

POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND

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There is a false and greatly detrimental understanding of the Promised Land promoted by the church system today, which basically equates the Promised Land with Heaven—a heaven that is attained only after we die. This is a detrimental understanding because it does not prepare God’s people for the stark reality of the battles that face us upon entering the Promised Land, nor for the glorious inheritance that is truly ours. This article considers some of these realities.

I have stated previously that the experience of the ancient Israelites was a shadow and a type of spiritual realities today, and is instructive for our own spiritual journey. The Israelites had spent forty long years wandering in the wilderness after being delivered from the hand of Pharaoh in Egypt. Theirs had been a miraculous deliverance with signs and wonders accompanying. These miracles included the dividing of the Red Sea for their safe passage across, only to

close the waters to drown the Egyptian warriors pursuing them; providing a cloud by day and fire by night to guide them through their wilderness journey; and bringing forth water from a rock, among many others. Despite these demonstrations of God's care, they complained almost continuously.

There then came that decisive hour at Kadesh-barnea, when the Israelites were presented with the vision of the Promised Land. They were to go up and possess the land without fear, because the Lord God would deliver the land into their hands (Deut. 1:20-21). Spies were sent to scout out the land. The spies came back with a good report: that the land was flowing with milk and honey. The spies also reported that the people in the land were strong, giants in fact, and that the cities were fortified. All of the spies, excepting Joshua and Caleb, were in fear of the Canaanites, and their report struck fear in the heart of the people, who refused to go up despite God's directive to take the land and His promise that He would go before them. God's anger was kindled because of this, and he threatened to destroy that generation then and there. Moses interceded on behalf of the Israelites and God withheld his hand of judgment at that time. God did decree, however, that none of that generation, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, would enter into the Promised Land. The result was that the Israelites would spend much longer in the wilderness than necessary. I have written of this journey, and of the significance of that journey as a shadow and type of our own spiritual journey in [The Wilderness](#), and I would encourage you to read that article before reading further, if you have not done so already.

That second generation did enter the Promised Land, once again through the demonstration of the power of God when He held back the waters of the Jordan. Once across, they built a stone monument to memorialize God's mighty hand. In a previous article ([Entering the Promised Land](#)), I have discussed the significance of this experience as a foreshadowing of our own Promised Land entry. It is not enough, however, to merely *enter into* the Promised Land. We know that there is an enemy that inhabits this land and he comes in many forms. The Promised Land—which in New Testament terms is the Kingdom of God, or Kingdom of Heaven—*must be conquered and possessed!* Jesus said, "*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the*

violent take it by force” (Matthew 11:12). We must understand that the Kingdom of Heaven is not some sort of gift that is bequeathed to us after we die for a good life lived on this earth; it is a land to be conquered!

God’s Preparation for Possessing the Promised Land

God began preparing the Israelites for possessing the Promised Land while Moses was still in command. This preparation began many years earlier, while they were still in the wilderness; and more instructions as they were encamped on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho. There, He gave Moses some very specific instructions as to what the children of Israel were to do in order to possess the Promised Land; and once across, the Lord gave Joshua more directives. These preparations are beneficial for us as we come to possess the Kingdom of God, the land of promise that Jesus told us has been prepared for us.

Spying Out the Land

Long before Israel crossed the Jordan River at Gilgal, the Lord instructed Moses to send twelve spies into the land of Canaan, which was their Promised Land. Three kinds of information were brought back by these intelligence gatherers. The first had to do with the bounty of this land, *“whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not”* (Numbers 13:20). Second, they were to report as to the nature of the inhabitants, whether they be strong or weak. Finally, they were to assess the nature the dwelling places—whether they lived in tents or in fortified cities.

So the spies scouted out the land for 40 days. The number 40 is both fascinating and significant. In addition to this incident, we also observe that after the children of Israel entered the wilderness, Moses spent 40 days atop Mt. Sinai without food or water waiting upon the Lord to write upon the tablets the second time. Elsewhere, we see Noah and his family shut up in the ark for 40 days while God sent a flood to kill every living thing which was not contained in the ark. The prophet Ezekiel lay on his side 40 days for Israel’s sins. These are but a few of the

many instances of the number 40 in scripture. This number is seen many times in scripture and it is almost always used in connection with experiences or events that involve testing and trial or cleansing and purging. This would, indeed, be the test of a lifetime for the children of Israel.

Their report contained both an encouragement and a warning. The land was bountiful, flowing with milk and honey, as evidenced by huge clusters of grapes, and pomegranates and figs. But beware! The people who inhabit the land are giants, and they live in fortified cities. We know the rest of the story. The fear of the inhabitants dominated their report (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb) and they were controlled by fear. They did not believe they could conquer this enemy and the people chose to believe this bad report. They were tested and they failed to respond in faith. They would stay in the wilderness another 20 years until that entire generation would die off.

I believe I am speaking truth when I say that God has been sending out His spies in our day. These spies are the forerunners of that which God is preparing to do. Their report came back to us at Azusa Street and then in the 1940's and 1950's in what has come to be called "the Latter Rain Outpouring." These messengers, and the many who have come after, have tasted of the Kingdom and have brought back a positive report of the things that God has in store for us. Many have embraced this message but have turned a deaf ear to the other part of this message. *There are giants in the land!* These "name it and claim it" proselytizers of prosperity have held out a promise to multitudes that they can have whatever their heart desires (even their soulish heart) if only they have enough faith. Sadly, they have not warned of the giants in the land. They have failed to alert their followers to the refining and purging of the giants within that would set about to defeat them in their quest to possess this land of promise. Moreover, because the preoccupation of these prophets of prosperity seems to always be on material blessing, their followers remain blind to the true riches that are theirs to possess as they drive out and defeat the enemy that currently occupies their land of promise. While God is faithful in bringing material provision, only as the soulish forces within are conquered do we discover the true riches that God has in store for us! These are spiritual riches that give us peace in the midst of trial and

testing; joy in the face of tragedy; overcoming power and authority in the face of persecution and opposition. Just as the giants in the land are a shadow and type of the spiritual forces aligned against our quest to enter and possess the Kingdom of Heaven, so the pomegranates and grapes symbolize the spiritual riches that are prepared for us.

There have been Joshuas and Calebs, however—among whom are those we have linked to this website—who have been faithful to bring back a full report. Indeed, the land *is* flowing with milk and honey. But God’s true prophets in our day recognize that there is an enemy that must be defeated. They understand that the enemy is, first and foremost, within each of us. That enemy must be defeated. It is a formidable enemy. Anyone who honestly examines themselves will find a daunting foe. Many, like the children of Israel, are overwhelmed by this foe. They have heard the prosperity message of milk and honey, but when they encounter the obstacles to possessing this land, they are overwhelmed and discouraged, and even told that the reason for their failure is that they do not have enough faith. Oh that these charlatans who peddle this one-sided kingdom message would be exposed for who they are! Friend, the obstacles that you encounter are nothing more than God’s providential orchestration of circumstances to root out the enemy within you that would blind you from the true riches God has in store for you, and that would deter you from taking possession of them! God must have a people who are totally surrendered unto him; a people within whom the old Adam has been dealt a death blow. This is a victorious people in the face of battle. The good news is that, just as with the children of Israel, it is the Lord’s battle to be fought within each of us. He will accomplish and bring to completion that good work which He has begun. As we then move forth and encounter the enemy that would come against us from without, this, too, is the Lord’s battle and again He goes before us. We must not be deterred by the size of the enemy—without or within. We must also know that we will never defeat that enemy in our own strength. We must know the size of our God and that He, in fact, has *already* delivered the death blow to that enemy on Calvary. This is the knowledge in which we can march confidently forward in the battles ahead.

Drive Out the Inhabitants of the Land

After wandering in the wilderness another 20 years after they rebelled in fear to the spies report, the Lord brought the children of Israel to the plains of Moab, postured to cross the Jordan and enter into the Promised Land. There the Lord gave Moses more instructions for possessing the land once entered. First, He told Moses most emphatically that they were to drive out all the inhabitants of the land, to destroy their pictures and molten images and to tear down all of their high places (Numbers 33:52-53). He further made it very clear as to what the consequences would be if they failed to do this: *“But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass that those which ye let remain in them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell”* (Numbers 33:55). Anyone who has read the story of the Old Testament Israelites is very aware that this is exactly what happened because they failed to be completely obedient to the Lord on this matter.

There is a serious lesson in the experience of our Hebrew forefathers for those of us destined to enter and possess the land of promise that the Lord has prepared for us today. Contrary to what many think, and contrary to what the church system has taught—at least implicitly—the Kingdom of God is at present occupied by enemy forces. Paul makes this very clear when he writes to the Ephesian believers:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:10-12; NKJV).

Please note that these are spiritual hosts of wickedness in the *heavenly places*. This is our place of destiny that these hosts occupy. However, just as God promised the ancient Israelites that He would go before them and that He would

fight their battles, we receive the same promise. Once again, God's apostle to the Gentiles extends to us the assurance of our victory:

Yet in all these things (tribulation, distress, persecution, nakedness, famine, peril, sword) we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:37-39; NKJV).

There is an enemy that must be conquered, and *will* be conquered through the power of the Spirit as we submit our wills to His completely. This enemy may come to us from without, in the form of persecution, extreme financial distress (nakedness and famine), health and physical problems or a myriad of other forms. We are declared to be conquerors, because greater is He that is within us than He who is in the world (1 John 4:4). We conquer, not by natural means but by spiritual as we live and move and have our being in Christ. More often, the enemy to be conquered is within ourselves. Old Adam has his roots still within us. We respond with fleshly anger when our spouse or business partner fails to act as we believe they should. We are secretly jealous of our neighbor's lifestyle that allows them to seemingly enjoy the fruits of the good life without a care in the world. Circumstances arise which reveal that we have been holding a grudge against a friend or sibling and unforgiveness has ruled our relationship with them. All of these are manifestations of a deadly enemy within that must be conquered as we march forward to take the Kingdom of God by force (Matthew 11:12).

We so typically become discouraged when we encounter these enemies—those external, but especially those internal. We feel like failures, even believing that these besetting character issues have disqualified us from even entering the Promised Land of God's Kingdom. Dear brother, dear sister, understand that every time that we encounter persecution and difficult circumstances, every time that we are confronted with our own unredeemed Adamic nature, the enemy

that is entrenched in our land of promise is thereby exposed, and this is the place of our vulnerability that the Lord can most effectively conquer that giant within.

We cannot allow a single enemy to remain hidden. We cannot leave *any* offense unforgiven. We cannot allow *any* ungodly anger to masquerade as righteous and remain within us. *Any* enemy that we allow to remain in the land will surely come back to vex us, as I'm sure just about every single person reading these lines has experienced. Let me be very clear here: *We* cannot and never will be able to defeat these enemies. It is only as we humble ourselves before the Lord, submit our will to His and patiently wait for him to conquer the deadly enemy within and without, responding only in obedience and in accordance with what *He* is doing that we will be victorious over the enemy entrenched in the land. Jesus told us that in the midst of persecution, "*In your patience, possess ye your souls*" (Luke 21:19). The word for patience here is *hypomoné* which speaks of one who is not swerved from his purpose or commitment to his calling by even the greatest of testings and trials. And so, as we simply wait on Him with resolve to trust Him in the midst of the trials, our Promised Land—that land within which is now our battlefield (the soul)—is, according to our Lord, possessed!

Defining the Boundaries

God defined in great detail and with great specificity the boundaries of the land that He was giving to the Israelites. A large part of chapter 34 of the book of Numbers is devoted to this description. It was obviously important to God that His people know precisely the boundaries of the Promised Land! They were to possess all of it; at the same time, any attempt to take land that was beyond these borders was not authorized or approved by God, and He would not bless any attempt to go beyond His divinely authorized boundaries.

The Lord would have us know the boundaries of our land of promise as well. Over the centuries God has been revealing more and more of the nature and magnitude of the Kingdom of God to those with spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear. We have come to understand, with Luther, that the Kingdom of God is apprehended by faith, not by dead works or penance. We have come to

experience, with the Wesleys and others such as George Fox, the inner fire and light of God's presence; that there is an *experience and communion* with God that is personal. God's outpouring at Pentecost was a further revealing of the power of God to transform and to bring down strongholds. More recently, the Latter Rain outpouring revealed as never before the destiny of the Sons of God to rule and reign with him in the ages to come.

There are two problems that we have had in our coming to terms with the parameters of the Kingdom that God has prepared for us. The greatest problem which has plagued the church is in believing that the last great revelation of God is all that there is. There are even those who believe that divine revelation ceased with chapter 22 of the book of Revelation! This mindset has resulted in an impotency in the life of God's people and has kept them as babes, feeding mindlessly (and spiritlessly) on watered down interpretations of scripture and past dealings of God by the self-appointed guardians of divine knowledge and wisdom (the preachers and theologians). There is no room for a fresh word from the Lord when we are stuck in past moves of God, and rely on interpretations of these moves that come from the carnal mind of man. God is looking for a people who have ears to hear the fresh Word that He is speaking forth NOW, in this day!

The other mistake that has been made is when overly zealous men and women of God go beyond what God has authorized them to say and do. There have been many false doctrines promoted, and ministries that would fleece the people of God, that have gone forth from those who *think* they know the mind of God, and then arrogantly proceed to rule over others. Jesus said that such was not to be the way in which His true followers operated (Luke 22:25). These wolves in sheep's clothing *may* have heard a word from the Lord, but because they have not fully surrendered to the refining fires of the Lord in the wilderness of preparation, these have filtered any such word through their own carnal minds and fleshly ambitions. They have made claims and assumed an authority that extends far beyond what God has ordained. I am quite convinced that it is because of the excesses of these zealous entrepreneurs that much of the church world turns a deaf ear to any fresh word that the Lord may be speaking in our day. The truth is that God *is* speaking today, and He is continuing to reveal the

glories of His Kingdom which He has prepared for those with spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear. Great discernment is required as we hear *our* Numbers 34 being spoken to us.

Circumcision at Gilgal

After Israel entered the Promised Land, there was one final act of preparation that had to take place before the people of God were positioned to take possession of that Land. The men must be circumcised. All of the men coming out of Egypt had been circumcised, in keeping with God's covenant with Abraham. During the 40 years in the wilderness, however, the rite of circumcision had not been practiced, and so those born during the years of wandering had not yet had the knife taken to their foreskin.

This painful ordeal was necessary for, by covenant between God and Abraham, this was what set Abraham's seed apart from those cultures around them. God's people were a distinctive and peculiar people, and this act of circumcision signified their election as God's chosen ones. It was, of course, a painful rite, and would require a time of respite until they were whole enough to engage the battles ahead.

That which took place at Gilgal is also a shadow and type of what must take place amongst the people of God today. This is not a physical circumcision, of course, nor is this circumcision restricted to those who are born into male bodies. Indeed, Paul declares to believers in Galatia that

*...in Christ Jesus neither **circumcision** nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love (Gal 5:6; NKJV).*

Paul has, in fact, just urged the Galatian believers *not* to allow themselves to be circumcised!

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you

nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:1-4; NKJV).

Circumcision had become a matter of merely keeping the law, and Paul was loudly declaring that if the Galatians allowed themselves to be circumcised, they were indebted to keep the entire law—a feat that no one could accomplish in Paul’s day or in ours. The need for such was abolished at the cross, and to insist on the necessity of keeping this regulation, or any other, is to make a mockery of the cross.

There is, however, a circumcision of the heart that is foreshadowed by the covenant of circumcision that God established with His people Israel.

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God (Romans 2:28-29; NKJV).

God is preparing a people today to storm the gates of hell and take down every stronghold against the Kingdom of God in our day by circumcising our *hearts*. Like the circumcision of the flesh, this is a painful process, as God must strip away all of the strongholds and within *us* that would hinder our communion with Him. God must essentially exchange our hearts of stone for hearts of flesh. He must do this in order to sensitize us to *His* heart and make us ready for carrying His heart as His priests and kings. This is how He separates us unto Himself as a special and peculiar people. As Paul so clearly states, this is not a process that will be recognized by or receive the praise of men. This circumcision of the heart will humble us before men as God strips us of all that we and others have deemed as good within ourselves. It is, nevertheless, our flesh, and this foreskin must be removed. Through this painful process, God is re-creating a people in His very image, who have surrendered every other loyalty unto Him and who look unto Christ alone as the Head of all they are and do. As our hearts are being circumcised, we are being set aside for the work of partnering with Jesus our

elder brother to establish the Kingdom of Heaven—our Promised Land—here on earth. What an incredible and awesome privilege that is ours!

Battles to be Fought

Israel would not march into Canaan and have a table spread before them, welcoming them as the new owners of this small but significant piece of real estate at the juncture of three continents. Quite to the contrary, they would have to go to war to take this land. There would be a total of 31 kings defeated *after* Israel crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land (Joshua 12:7-24). This isn't even counting the kingdoms that were defeated under the leadership of Moses on the other side of the Jordan!

Many people have the mistaken notion that the Promised Land is a place of blissful rest and relaxation that the believer has somehow “earned”—whether this has been earned by living righteously, doing good works, or even giving up all of their material possessions. All too many even believe that simply “asking Jesus into their hearts” is all that is required to earn their piece of celestial real estate, at least if they remain diligent in this life to maintain their Christian lifestyle as defined by the guardians of whatever church they attend. Heaven has almost become some sort of Olympic gold medal (or silver or bronze, depending on whether you aspire to a mansion next to Jesus, or merely a wee cabin just inside the pearly gates) conferred upon those who “run the race” effectively. Jesus painted quite a different picture. He said, *“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force”* (Matthew 11:12; NKJV).

What? Did Jesus mean that we were going to have to storm the pearly gates after we enter the grave, even taking out St. Peter, the guardian of those gates? This would be just about the only conclusion that one who has a view of heaven as the celestial abode that we go to when we die. This is why we have to have a radical paradigm shift—a repentance, a *metanoia*—in our understanding of heaven, and the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus repeatedly said that the Kingdom of Heaven was *at hand*—not in some far off time after the death of His hearers. He also talked

about the importance of *entering* the Kingdom of Heaven, and spoke of how hard it was for those with great wealth to enter that Kingdom. Let us understand clearly that the Kingdom of Heaven is a place in God that we are encouraged to enter into, and *to take by force* on this side of the grave! There are battles ahead, even and especially after we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. There are enemies occupying that land. Paul speaks of principalities and dark powers in the *heavenly* places (Ephesians 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16). As we enter into this realm of the Spirit, which is truly the Kingdom of Heaven (or Kingdom of God), the enemies that we encounter there are daunting, yes, much more daunting than anything that we encountered on the other side, before crossing that spiritual Jordan in our walk with the Lord. But praise God, He has promised to go before us. Just as with Israel of old, He has promised to go with us into battle and as we listen carefully to His directives, the enemy will ultimately and inevitably be defeated.

The book of Joshua records that there were 31 kings or kingdoms that were defeated after the Israelites crossed over into the Promised Land. Each of the battles fought were unique in the specific actions and strategies that were required to be victorious. Indeed, there were battles that were *not* won because of a failure to respond obediently to God's directives. This is not just a reality that the Old Testament Israelites encountered. There are people who are just now waking up to God's instruction specifically given to them, maybe even years ago. They ignored God's command, or simply procrastinated. They now find themselves in a much worse condition and facing an even longer battle to fight as a result. You may be one of those. There is an old adage that preachers love to proclaim, especially during stewardship season or when mounting some outreach campaign in their churches. That adage is that "delayed obedience is not obedience at all". Friends, this is a lie from the author of lies to keep God's people in a state of defeat. God knows the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. He is patient and will always receive repentance, ready to extend grace to those who have come to recognize their disobedience and are ready to do things His way. In this section, we shall examine a few of the battles of our spiritual

forefathers in that ancient land of Israel so that we might glean some spiritual insight into the nature of the battles that lie before us in this hour.

The Battle of Jericho

The battle of Jericho is unique among all of the battles that the Israelites would face upon entering the Promised Land. It is unique, of course, in that this is the very first battle that they would face after crossing the Jordan. It is also unique, however, in that this is the only battle in which there really wasn't much of a fight. The scriptural account tells us that on the seventh day, after marching around the city seven times, blowing the trumpets and shouting, the walls crumbled and the Israelites simply marched in, killed every living thing (except Rahab and her household), and took the designated spoils of war. There really isn't much evidence of a battle here! There is much to be learned from this skirmish however as we consider the lessons that it has for possessing the Kingdom of God, our Promised Land.

The first thing that we must consider is that God asked them to do a very strange thing, something that would be an offense to any military strategist. The men of war were to simply march around the city with the priests blowing their horns—and then lay down for the night. They would do this for six days. Then on the seventh day, they would march around the city seven times, and after the seventh time, everyone would shout. What? What kind of military strategy is this? It would test the heart of obedience of this people, and especially its leaders. God had a plan, and there is no way that the military geniuses of that day could have predicted the coming down of those walls simply as a result of the people shouting. But they did!

God will always test the hearts of His people. He will ask of us things that simply do not make sense to the carnal mind. This has always been His way. Remember Noah and the building of the ark? The same God is at work today. I will never forget the morning when the Lord awoke me from my sleep at five o'clock in the morning saying, "It's time to leave—NOW!" I knew that it was in relation to the church, but surely he wasn't telling me to leave the church! I could only assume

that He was telling me to step down from the session on which I served. “But,” I reasoned, “if I step down now everyone will think that I am leaving just because I didn’t get my way.” You see, the session had just made a very controversial decision against which I had to stand alone because I knew that God was not in that decision. Nevertheless, I had fully accepted the decision that my fellow elders had made, and, after the decision was made, I was ready to work with them toward that end. Now, I was asked to step down from the session, knowing that they would think I was simply being petulant? I delayed, but finally obeyed. Sure enough, this is *exactly* what they thought—that I was a spoiled child who was picking up his toys and going home because I didn’t get my way. This was a charge that I had to endure. Oh, but the Lord wasn’t done. He was not asking me to simply step down from the session—He was telling me that it was time to leave that church altogether. This was not clear until about a month later, and once again, I was misunderstood. Not only was I misunderstood, but I couldn’t even understand why God was doing this! I loved this church. I could only proceed obediently, sometimes chafing in the process, but knowing that God had called me to this. Many months later, I would learn that God was not simply calling me out of that local congregation, but that He was calling me out of institutional Christianity altogether. This was a strange thing that the Lord was asking of me indeed! I have since, of course, come into much greater understanding of why this must be so. I have seen the walls of Jericho crumble, so to speak, but at the time, it made no sense whatsoever. This would not be the only time that God would test my heart by asking of me something that did not make sense to my carnal reasoning.

Let us look a little more closely now, at the specific instructions that God gave to Joshua. They were to march around the city once each day for six days. And on the seventh day they were to march around the city seven times, blow the trumpet, and give a victory shout. This is reminiscent of the creation story itself: God created the earth in six days, and on the seventh day He rested. There is great significance in the fact that the Israelites were told to march around Jericho seven days, and on the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times. Seven is a most significant number in scripture, and comes up repeatedly

from the very beginning, in the creation story. We also see it in God's instruction regarding the sabbatical (seventh) year and the Jubilee year—the year following seven Sabbath years, or seven times seven years, when all lands which had been taken in payment for debts were to be returned to their original owners and when all indentured servants were to be freed. It figures in the feasts as the seventh month was ushered in by the Feast of Trumpets; and a seven week interval between the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus also understood the significance of the number seven when He was asked by Peter how many times he was obligated to forgive his brother—seven times? Jesus replied *“I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven”* (Matthew 18:22). So frequently does the number seven occur in connection with God's calendar that it would behoove us to understand its significance here.

The number seven in scripture signifies rest. The Sabbath, that seventh day, was the day that God rested from all of his works of creation; and it was the Sabbath that He ordered be set aside as a day of rest for His people. God was speaking to His people Israel here by His instruction to march for seven days and on the seventh day march around the city seven times. He was speaking to them of entering into His rest! He knew what they did not know—that the city walls would come crumbling down before them at the shout after the seventh time around on the seventh day. This was their Jubilee—their seven times seven, followed by the blowing of the trumpet. Remember, Jubilee was to be a time of rest for those who were indentured, and their property was to be returned to them on that year. And so it was that this Promised Land, this land of Canaan, was to be returned to its rightful owners more than 400 years after the promise originally came to Abraham. They were to rest in the Lord's mighty arm to go before them in this quest. And go before them He did in this first and significant battle.

Dear friend, the Lord is calling us *first* into His rest as we engage the enemy in our land of promise. We are told,

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest hath ceased from his own works, as God did

from His. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief (Hebrews 4:9-11).

There are battles before us, to be sure, but He goes before us. *He* will defeat the enemy as we cooperate with Him, even and especially when what He asks of us does not make sense. Trust Him, not trying to strategize how *you* are going to overcome this enemy, nor even trying to figure out what God is up to. Just enter into His rest and trust Him, as you are obedient to the Spirit directive resonating within you.

The Battles of Ai

There were actually two battles fought to take the city of Ai. We can only understand these battles by examining what took place when the Israelites conquered the city of Jericho. They were commanded to (1) spare only Rahab and her household; (2) refrain from touching those things which God had designated as banned; and (3) take all of the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron into the treasury of the Lord (Joshua 6:18). One of their number, however, disobeyed this command and took for himself silver and gold along with other spoils of war that the Lord had banned. Achan's disobedience set the stage for a massive defeat the first time that the Israelites attempted to take Ai.

Joshua, however, unaware of Achan's wrongdoing, sent a reconnaissance party to spy out Ai. They came back with a report that this would be an easy take. They advised Joshua to send only 3000 men, for the men of Ai were few in number. Joshua responded accordingly. Despite the sparse population of fighting men in Ai, the Israelites were roundly defeated and those fighting men who remained came back to a thoroughly humiliated Israel. Joshua recognized the seriousness of this defeat. They had scarcely entered Canaan and in their second battle they suffered a humiliating defeat. Word would soon get around all of Canaan that Israel was weak and they would face even more defeats ahead. What is more, the name of the Lord God of Israel would be mocked. As Joshua went before the Lord about this, God revealed to him that there was sin in the camp and set in motion a procedure for how to expose this sin and deal with it. Achan's sin was

exposed, and this required that he and his family be stoned and burned in the Valley of Achor, which means the valley of trouble or disturbance.

The Lord then commanded Joshua to go up and take Ai. The sin had been exposed and dealt with. God's anger was turned away, and He would go before them to deliver Ai into their hands. This time Joshua took 30,000 men, and with divine strategy, easily conquered Ai as they had done to Jericho.

I take three valuable lessons from these battles. The first is that *God is serious about dealing with sin!* God's requirement in response to Achan's sin was not merely a matter of restitution whereby Achan would be required to return the unlawful spoils that he had taken. Oh no! God required that not only Achan, but all of his family be stoned in the valley of destruction and then burned so that not even their dead bodies would remain to contaminate the camp of Israel. Let us understand this through spiritual eyes as I say that God will not allow even the dead carcasses of old Adam in the land of promise to which He is leading us to take as our possession. Fire throughout scripture represents purification and refinement, especially as it consumes that which is evil. The most hidden sin of our hearts He will expose, and will consume it by his consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24). We may hold secret resentments or jealousies. These are incompatible with that place in Him that we are about to possess. He will be as ruthless with us as He has to be to put to death all that is within us that is not Him. Those who are destined to possess the Kingdom of God are being thoroughly purged so that there remains no Achan within us. Preston Eby speaks poignantly to this issue:

“...when Israel entered into their land of inheritance they possessed the land, not by bringing things in, but by kicking things out. In like manner, the book of revelation portrays for us *our inheritance*, and the entrance of all God's people into our promised land—the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The possession of our inheritance in Christ is not obtained by adding anything to Christ in us, but by what God **removes from us** so that Christ can be fully revealed in his saints.”¹

A second lesson for us in these battles is a lesson that God had been attempting to teach the Israelites from the beginning of their time in the wilderness. *They were to wait on Him, and go forth according to His word.* When they were encamped at Kadesh-barnea, the spies were sent out and came back with the report that there were giants in the land and that they would be overpowered. But God had said that He would go before them and only two—Joshua and Caleb—were able to see and walk by eyes of faith. This time, the circumstances were exactly the opposite: there were only a few measly fighting men in Ai and Israel could take them easily. In fact, the spies suggested that Joshua send a paltry 3000 men into battle to take Ai. The circumstances might have been different, but the Israelites were falling into the very same trap that they did at Kadesh-barnea—they were seeing their situation through only a carnal understanding and moved forth in the arm of the flesh and not by the direction and in the power of God. They lost that first battle because of this, even though their army was far mightier than that of Ai.

I am embarrassed to even remember the times that I have proceeded with my agenda without even thinking about taking my plans before the Lord and letting my spirit-man speak forth His wisdom. I did not consider the decision important enough to seek the Lord's direction on it! On the flip side, there have been too many times when the obstacles seemed so overwhelming that I ruled out moving in a direction before I even had time to consider it. It simply didn't make sense to my natural, carnal mind! This was Israel's mind at Kadesh-barnea. These two responses of the children of Israel *seem* to be diametrically opposed. In fact, however, they were responses coming from the same mind—a *carnal* mind. Neither was a response of faith. It is just as devoid of faith to take an action of which we are confident in our own flesh as it is to refuse to take an action because of fear of the giants that stand in the way. God is training a people today who learn to live and walk by His Spirit and not by their own carnal understanding and ability. I am certainly not suggesting that we must spend hours cloistered in a prayer closet before each and every decision that comes before us on a daily basis. I am, however, emphatically declaring that as we walk in close communion with our God, we increasingly come to recognize *His* will, and are ordered by *His*

Spirit as we encounter the enemies which rise up within. As we are more and more ordered by the Spirit of God, our thoughts, decisions and actions less and less come forth from our carnal understanding and natural assessment of what lies before us.

I learn yet a third precious truth in Israel's experience at Ai. That is the unchanging, glorious truth that *our God is a redemptive God!* Israel fell short—both in the disobedience of Achan, and in the moving forth in a battle plan that was not ordered of the Lord. There was, however, redemption in the very heart of God toward His people, and this redemption was manifest as Israel repented of her wrongdoing. The scriptural account tells us that the Lord “turned from the fierceness of His anger” (Joshua 7:26). And He gave them the victory. It is so very discouraging when we stumble and miss God. Joshua was so discouraged that he cried out to the Lord, asking why He had ever brought them across the Jordan only to be humiliated in this way (Joshua 7:6-9). But there was victory ahead. The Lord was faithful to Joshua to reveal where Israel had failed and showed him the path back to victory. This is the redemptive nature of our God! The paradigm of law in which we have been immersed since the time of Moses (yes, the religious establishment today is still immersed in the paradigm of law, regardless of the spiritual rhetoric they would use to disguise that fact) tells us that our defeats are our just desserts for our sinful or ungodly decisions. Invariably, those caught in the clutches of the bondage of the law suffer condemnation and are paralyzed from moving forward in God's great Kingdom agenda. There is, to be sure, a principle that we reap what we sow, and there *are* consequences for sin and for bad decisions that we make out of our carnal and unredeemed mind. The good news, however, is that even these consequences are intended for our ultimate redemption, as God uses them to bring the self into full submission unto Him. Let us learn from Joshua, as we receive of the Spirit of *our* Joshua, the Lord Jesus, to humble ourselves before the Lord, bow before Him in repentance, and rise up in faith, overcoming the enemy that would beset us!

The Gibeonite Deception

Israel was now developing a reputation as a mighty fighting force. When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard of the defeat of Ai at the hands of Joshua's army they were struck with great fear. Rather than attempt to fight the army of Israel, they sought to make peace with them; but they did it through deceptive means. They planned their deception carefully. They gathered up old sackcloths, worn out sandals, decrepit wine bottles, and came to Joshua's army as worn out long-distance travelers from a far-away land. They presented themselves as destitute sojourners who sought to come into league with the Israelites, as they had heard of their mighty valor in war. The fact is that these Gibeonites were Hivites, occupants of the land of Canaan whom Israel was instructed by God to completely drive out of the land. They were one of the many faces of the enemy that occupied the Promised Land.

Make no mistake about it: the Gibeonites were waging war against the Israelites! It was not a military war; rather it was a war of deception. If they could but find a way to make peace with the Israelites, they would be able to save their position in the land. They knew that Joshua's army would not respond favorably to a direct plea for a peace agreement because of the reputation that had preceded them. So, they sought to make peace through deception. Joshua and his army were wary of them, asking them all sorts of pointed questions until they were satisfied that they were indeed sojourners from a far-away country, and made a covenant with them to let them dwell among them. Israel's failure was the very same failure that led them to a routing defeat the first time that they attempted to take the city of Ai: *they failed to inquire of the Lord what they should do with the Gibeonites*. Three days later, the Gibeonite deception was revealed, and Israel, because it had made a covenant with the men of Gibeon, was bound to honor their agreement.

I would put forth to you that this was a defeat at war just as much as was the initial defeat at Ai. There was no bloodshed in this defeat. There were no soldiers' lives lost. But Israel was now compromised. They had an enemy people living among them. God would withhold His judgment for a time and give them mighty victories over remaining enemies occupying the Promised Land as we shall see below. There would be a price to pay some 400 years later, however, as God

brought a famine upon Israel because of Saul's earlier failure to honor the ill-conceived covenant. Saul slaughtered the Gibeonites out of his own fleshly zeal, and when David realized that the famine was the Lord's judgment he sought out the remaining Gibeonites to seek peace by asking what he could do to rectify this wrong that Saul had committed. He was told that their vengeance would be satisfied only by the giving over of seven of Saul's own offspring. David delivered Saul's sons—sparing only Mephibosheth—to the Gibeonites to be hanged. Yes indeed, there were consequences for this foolhardy peace treaty made with the Gibeonites that day!

Please hear what the Spirit of God would be speaking to us through this untoward event in Israel's history. The enemy that would stubbornly occupy the land of our inheritance does not always attack us directly through persecution, sickness, emotional warfare, financial disaster, or any number of other means of direct assault. When these things come upon us we can fairly readily see them for what they are and come against them with all of the spiritual resources at our disposal. I am convinced that, just as was the case with the Gibeonites, the enemy of the Kingdom of God today would much prefer to "make peace" with us; and let there be no doubt, he will do this through deception. He will come to us most rationally and logically; or he will appeal to us emotionally, possibly by distracting us with a cause or a need that tugs at our heartstrings. In the frailty of our carnal minds we believe that the resolution of this thing is dependent on *our* response. Oh, the myriad of ways that we are lured into the agenda of the enemy camp! Several years ago I came to the realization that I could no longer give—neither financially, nor of my own time or labor—simply in response to a presented need, no matter how worthy that cause or need seemed to be. I must know from the Lord that *He* was directing me to give in this or that way. We must be so very careful to listen to the voice of the Spirit of God within us before launching any venture.

Let me be very clear here: Our Lord will redeem even our failures in this regard. He did with the children of Israel as we shall see below. He will with us. I have written elsewhere that there was a time when I believed that God wanted me to drive a truck. I thought I was going to be a missionary to truckers. This was my flesh. *I* wanted to drive a truck since I was 18 years old! Now, I had just retired,

time was hanging heavy on my hands, and I had the opportunity to go work for an over-the-road trucking company. My soulish desires deceived me into believing that God was asking me to do this as a way to somehow advance His Kingdom. Four months later, after three accidents in truck stops and a shipping yard which left me with an intense fear of even going into these places, my trucking career was ended. I am grateful that God allowed me to realize my dream of driving a big rig, even if only for a few months, but I now realize that this was but a fleshly desire that I was acting upon. God had called me to Arkansas, not to be a missionary to truckers, but (initially at least) to do some deep work within me, hidden from the eyes of most. He brought me here to purge me of any need for recognition by others. Indeed, I was to be purged of any sense of my own accomplishment and to learn to trust and rest solely in Him and His resources alone. That process is still on-going. There is still an enemy of fleshly self that God is in the process of routing. He used even my own soulish decision to drive a truck to further this work! In the process, He has honed my discernment of my own motives as I endeavor to seek *His* wisdom in the battles that lie ahead.

I wish I could say that this was the only Gibeonite deception to which I fell prey, but it isn't. I can say, however, that God has used each and every one to bring me into a greater maturity and knowledge of Him. I know that each of you reading this have your own Gibeon-deception experiences. Take heart that even these seeming failures are being used to further refine you. You are being prepared for even greater battles ahead as you march relentlessly forward to possess the land of inheritance that the Lord has prepared for you!

Victory Over the Amorites

The story of Joshua's victory over a coalition of five Amorite kings is the setting for one of the most spectacular natural events in history, namely the sun and the moon standing still for a full 24 hours while Joshua and his army avenged themselves upon the inhabitants of those five kingdoms. This is an event that has captured the imagination of generations, a story that is still taught to children in Sunday school classes today. As spectacular as this story is, it is but the

exclamation point to a most remarkable routing of a powerful force that came against the children of Israel following the victory at Ai.

When the king of Jerusalem heard of the mighty victory of the Israelites over Ai, and of the crafty deception of the Gibeonites, he conspired with the remaining four Amorite kings to join forces against the Israelites. Their strategy was to first take out Gibeon. The Gibeonites appealed to Joshua to come to their aid, which Israel was now obligated to do because of the covenant that was made between them—even though it was an ill-advised peace treaty. This time we can only presume that Joshua inquired of the Lord for the Lord assured him that He had delivered the Amorites into his hand. It is worthwhile to take note of the fact that the Lord spoke this forth as an accomplished fact. *He had already delivered the Amorites into the hands of the Israelites before they lifted a single sword.* When Israel came against the Amorite armies, they were met with total confusion and “slew them with a great slaughter” (Joshua 10:10). But God was not finished. As the surviving soldiers were fleeing from Israel’s army, the Lord God sent large hailstones which decimated them. The biblical account tells us that more men were killed with hailstones than those who were killed by the sword in that battle. This no doubt emboldened Joshua, for he then had the audaciousness to command the sun and the moon to stand still to give the Israelites time to completely avenge their enemies. I am imagining that it was getting near sunset as the biblical account suggests that both the sun and the moon were providing much needed light—the sun on Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon. In my imagination, Joshua was saying to the Lord, “You have brought us this far, and it is now at the end of the day and we have not completed this task to totally routing our enemy. Therefore—*sun and moon stand still!*” Joshua *knew* that God had ordered the complete victory over these Amorite kingdoms. And because he knew the will of God, he could, in complete confidence, order the sun and moon to stand still as though it were God Himself ordering it. God responded to Joshua’s command by holding back the setting of the sun for 24 hours. Scripture says that there has never been, before or since, another day like this day.

This was, in all likelihood, the most spectacular victory for Israel since they left Egypt more than 40 years earlier. It is all the more amazing because it followed

on the heels of a potentially devastating “defeat” at the hands of the Gibeonites because of their failure to seek the Lord before entering into a covenant with this enemy. Nevertheless, the Lord did not abandon them, and indeed went before them with greater power than they had ever seen since crossing the Red Sea. Oh, what an important lesson there is in this battle for us as we take possession of our land of promise! In my experience, one of the greatest obstacles to overcoming the giants in my life is a prior defeat. I am naturally prone to beat myself up when I make a misstep or fail to overcome in any given area of my life. There was a time when I needed to repeat (many times a day) Romans 8:1 wherein we are told, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”* Indeed, to engage in self-condemnation is to walk after the flesh! We see our failures and become overwhelmed by them because we mistakenly assume that our victories are because of *our* goodness or faithfulness, and therefore our failures reflect a lack on our part. As we learn to walk in the Spirit, we come to recognize deep within that we are but a vessel and that there is no good thing within us save the Spirit of God who is as a tiny mustard seed ever growing within us. Even our failures are opportunities for this seed to put down deeper roots as we learn to walk in His righteousness and not our own. This is the knowledge that we must have as we encounter further battles. *These are the Lord’s battles and we must move forward in the consciousness of that reality.*

Joshua provides a powerful role model for how we engage these battles. He did not dwell on the mistaken covenant with the Gibeonites. Word came (from the Gibeonites themselves) that the Amorite kings were coming against them, and Joshua immediately went into action. I believe that he checked his spirit, inquiring of the Lord before he went, but he did not hesitate nor was he burdened down with condemnation or fear because of the Gibeonite deception. *He moved forward and the Lord assured him that He had delivered the Amorites into his (Joshua’s) hand.* There was no room for doubt here. So confident was Joshua that after the initial defeat, and after the hailstorm, he had the brazenness to speak to the sun and moon and order them to stand still. Please take note here that Joshua did not come before the Lord in supplication, saying something like,

“Oh God, if it be thy will, please keep the sun from setting so that we can complete our task...” Such is precisely the spiritually anemic posture with which people in most churches today are taught to approach God. They are taught that they cannot possibly know the mind or will of God, so they approach their Heavenly Father as beggars, pleading that He be so favorably inclined toward them as to give them a morsel. This was not Joshua’s approach to God. Oh no! *Joshua commanded the sun and moon.* This was the evidence of the authority that he knew that he had because this time he had inquired of the Lord and he *knew* the will of God.

This is the authority that we have as we are, in Christ, taking possession of that place that He has gone ahead to prepare for us. Friends, we must know who we are in Christ Jesus. And knowing who we are, we must learn to function as His representatives. As we operate in and according to the Spirit, we are indeed His representatives and we are given authority to speak into existence those things which are not seen as though they are. The time is long past for the sons of God to settle for slippery responses to life challenges. Responses such as “if it be thy will” or “please heal sister so and so in Jesus name” have no place in the spoken arsenal of the sons of God. WE MUST KNOW THE WILL OF GOD, and if we are unsure of the will of God in a particular situation, we do not speak forth in prayer or any other word until we are confident of what God would do in any given situation. We then speak forth that word with full confidence that God will accomplish it! This is how Joshua defeated the Amorite kingdoms, and it is also the way that we will defeat the forces that conspire against us as we move into our destiny in Christ.

Unconquered Territory

Following their victory over the five Amorite kingdoms, Joshua and his army proceeded to decimate city-kingdoms throughout the land of Canaan. The Biblical record indicates that a total of 31 kingdoms were conquered under Joshua’s command. Their victories were mighty, and no doubt they had earned the reputation of a mighty warrior people. There were, however, territories that

yet remained unconquered at the time of Joshua's death. Among these territories were those occupied by some of the most powerful inhabitants of Israel's Promised Land. These were lands occupied by the Philistines. Among these people were the giants that put so much fear into the spies who came back with a negative report some 20 years earlier. And so they remained as "unfinished business" in the land of Canaan.

These Philistines and the other unconquered kingdoms would remain a threat and a bane to Israel's well-being throughout its history as recorded in the Old Testament. They had an army that struck fear in the heart of Saul's army, particularly one Goliath. It took a humble shepherd boy—himself a type of Christ—to come forth in the power of Almighty God to slay this giant. This was also a deceptive people, as we see in the seduction that brought down Israel's strong man Samson. The Philistines and other unconquered nations would also cause God's people to engage in all manner of idolatrous acts as they freely intermarried with these people and took on their ways and customs, directly in violation of God's command to keep themselves separate. Israel would eventually be conquered and taken into Babylonian captivity for 70 years because of this unfaithfulness. Their life in the Promised Land would be very different than that which God ultimately had in store for them.

Did Joshua fail to complete his mission by not taking out all of these other city-states prior to his death? Throughout most of my years of reading and meditating on this biblical record of Israel's history I believed this to be so. If only Joshua and his army had taken out *all* of the inhabitants of the land as the Lord had instructed, they would not have faced all of the temptation and ultimately disobedience that took place years, decades and even centuries later. I read these passages now, however, with an eye to spiritually discern more completely what is taking place here in the grand economy of God.

As we understand the Old Testament narrative as a shadow and type of greater spiritual realities yet to unfold, even in our day, we see a rather exciting and challenging drama taking place. We must understand, as I believe most of you reading this article do, that Joshua is a type, a foreshadowing of Christ. Indeed,

“Joshua” is the English rendering of “Yeshua”, the same name that is given to our Lord, and rendered to us from the Greek as “Jesus.” Joshua’s task was to take the children of Israel into the Promised Land, and to possess it. Joshua accomplished this task. It was to future leaders and battles that all of the inhabitants of the land were to be subdued.

This task of crossing the Jordan and possessing the Promised Land was also accomplished by Jesus, our Joshua, some 1400 years later at Calvary. By His death, Jesus took us from the realm of Egyptian slavery into the land of promise. This would come about—both individually and corporately—through a time of wandering as we have been in a process of being readied to cross the mighty Jordan. Make no mistake—Joshua’s (Jesus’) mission as the Galilean who walked the face of this earth some 2000 years ago has been accomplished! He has taken us into the Promised Land, subdued the enemy and, as our forerunner, taken possession of it on our behalf. He has gone before us, just as the God of the Israelites went before them, and the victory is His. Jesus told His disciples, just before his death that He was going to prepare a place for them (John 14:2). This has been done. The promised inheritance has been secured. Indeed, those of the first fruits company—those who have surrendered to the absolute Lordship of Christ, who have counted the cost, and who have willingly taken His sufferings upon themselves—are even now battling the Jericho’s and Ai’s, taking possession one stronghold at a time, and occupying that place that He has gone to prepare for them.

There are, however, still giants in that land. There are territories yet unconquered. Does this mean that Christ, our Joshua, has failed at His mission? By no means. Those territories were left unconquered in order to teach the children of Israel to overcome the enemy in their land of possession. Joshua was no longer with them in body. Nevertheless, the same Spirit that was within Joshua and which went before the army of Israel was still with them. They must now mature into their inheritance. Friends, this Spirit of Inheritance is now upon us. We are being called this day to possess the land, to recognize and apprehend the glorious inheritance that is ours; and furthermore, as partners and joint-heirs

with Christ, to rout the enemy that remains in the land. This is now our challenge of *living* in the Promised Land!

Living in the Promised Land

Despite the fact that there remained enemy kingdoms to be conquered, the children of Israel took up residence in the Promised Land (with the exception of the tribes of Gad, Reuben and the half-tribe of Manessah). They would now face the challenges of living in a land flowing with milk and honey, with total dependence on the former and latter rains from the Lord to nourish their crops. This was a different way of living than they had experienced either in Egypt or in the Wilderness. They would also have to learn to live with enemy forces as neighbors. They were called apart as a separate nation, and this would now be tested. God had given special instructions regarding the division of the land, provision for the Levites, and the setting up of cities of refuge. They were taught concerning the keeping of the three festivals—Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. They were warned of that which was forbidden, including unclean food and the worshipping of idols. All of this and much more comprised the blueprint that the Lord God spoke through His servant Moses while they were still in the wilderness. This would, indeed, be a new way of living for the people of God.

There is much that we have to learn from these ancient ancestors of our faith. This is for us, like them, uncharted territory that will require leaving behind old paradigms. It will require, not only that we leave Egypt, but that the ways of Egypt be purged from within us. I speak here to those who have come out of the Babylonish religious system. We may have come out, but our years of indoctrination have left us with all manner of ideas and methods that are not ordained of God for the place of inheritance that we now occupy. Similarly, the coping mechanisms that we learned while in the place of the wilderness must be carefully examined and placed upon the altar as we allow the Holy Spirit to lay out His blueprint for our Kingdom lifestyle. This is, indeed, uncharted territory, and we shall be examining the lessons that the Lord has for us in the experience of the

children of Israel in a subsequent article. In the meantime, I would urge each of you reading this series to be inquiring of the Lord and listening carefully for what that Promised Land lifestyle might look like for you!

¹ J. Preston Eby, *From the Candlestick to the Throne*, Book 9, p. 235. Emphasis in the original.

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