

Part 16: "NOW WE TAKE POSSESSION"

Part 1 – Strategies for Possessing Your Mountain

Texts:

Joshua 11:23 (NKJV) - "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war."

Joshua 13:1 (NKJV) - "Now Joshua was old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him, "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed."

- A. In the first verse of our text, Israel took the whole land; but in the next verse, much land had not been possessed.
1. Is there a contradiction between these two verses? Not at all. Going to war and moving from one battle to the next is one thing; but taking possession and occupying the land is quite different.
 2. These verses show that we must fight to possess what is ALREADY ours! The price for our salvation has been paid in full; healing and deliverance have already been purchased. On the cross, our Savior fought and took authority for everything we need. The problem is, the enemy doesn't want anyone to possess what Jesus died and purchased for us. Because he is constantly trying to take what is rightfully ours, we must fight to possess our miracle or breakthrough.

3. Joshua 13:1 declares that the inheritance God's people will possess depends upon each of us. I don't want God to speak to me what He did to Joshua: "You have claimed only a fraction of your blessing!"
4. But one man in Israel was determined to have everything God had promised. His amazing story gives insight to help us possess what Christ has already provided for us:
 - a. **Joshua 14:7, 11-12 (NKJV)** - "I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart. [11] As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. [12] Now therefore, give me this MOUNTAIN of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said."
5. The mountain Caleb sought to inherit was Mount Hebron.

"How to Possess Your Mountain"

- B. God has a plan for your life—and an inheritance!
 1. Whether it is a successful marriage, children who have been blessed by God, a business you've been struggling to establish, or the ministry God wants you to develop—you have an inheritance!
 2. After a very long journey, Israel had finally conquered their Promised Land! Before they could rest, they had lived in Egypt 400 years, 40 years in the wilderness, and approximately five years

fighting other battles. Whether it's a career, a ministry, or building a successful family, your goals will never be attained as quickly as you imagined. Expect to endure many battles on your life's journey. If the enemy can never persuade you to give up, you will finally possess God's promises!

3. Building this church was never easy; but we didn't give up! The same is true with our family; but Geri and I have continued to work at it. Now that we have grandchildren and great-grandchildren to pray over, we realize that we have a lot more praying to do.
4. After all the delays in the wilderness and the years of warfare were finally over, Caleb approached Joshua with this request: "Do you remember Moses' promise to you and me when we returned from spying out the land?" This promise was made 45 years earlier when 12 men had marched through Canaan to observe the land and the people. But Caleb and Joshua were the only two with a good report. The other ten complained about the giants and all the problems Israel would encounter.
5. Have you learned that you can't listen to what everyone else says? Some people will talk you right out of your breakthrough and your dream!
6. Against Caleb's and Joshua's protests that they were well able to take the land, the ten spies discouraged Israel and persuaded them not to conquer Canaan. Because of their evil report, Israel had to march in circles through the wilderness for 40 years until the unbelieving generation had died.
 - a. **Numbers 32:11-13 (NKJV)** - "Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

because they have not wholly followed Me, [12] except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.' [13] So the LORD's anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone."

7. Forty years later, Caleb and Joshua were the only spies who would enter the Promised Land. After another five years of warfare to defeat the Canaanites, the land was finally theirs. That's when Caleb told Joshua, "I'm as strong today as I was then. Moses made me a promise that I could have this mountain, so I've come to ask for it as my inheritance."
8. What's amazing is that Caleb was now 85 years old. You wouldn't normally expect such a request from someone that age.
9. Joke: "Precious Memories"

I heard about a pastor who intended to preach about godly morals and values. So, he began by announcing, "Today's message is going to be different. I want you to help me preach today, and this is what we're going to do. When I say a word, I want whoever will to stand and sing the song of our faith that reminds you of that word."

When he said the word "faith," someone immediately stood and began to sing, "Only believe, only believe, all things are possible, only believe."

"That was really good," he said. "Let's do this again." And he said, "blood." Someone quickly stood and began to sing, "There is power, power, wonder-working power in the blood of the Lamb."

Now that everyone was really getting into it, he said, "grace." And immediately someone jumped to their feet and began to sing, "Amazing Grace."

Then he said the word "sex." Stunned, the congregation sat there in total silence until an old lady in her late 80's stood and began to sing, "Precious memories, how they linger."

10. Caleb didn't do what most 85 year-old's would normally do. In the past 45 years, his strength had not diminished since he and Joshua had brought a good report. Even more astonishing is the fact that the mountain he had chosen was where the gigantic sons of Anak lived. Most people run from giants; but not Caleb. He wanted that mountain!

C. Both symbolically and prophetically, mountains represent places of significant achievement and our low places as valleys.

1. Mountains symbolize great victories and success. They stand for a memorable accomplishment or some meaningful watershed event. But since we live in a broken, imperfect world, we must also face valleys.

a. In Psalm 23, 'death' is called a valley.

b. In the valley of Sorek, Samson was tempted by Delilah. We might call that the 'Valley of Temptation.'

c. Several of Israel's decisive battles were fought in valleys.

That's where we also fight battles. Who among us has not had to endure a valley of discouragement or opposition? But it's in the valley where God restores our souls.

d. **Psalm 84:6 (KJV)** - "Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well."

2. I've learned much more in my valleys than the mountains.
 - a. **Matthew 10:27 (NKJV)** - "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops."
 - b. God conducts His schools in the darkness; not in the light.
3. Whether Caleb's military campaign would be on a mountain or in a valley, it would have quite an effect upon his future.
4. At West Point Military Academy, future leaders are taught the importance of taking and holding the high ground while in battle. Throughout history, some of the most important and decisive military successes were planned and won by generals who fought an army they had lured into a valley while they remained on higher ground.
5. When things aren't going well in the midst of opposition and attack, people often talk about being in a valley. Unfortunately, some people have formed a habit of living from valley to valley—when they should have been living from mountaintop to mountaintop. How does that happen? If you live from problem to problem, rather than victory to victory, you'll always be complaining about how hard life is rather than how good God is!
6. We all have challenges with our kids and our businesses. Now and then, everyone goes through a valley. But never let the enemy remove the high ground from your thinking or cause you to focus on just the bad things that happen. Don't allow him to lure you into the valley. If that's where you happen to be right now, don't get stuck there.
7. During the Civil War, soldiers in the North called the Shenandoah Valley the "valley of humiliation." When the South took control,

that's where they were defeated. Following along the Shenandoah Valley, General Stonewall Jackson was poised to capture Washington, D.C. Had he done so, the South would have won the Civil War. But when General Philip Sheridan of the Union Army broke the Confederate Army supply line, the North won the war.

8. Never allow the enemy to control your valleys. Our God is not only the God of the hills, but the God of the valleys. Don't let the enemy control the supply lines of your joy. Keep worshiping—even when you're in a valley. Use that time to draw close to God and learn about Him. Shut down the enemy's supply lines that feed your mind with doubts, fears, and negative thoughts. Trust God and head for higher ground!