb asked for the portion of land that the Lord had promised, Joshua 14:6-9;

Numbers 14:24

²⁴ But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

Numbers 14:30

³⁰ Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Deuteronomy 1:36

³⁶ Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord.

Isaiah 1:19

¹⁹ If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

2 God had kept Caleb alive and had preserved his physical condition, Joshua 14:10, 11;

Deuteronomy 30:20

²⁰ That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

Deuteronomy 34:7

⁷ And Moses *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Psalms 103:4-5

⁴ Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

⁵ Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Proverbs 3:1-2

¹ My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

² For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

3 Caleb knew that he would face the Anakims, but his trust was in God, Joshua 14:12-15;

Philippians 4:13

¹³ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Hebrews 11:33-34

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

II God's Word Fulfilled

1 Joshua was the last of the Children of Israel to receive an inheritance, Joshua 19:49;

Philippians 2:3-4

³ Let nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

⁴ Look not every man on his own things, but every man also

great *and* fenced: if so be the Lord *will be* with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.

¹³ And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

¹⁴ Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.

¹⁵ And the name of Hebron before *was* Kirjatharba; *which Arba was* a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war.

Joshua 19:49-50

⁴⁹ When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them:

⁵⁰ According to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked, *even* Timnathserah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein.

Joshua 21:43-45

⁴³ And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

⁴⁴ And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.

⁴⁵ There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

Joshua 23:1-16

¹ And it came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies

on the things of others.

² His lot was selected from among his brethren, the Ephraimites, Joshua 19:50;

Numbers 13:6

⁶ Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

Numbers 13:16

¹⁶ These *are* the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.

³ All the good things that God had promised had come to pass, Joshua 21:43-45;

1 Kings 8:56

⁵⁶ Blessed *be* the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

Titus 1:2

² In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Hebrews 10:23

²³ Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

III The Esteemed Soldier and Statesman

¹ Joshua, the aged, called the heads of the tribes, the elders, judges, and officers together to exhort them, Joshua 23:1,2;

Acts 20:17-35

¹⁷ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

¹⁸ And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

¹⁹ Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

²⁰ *And* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

²¹ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

²² And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

²³ Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

²⁴ But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

²⁵ And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

²⁶ Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*.

²⁷ For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

²⁹ For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

³¹ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

³² And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the

round about, that Joshua waxed old *and* stricken in age.

² And Joshua called for all Israel, *and* for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old *and* stricken in age:

³ And ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the Lord your God *is* he that hath fought for you.

⁴ Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.

⁵ And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised unto you.

⁶ Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom *to* the right hand or *to* the left;

⁷ That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them:

⁸ But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day.

⁹ For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but *as for* you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

¹⁰ One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he *it is* that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

¹¹ Take good heed therefore unto

word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

³³ I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

³⁴ Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

³⁵ I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

2 The land had been divided, but some of the heathen still remained, Joshua 23:3-5; Deuteronomy 7:22, 23;

Judges 1:1-4

¹ Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

² And the Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

³ And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

⁴ And Judah went up; and the Lord delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men.

Psalms 44:1-3

¹ We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

² *How* thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out.

³ For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

3 Joshua solemnly warned Israel to serve God, to shun idols and idolaters, Joshua 23:6-13;

Psalms 1:1-2

¹ Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Proverbs 4:26-27

²⁶ Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

²⁷ Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Proverbs 16:13

¹³ Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

2 Corinthians 6:15-16

¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

4 God's goodness had been secured, but evil was inevitable if Israel failed to keep the commandments, Joshua 23:14-16;

Judges 2:11-15

¹¹ And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim:

¹² And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

¹³ And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.

¹² Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even* these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

¹³ Know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out *any of* these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.

¹⁴ And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof.

¹⁵ Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.

¹⁶ When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

¹⁴ And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

¹⁵ Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

Luke 21:33-36

³³ Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

³⁴ And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

³⁵ For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

³⁶ Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

NOTES:

The Land Occupied

Joshua was an old man and stricken in years by the time the important battles of Canaan were fought and won. God had prospered Joshua and the men of Israel in all the wars they had undertaken, yet there was much land still to be occupied (**Joshua 13:1-6** ¹ Now Joshua was old *and* stricken in years; and the Lord said unto him, Thou art old *and* stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed. ² This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri, ³ From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, *which* is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites: ⁴ From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians, unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites: ⁵ And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath. ⁶ All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim, *and* all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.). The main resistance of the enemy had been broken, through God's power and Joshua's army, but the actual occupation of all the land would still take a great number of years. The Lord, therefore, instructed Joshua to divide the land among the nine and a half tribes on the west side of Jordan, that each tribe might take up its possession and dispossess the enemy that remained in its inheritance. The promise of God was that He would drive out the enemy "by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee" (Deuteronomy 7:22).

Christian Soldiers

In many respects, the Christian warfare is similar to winning the land of Canaan by the Israelites. Many battles are fought side by side with comrades in the Gospel, while other battles must be worked out individually. When a Christian sees his brother struggling beneath the load of sickness, persecution, or destitution, it is his duty to put his shoulder under the burden and help his brother. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6'2)

There are other battles that a Christian goes through which cannot be seen by men. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (I Peter 4:12). God will have a tried and tested

people. Many of these trials cannot be analyzed by the finite mind; therefore they cannot be told to anyone. The object for which God is striving must be brought to fruition in the Christian soldier's life by God's help alone. These are the battles that must be waged and won individually. Paul spoke of these battles when he said: "For every man shall bear his own burden" (Galatians 6:5).

Dividing the Land

Naturally speaking, it would not be an easy task to divide this land among the nine and a half tribes of Israel. Joshua was a very wise statesman, and he was loved by all Israel; but had he attempted to divide this land between the tribes by his own wisdom, he would have run into trouble quickly. Somebody would soon be dissatisfied with his portion, for it is impossible to please everyone. However, the plan had long ago been spoken by the Lord as to how the land should be allotted. "Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few" (Numbers 26:55, 56). "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD" (Proverbs 16:33). God Himself had marked the portion for each tribe; consequently any dissatisfaction would actually be a quarrel with God.

Caleb's Request

Before the lots were cast, the children of Judah came with Caleb to Joshua and requested that he fulfill God's promise to Caleb (**Numbers 34:19** ¹⁹ And the names of the men are these: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh). Caleb rehearsed the stormy scene of Kadesh-barnea before Joshua who also remembered it well. God had promised Caleb at that time "the land whereinto he went," and that his seed should possess it (Numbers 14:24). God promised this blessing to Caleb because "he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully" (Numbers 14:24). Now Caleb asked for the land of his possession, and "another spirit" manifested itself again. Caleb did not ask for some broad, level plain, as Lot did; he asked for the mountain of Hebron, wherein the children of Anak dwelt. That was the country that he had spied out; that was the land whereof he brought his report to Moses: "I brought him word again as it was in mine heart."

The passing years had treated Caleb kindly. "I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in" (Joshua 14:11).

Caleb had longed for this Promised Land; and his desire years before had been: "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30). He told the Children of Israel at that time not to fear the people of the land, "for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them" (Numbers 14:9).

Rewards of Faith

Caleb now desired to show the people that his faith in God was justified. "If so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said" (Joshua 14:12). God honored His Word and Caleb's faith, for we read: "Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak" (Joshua 15:14).

If you desire to see God manifest Himself in your behalf, take an uncompromising stand upon any of His promises and hold on with unwavering faith. Caleb had to hold on to God's promise for 45 years, had to go through the dry, burning wilderness because his brethren failed; yet God fulfilled the promise. When you take hold of

God's promises, uncontrollable circumstances may surround you; but keep holding on to God, keep your faith and eyes on Him, for He will surely bring you through.

The Conqueror's Share

Joshua, the leader of Israel, was the last of the Children of Israel to receive his inheritance. This seems a remarkable thing and truly shows the wonderful spirit in that man of God. Joshua was the oldest and greatest of all the men of Israel at this time. He was commander of the armies that had conquered Canaan, and thus had the right to first choice in the land for himself and his family; but this act of waiting proved that he thought first of his country and people, rather than of any private interest of his own. Joshua thought not of himself until he saw all Israel settled in their possessions. This world would be a happier place in which to live if every man, and especially those who are in positions of authority, would follow Joshua's code of conduct.

Joshua received his inheritance among his brethren "according to the word of the LORD." It is probable that God gave Joshua a promise of his inheritance similar to the promise given Caleb. Joshua chose Timnathserah in Mount Ephraim and "built the city." While many among the Children of Israel received cities that they built not, and vineyards and olive- yards already planted, Joshua's inheritance had to be improved. Thus Christ, of whom Joshua is a type, dwelt humbly among men — not in pomp, but in poverty. He who came to give rest to His people had not so much as a place to lay His head (**Luke 9:58** ⁵⁸ And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.) .

Joshua's Solicitude

The closing records of the history of Joshua show a solemn pause and crisis in the career of Israel. They had attained success in Canaan through their faithfulness to God, and that faithfulness was due primarily to the outstanding leadership of Joshua. Now that leader was approaching the close of his life's span, with much work yet to be done. The conqueror of Canaan naturally felt a great solicitude for his people. The land had been divided and the people were happily settled in their possessions, but many of the heathen still remained.

In conquering the land, Israel had dealt a crushing blow to the Canaanites from which they would not quickly recover. However, Israel had been in possession of this land a number of years by this time and had made no further efforts to remove these people who remained in strongholds and fortifications among them.

Joshua therefore called a meeting of Israel, their elders, heads, judges, and officers. He had observed wherein Israel's danger lay: namely, in their associations with the Canaanites that remained. As long as these heathen remained in the land, Israel was in danger of idolatrous infection from the false gods these people worshiped. Joshua's burden was to set clearly before the people their true position and bind them to a renewed covenant with God, if possible.

Duty to God

Jacob had blessed his sons before his death, and in like manner Moses had blessed the twelve tribes of Israel. Joshua and the men of Israel had seen the fulfillment of these blessings in the greater part. God could have inspired Joshua to prophesy more of Israel's future, but that was not needful. There was one great need of the day, and that was the impressing upon posterity a sense of

the obligation of worship and of a knowledge of their duty to God. If Israel would serve God, Joshua knew that the future would be secure.

Joshua could point to the successes of the past campaigns. In every battle God had given them the victory; in every siege God had given them - the city. The God of the past was the God of the future, if Israel would only trust Him. Possibly much of the national army had been disbanded, but little did that matter. "One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you" (Joshua 23:10).

"Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you" (Joshua 23:14). Fidelity to God had brought generous dividends, and it always will. God kept His word because Israel at this time kept His covenant. Joshua pointed out that as good had resulted from faithfulness to God, so evil was the inevitable result of indifference to God. Failure to keep God's Word would result in the certain removal of Israel from his good land that God had given them. Joshua's words were fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity and more fully in the world-wide dispersion of the Jewish people since- their crucifixion of Christ.

But the words of Joshua to Israel cannot be read and assigned to Israel alone. They were inspired by God and have a meaning to all people everywhere. What was true in Israel's day is true in our day. As a man is faithful to God in all things, God's blessing and good and eternal life are graciously given; but as a man is indifferent and rebellious against God and His Word, evil and eternal death are the unalterable results "except ye repent."

QUESTIONS

- 1 How was the land of Canaan divided?
- 2 Were all the Canaanites conquered when the land was divided?
- 3 Who was Caleb, and what request did he make to Joshua? Did he receive his request?
- 4 When and where did Joshua receive his inheritance?
- 5 How did Joshua feel about Israel's future?
- 6 What action did Joshua take in an attempt to secure Israel's future?
- 7 How many things had failed of God's good promises to Israel?
- 8 How long did Israel follow Joshua's advice?