

Part 17: "NOW WE TAKE POSSESSION"

Part 2 - "Strategies for Possessing Your Mountain"

Text:

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."

"When God Gives You a Mountain"

- A. In scripture, valleys are compared with difficult situations and darkness.
1. Gideon faced the Midianites and Amalekites in the Valley of Jezreel.
 2. The people of Israel were terrified and threatened by Goliath in the Valley of Elah.
 3. When David became king of all the tribes of Israel, the Philistines gathered their armies to attack Israel in the Valley of Rephaim.
 4. The Psalmist spoke of the Valley of the Shadow of Death.
 5. The Song of Solomon refers to our Lord as the Lily of the Valley.
 6. Isaiah spoke of the Valley of Vision.

7. Ezekiel's vision was about a Valley of Dry Bones.
8. On the outskirts of Jerusalem, refuse from the city was burned in the Valley of Hinnom. From this continual burning, smoke billowed upward to the sky. Through the centuries, Jewish people have considered this valley to be a visual representation of Hell.
9. Valleys represent the low places in our lives. We often refer to our challenges as a "valley" we must walk through.

B. In spite of the struggles and difficulties associated with valleys, this is where God performed some of His greatest miracles for Israel.

1. One of the most important lessons we learn in life is that problems often become opportunities. In each of the valleys mentioned above, a miracle was often a problem in disguise:
 - a. In the Valley of Jezreel, Gideon defeated the combined armies of the Midianites and Amalekites with only 300 men!
 - b. In the Valley of Elah, the giant warrior Goliath was defeated by David, a young shepherd boy, with a simple slingshot.
 - c. After David became king and the Philistine army came to attack Israel, God told David that when you hear the sound of a "going" in the tops of the mulberry trees, you are to attack the Philistine army in the Valley of Rephaim.
 - c. "Going" is an interesting word. It wasn't the sound of wind blowing in the trees, but the Hebrew word for "marching" or the sound of a soldier's metal leggings worn in battle. What he must wait to hear was an army of marching angels that had come to do battle for Israel. David must not go ahead of God and His angels, but wait until they arrived. If we will pray and then wait, God and His angels will fight our battles for us.

He can transform our darkest valleys into open doors of opportunity and incredible victories!

2. The word "Jerusalem" means: *city of peace*. One of the gates in ancient Jerusalem was known as the Valley Gate. When coming from the Valley of Hinnom (which represented "hell" to the Jewish people), they would enter Jerusalem through this gate. If you're going through "hell" right now, don't give up. The enemy wants you to quit because he knows you're about to leave that valley and enter a gate leading to a higher dimension in God.
3. In each of these situations, He will become our God of the valley—not just the mountains.

C. Since mountains have played a major role throughout history, Caleb wanted his mountain!

1. Ancient cultures believed that mountains were dwelling places of the gods. The Greeks worshiped a pantheon of twelve gods who they believed lived on Mount Olympus in Greece.
2. About a year ago, I preached a prayer conference with Benny Matthews in Kathmandu, Nepal, at the base of Mount Everest in the Himalayas. The Hindus consider these tallest mountains in the world to be the sacred home of the Hindu gods. The name Himalaya literally means "dwelling," where their deities lived.
3. Mount Everest, the tallest of these mountains at 29,029 feet, is considered by the Nepalese to be especially holy. But not only to the Hindus, Mount Everest is holy and revered by the Buddhists.

D. Significant biblical events have also occurred on mountains when God spoke to His people.

1. After the Flood, the Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat.
2. Abraham offered Isaac, his greatest sacrifice, on Mount Moriah. This is where God revealed a new name for Himself: Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord Who Provides.
3. On the backside of a desert near Mount Sinai, God spoke to Moses from a burning bush. This mountain is also where Moses met with God for 40 days and received the Divine Law.
4. After disobeying God, Saul died on Mount Gilboa.
5. God opened the eyes of Elisha's servant to see a mountain covered with angels and chariots of fire.
6. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Christ's inner radiance burst forth through the veil of His flesh.
7. Our Lord was crucified on Mount Moriah.
8. Christ ascended back to heaven from the Mount of Olives. When He returns to earth at the end of the age, He will stand victorious on this mount as King of kings.

E. Caleb's request helps us better understand God's purpose for creating us.

1. **God wants to change the way we view mountains.**

Mountains are not easy to climb. It's hard work. Mountains represent challenges.

- a. The mountain that stands between you and your destiny could be a generational curse or some self-destructive family pattern of behavior.
- b. Mountains are symbolic of life-long dreams about your destiny. Conquering a mountain represents a great victory. Whether your mountain is a challenge or an opportunity for achievement depends upon how you see it.

- c. Darkness was an insurmountable challenge until Thomas Edison invented the light bulb.
- d. Most people agreed that going to the moon was absolutely impossible—until President John Kennedy saw it as an opportunity.
- e. I have become the friend of an elderly gentleman who was one of the engineers who helped develop our space program. We have talked for hours about the many inventions his team developed at NASA that our society can hardly function without. Because of technologies discovered in the space program, we now have pumps that have made heart surgery possible, artificial limbs, LASIK technology, invisible braces, anti-icing equipment for airplanes, much more efficient automobile tires—plus thousands of other useful products that we now take for granted.
- f. So the question is: should we look at our mountain as a problem or an opportunity? Once you've climbed a mountain, you have overcome what others thought could never be done. It wasn't easy—but you made it!
- g. Those who have discovered that mountains are opportunities will build great businesses and ministries. They will create and invent what others thought was impossible. They are also the ones who will experience great success and make *real* money. In fact, those who see mountains as problems will work for the 2% who see mountains as opportunities!

2. Mountains are where the giants live.

- a. Giants don't just appear every now and then on mountains; they **live there!** When you're ready to conquer your mountain, expect to face some giants!
- b. Once you choose to pursue God's Kingdom objectives, the enemy will do his best to stop you. But remember—he has already been defeated!
- c. Nothing will keep you on your knees like a God-sized dream! Rewards in life are based on the level of difficulty you will solve.
- d. Giants bring promotion. We would have never heard of a shepherd boy named David if he had not faced a giant. He became king for conquering Goliath.

3. The opposition you face will be in proportion to your objective.

- a. Little goals....little opposition. Big dreams....big opposition. Little prayers....little resistance. So, if you have a big dream, expect a big giant to appear who won't just roll over and surrender.
- b. Not much effort is required to climb a hill. Anyone can do that. But a mountain? That's a different story.
- c. **1 Corinthians 16:9 (NKJV)** - "For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."
- d. Little doors....little problems. Big doors....big problems.

4. Your age doesn't matter.

- a. It's not too late to do something for God. Nor is it too late to do something for your family or start a business. If you will pray, God will open doors to fulfill your dream.

- b. With his first social security check, Harlan Sanders began the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise at age 65. It is now the second largest restaurant chain in the world with over 23,000 KFC's in 136 countries.
- c. But neither are you too young to be used by God. Most scholars believe that Jesus' twelve disciples were in their early 20's when He called them, and some could have been in their teens. If young people and children were the foundation of Jesus' ministry, they should be included in every church's vision.
- d. Our purpose for spending so much money on lighting and sound equipment in this building is because our kids have grown up with technology. A major reason they leave the church is because American congregations are 50 years behind everyone else. It should not be that way.
- e. Think about the pomp and dazzling ceremony in the ancient Tabernacle. People who had been raised as slaves must have been astonished to see so much gold and silver and the priests' brightly colored robes.

5. Even if you've struggled your whole life, don't give up!

- a. Caleb had spent 40 years in the wilderness and then five years fighting the Canaanites. Have you ever felt like your life has always been an uphill fight? I know you've been through some difficult times. Some of you have been knocked down so hard, you don't know if you'll ever feel like getting up again. But don't quit too soon. If you'll keep pressing on, God will cause those tough experiences to prepare you for taking

your mountain. You've learned some things in the struggle that you would have never known without the fight!

- b. If you have not yet possessed your Promised Land, keep praying and believing God. If your financial breakthrough has not yet come, stay faithful in your giving.

6. **Don't set goals that are too low.**

- a. Caleb set some high goals. God loves for our dreams, projects, and prayers to be "God-sized!" Make your dreams so big and your goals so high, there's no way to achieve them without His help.
- b. The truth is, if God asks you to do something that can be done without His help, you probably weren't hearing His voice. He likes **big dreams** and **GOD-sized** projects!

7. **Practice the secret of Caleb's strength and youthfulness.**

- a. Moses had promised Caleb the mountain for a reason.
Joshua 14:8-9 (NKJV) - "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, **But I have wholly followed the LORD my God.**" [9] So Moses swore on that day, saying, "Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, **because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.**"
- b. We must follow after God with our **whole heart!** Don't keep anything back; dive in and be fully committed. In language that some of you can understand, Dana White says, "Leave it all in the octagon."

F. I believe that God wants to specifically speak to someone today about possessing your mountain!

1. He wants you to know that your mountain is still waiting. God hasn't forgotten the promises He made to you. You may be in the valley right now, but that mountain still has your name on it.
2. If you're fighting your way uphill and wondering why it isn't getting any easier, don't give up! Begin to fast and pray. Since God put those plans in your heart, keep climbing and see what He will do!
3. For 21 days, Daniel prayed and fasted and ate no pleasant food. On the 20th day, Gabriel appeared with this message: "Your prayer was heard the first day; but the dominant principality of the region, the Prince of Persia, withstood me." Michael, the archangel, had to help Gabriel push against the powers of the prince of Persia. (Persia is the modern country of Iran).
4. I have often wondered what would have happened if Daniel had prayed for 20 days and quit! Don't stop praying and believing one day short of your breakthrough...or two days...or three!
5. I've also wondered what would happen if people in the United States would go on a 21 day fast about this ordeal with Iran. The prince of Persia still exists today! Or what would happen if we fasted and prayed about North Korea ... or the abortion dilemma that has destroyed so many lives and is a constant grief to the heart of God!
6. So I close with two words....KEEP CLIMBING! Even though you're facing a mountain, don't give up. Victory is just ahead. God will
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