

# (Through the Bible) Joshua 9-16

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon explores the Gibeonite conspiracy and the long day of Joshua, highlighting God's power and intervention in the lives of his people.*

**Duration:** 1:04:16

**Scripture:** Exodus 23:30, Deuteronomy 7:22, Deuteronomy 20:16-18, Joshua 1:3, Joshua 10:12-14, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Gods Presence", "Faith Conquest"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses a popular but false story about NASA scientists discovering a missing day in time. He emphasizes that this story is not factual and has no basis in reality. The speaker then goes on to highlight the importance of recognizing God's presence and interest in our lives. He encourages listeners to approach God with their troubles and worries, as He is always ready to help. The sermon also discusses the conquests of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, particularly their victory over the kings who united against them.

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## Transcript

This time shall we turn to the book of Joshua, chapter 9, as we begin our study this evening. Now the children of Israel had conquered Jericho and Ai, which were strong cities. And the kings that were in the land of Canaan, where they were coming, felt that their only hope of stopping this migration of these people into the land would be by a combined effort, pooling all of their armies, all of their resources, in one massive assault against Israel.

Now this strategy was really prompted by the fact that the Gibeonites, which did cover an area of several cities, had determined that their only hope of survival was by a peace treaty. And so he starts out the ninth chapter, the first three verses, talking about the kings that were getting together to present a united front against this invasion, lest they would just be picked off kingdom by kingdom. They felt that they should all get together.

And then, beginning with verse 4, they tell of this Gibeonite conspiracy to develop a peace treaty with the Israelites as they were coming into the land. Now the Gibeonites had heard of how God had delivered these people out of Egypt and how he had destroyed the Egyptians. They had heard of how the kings of Og and Sihon, with their kingdoms on the other side of Jordan, had been conquered by Israel.

They heard, of course, that Jericho had fallen, that Ai had fallen. And so they determined their best course of action was to make a peace treaty. However, they also knew that these people that were coming into the land, the Israelites, had no intention of making any peace treaties with the inhabitants of the land.

For they were under the orders of God to utterly drive out all of the inhabitants of the land. To destroy, to drive out. Not to make any covenant with them.

Deuteronomy chapter 7. God commands them not to make any covenants with those in the land. So they knew that their only hope of making a covenant was by a disguise, which they perpetrated. They got some fellows who put on some old ragged clothes, old clotted shoes.

They had some old wine skins that were falling to pieces that they bound up. They had some dry, moldy bread. And so they came to the camp of Israel.

And they said that we have come a long journey. But the fame of your God has spread abroad through the world and we've come to make peace with you. They said, how do we know that you're not our neighbors? And they said, oh listen, when we left home this bread was hot in our hands.

And now look at it. It's all dry and moldy. That's how far we've come.

Our shoes were new on our feet, but look how ragged they are. Now we've really come a long way. And so the children of Israel took up their vituals and inquired not from the Lord or sought not the counsel from the mouth of the Lord.

And they made this covenant or peace treaty with the Gibeonites. And they swore unto them by God that they would have sort of a mutual defense pact that they would be allied together. So as the children of Israel then moved on from Ai, they started coming into the area of the kingdom of the Gibeonites, these cities.

And so as they started to deploy the troops to attack the cities, the men said, oh no, no, you can't do that. They said, what do you mean? They said, we just made a pact with you and you've sworn to us by God that you would not attack us. So they honored the pact that they had made.

They realized that they had been deceived, but they honored the pact that they had made with the Gibeonites. However, the people began to murmur against Joshua because of his strategic blunder. And it is interesting to note that this is really the second mistake that Joshua made as a leader.

The first mistake was in the case of Ai, where they sent up only a few thousand troops and the men of Ai came out against them and defeated them. And how that when Joshua cried unto the Lord, the Lord told him the reason for the defeat was because of the sin that was in the camp, that one of the children of Israel had taken of the accursed thing out of the spoils of Jericho, which were all to go to God. So Joshua then sought the Lord, got rid of the sin, and the Lord directed them then on how the conquest of Ai should go.

Now the problem with Ai was his failure to pray and seek counsel from God before they deployed the troops to attack the city. The same problem existed here. It was a failure to pray and inquire of God concerning the Gibeonites.

They just looked at the outward circumstances. They saw the dry, moldy bread and the ragged clothes, and they just were deceived. Now had they sought counsel from God, had he come to Eliezer, the high priest, and inquired of the Lord concerning these people, the Lord would have shown to them that these people were fakes.

They would have realized that these men were just seeking to disguise themselves as having come on a long journey, but in reality they were fakes, and the Lord would have revealed that. But they inquired not of the Lord. Their mistake was that of failure to seek God's counsel, and it got them into an ungodly alliance.

How many times we've found ourselves in ungodly situations because we failed to seek God first. Oh, for sure when we get in these conditions, then we seek God like everything. But if we would only seek God first, we could be spared so many of these tragic experiences that we encounter in life.

And so the failure to seek God's guidance led them into this alliance with the Gibeonites. But having once made it, they honored it. However, Joshua called them and said, All right, you guys, why did you deceive us like this? And they said, Hey, we knew that God was with you, that God was turning the land over to you, and we feared for our lives.

And we felt that the only way we could survive was by this little ruse. And Joshua said, All right, but now as a result of this, you fellows are going to have to be the hewers of wood and become our servants. They said, That's fine.

We'll agree to that. We'll be your servants, and we will serve you, but we're just glad to be alive. And so the people of Gibeon and the cities of Gibeon were spared.

Now, the names of the city of the Gibeonites are listed there. And in the listing of the names in verse 17, the last name, Kirjath-Jerim, is an interesting name and city because it was at Kirjath-Jerim that the Ark of the Covenant was kept up until the time of David when he moved it from there to Jerusalem. So one of the cities of the Gibeonites became the place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

Now, when these five kings heard that the Gibeonites had made this league with the children of Israel, then they decided to attack the Gibeonites more or less as traitors. And so they came against the Gibeonites, and in verse 6 of chapter 10, the men of Gibeon sent an urgent notice to Joshua that they were being attacked. And they said, Now we have this mutual defense pact with you, so come to our aid.

And Joshua, honoring the pact that he had made, took his men of war in a forced march all night long, and they came to the area of Gibeon where the Gibeonites were being attacked by these kings with all their chariots and horses and all. And the Lord spoke unto Joshua before going into battle and promised Joshua that he would be with him. Verse 8, chapter 10.

And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not, for I have delivered them into your hand. There shall not a man of them stand before thee. And Joshua came upon them suddenly, and he went up from Gilgal all night long, this forced march.

The Lord disconfitted them before Israel. He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the way to Beth-horon and to Azekah and to Makedah. And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel, they were in the going down to Beth-horon.

The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died. And there were more that died with the hailstones than those whom the children of Israel slew with a sword. And then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel.

And he said in the sight of Israel, Son, stand still upon Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ahalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is this not written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

And there was no day like that before it or after it that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel." Now, a very unusual event indeed. And whenever you get to miraculous events in the Bible, that's all it takes to trigger some people, especially those who do not believe in God or those who have an anthropomorphic concept of God. Think of God in terms of a man and limited as a man.

The miracles always create doubts and problems in the minds of people. And of course, they then begin to exaggerate the problems that they see. For instance, one of the things that they make fun of with this particular passage and find it quite incredible, that if the earth should suddenly stand still, and here you are standing on the earth and it's rotating at almost a thousand miles an hour, that if it would suddenly stand still, your body would still be going a thousand miles an hour, so all the people would just be sort of wiped out, you know.

You'd all go flying off the earth if it would suddenly stand still. And so they envision the impracticability of the earth standing still. In other words, he said sun stands still, but we know that the earth is actually rotating on its axis, which makes the sun appear to rise and set and so forth.

And so obviously it was, they say, the earth stopping on its axis, but then they saw all of these men flying off the earth because of it stopping so rapidly. However, there is nothing that indicated that it was a sudden stop like hitting a brick wall. Now, if it, say, took six hours to stop, that would be equivalent to stopping your car going 60 miles an hour and stopping your car to zero in 20 minutes, as far as the force that would be exerted against you.

Now, I would like to suggest if you were going 60 miles an hour in your car and you brought it to a 20 minute stop, that you would hardly notice any inertia against your body at all. Now, if it should stop in eight minutes, it would be equivalent to stopping your car at 60 miles an hour in 30 seconds. You wouldn't even need your seatbelts for that.

So there is nothing that indicated that it came to a sudden jerky halt. God could have just put on the brakes and brought it to a stop in, say, eight or 10 minutes. And again, the only way that you feel motion is by the jerks.

You really don't discern motion except for the jerks in motion. You, on a train, a lot of times you don't even know the train is moving until you look out the window and then you see the station gradually going by. Or on the airplane, so many times you don't know that the airplane has actually started moving until you look out and you see the motion outside.

But you don't feel motion unless there are jerks. So God could have brought the earth to a halt in a eight, 10 minute period and no one would have gone flying out in space and no one would have really noticed a sudden jerky stop at all. A few years ago, there were some articles in various magazines, there were some

tracks written, that some NASA scientists with a computer were trying to predict the trajectory of a particular rocket.

And in going back in time in the computer, the computer came to a place where it found a missing date. That is not factual. That didn't happen.

It's one of those stories that got widespread publicity, but there's no truth to it. However, if there was a long day, Joshua saw that it was, you know, that they needed more time to wipe out the enemy. And so he said, son, stand still.

That would be sort of a, quite a thing to say in the sight of all the people. I mean, you're going to look like a fool or a real powerful guy, one of the two. And in sound of all the people, he said, son, stand still.

Now, whether or not he really was expecting it to do it or not, nevertheless, it did for about the space of a day, giving them time to totally obliterate the enemy. Now, notice that along with this, there was a tremendous hailstorm and that more people were killed by the hailstones than they killed with a sword. There's a very interesting book entitled *Worlds in Collision* by Immanuel Velikovsky.

Now, his theory is that the planet Venus entered into our solar system during the period of man's history upon the earth, that planet Venus has actually come within our solar system within the last 6,000 years, that it actually made two or it made two orbits. And on the second orbit, it got fixed in its own orbit and in alignment as the planets are around the sun. It got locked into an orbit around the sun.

The first time it orbited in and out, according to his theory, was about the time that the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt. And he ties many of the plagues in Egypt to a close pass of the planet Venus to the earth. The second close pass, he times at this long day of Joshua.

In fact, he accounts for the long day of Joshua as to have resulted from this near miss of the planet Venus to the earth. He believes that the earth used to rotate the opposite direction on its axis until this near pass. Now, he theorized that if there was a long day there at Joshua's time, that other periods or other places in the world, there would be recorded a long night.

For instance, here in America, the Indians would have recorded a long night. If there was a long day there, they'd have to be a long night here. And that in different places of the world, it would be recorded as either a long afternoon, long morning, or whatever, as it related to the time there in Joshua.

So he carefully traced through the history of the Inca Indians. And sure enough, he found in their records the story of a long night over here when the sun didn't come up for the space of a whole night. And also of cataclysmic things that took place at that time--earthquakes, tremendous storms, violent storms, and tidal waves and all.

Because of course the earth stopping would create tremendous tidal waves by the movement of the water, would keep rolling faster than the earth and would create tremendous tidal waves. And he has gone through this approximate period of history and followed in the records of people around the world the stories of either long mornings, long afternoons, long nights, or whatever, and the cataclysmic things that took place at the same time. Now, Immanuel Velikovsky is not a Christian, neither is he necessarily a believer in God.

He is a scientist who has a theory that the planet Venus came into our solar system during the time of recorded history, and he uses the Bible as one of the proofs. This particular long day of Joshua as one of the proofs, but in order to use the Bible as a proof, he also follows it and proves historically that that event took place, showing it in the records, ancient records of peoples around the world. So I like his book, not that I necessarily agree with the theory of the introduction of the planet Venus into our solar system at that particular time, and yet I'm sure open.

It's very interesting, and I found it very fascinating to think about. But the thing that I really enjoyed is his laying out such conclusive proof for the skeptics who scoff at the idea of the sun standing still or the earth stopping on its rotation. Those who scoff at that idea as totally impossible, and how he proves that it was an actual historic event.

Otherwise, it wouldn't have been recorded around the world in the ancient records of history such as it was, and he does a very masterful job in proving that such an event did take place, in case you happen to be skeptical and need proof. But if you have a right concept of God, you don't need any proof. You can just believe it because God's Word declared it.

But some people have a problem believing just because God's Word declares something, and they need some kind of proof, especially when you get into stories which seem to be a little incredible, at least on the surface, that the guy could say, sun stands still, and it would stand still in the heavens for a whole day. So, such a thing is recorded in history outside of the Bible. It is interesting that it did happen at that psychic moment when they were chasing these kings, and Joshua felt he needed more daylight in order to wipe them out utterly, and so he commanded, and the sun stood still in the heavens.

So, this story of Joshua which has brought a lot of skepticism and criticism against the Bible, as all of the miracles do, has pretty well been scientifically proven, as much as you can prove anything, with science and historic records. So, you might find that book, *Worlds in Collision*, very fascinating. I did.

I enjoyed it thoroughly. Now, there was no day like that before it or after it that the Lord hearkened to the voice of man, for the Lord fought for Israel. It is, of course, his theory also that at this time the earth became tilted on its axis.

There was a shift of the polar axis, and now to our 23 and a third degree kind of an angle that the polar axis has in its relationship to the sun, which gives us actually now the ice caps in the north and in the south, and he has quite a bit to say about that too. So, Joshua returned and all of Israel with him to the camp of Gilgal, but the five kings hid themselves in a cave, and so they came and told Joshua these five kings were hiding in the cave. So, Joshua said, throw a bunch of stones over the cave, seal it up, and stand outside and guard the thing.

And so they went ahead then, and inasmuch as these men had come out from all of these cities to fight, the cities were left pretty well defenseless at this point, so Joshua and the children of Israel started going around, and they took all of the cities and the areas where these people had come from in this big battle against Gibeon. And they went and they took all of these cities with the exception of Jerusalem, a city that they did not take, but it lists the cities that they took, Lachish and Hebron and so forth. And so then he ordered them to take the rocks down and bring these kings out, and then he told some of these guys, put your feet on the necks of these kings, and so God is going to let you put your foot down on the necks of your enemies to defeat them.

And then Joshua killed these kings and threw their bodies back into the cave, hung them actually on five trees until evening. Then they threw their carcasses into the caves, and they threw the rocks over the caves which remained there until the day that this particular book was written. And so he went ahead then and took all of these cities that had sent their armies out against them.

Verse 42 of chapter 10, And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. Now in verse 14 and verse 42, declaration is that the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. And Joshua returned in all Israel with him under the camp of Gilgal.

Now there is a song later in the book of Judges that speaks of God using the stars and so forth in fighting for his people. There are those who call themselves theistic evolutionists. They acknowledge God in the origins, God in an ambiguous kind of a terminology, a force, a power.

There was something that started the whole thing going. But once God started the whole process, once he created the universe, then he more or less stepped back. He may have created the first cell, but he stepped back and let all things sort of develop and evolve as far as life forms and all.

It's known as theistic evolution. It was an attempt to harmonize evolutionary thought with the Bible, though it surely doesn't bring any real harmony with the Bible. It creates more problems than it answers.

Those who teach theistic evolution are more or less those who believe in the uniformitarianism concept of our universe and of the planet earth. Their theory is pretty well described by Peter, who said in the last days scoffers would arise saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since our fathers have fallen asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning. The doctrine or the idea of uniformitarianism is pretty well expressed in all things continue as they were from the beginning.

In other words, there aren't any real changes, no real catastrophic kind of changes. You can explain everything in the geological column and everything as far as life processes are concerned by observable phenomena today. So the idea of uniformitarianism really is in direct contrast to the Bible.

You cannot be a true believer in the Bible and be a uniformitarian. They are sort of mutually exclusive. Now, this same fellow, Immanuel Velikovsky, has in the last few years written another book, Earth in Upheaval, in which he thoroughly, totally destroys the idea of uniformitarianism, absolutely wipes it out with incontrovertible evidence.

He has twice now sent the scientists on their ears. His first book, Worlds in Collision, created quite a furore in the scientific community because, of course, it also challenged the idea of uniformitarianism. But his second book, he attacks it directly and does a devastating job in piling up evidence that shows that things cannot be explained by a uniform pattern, that there had to be cataclysmic changes on the earth's surface and so forth, catastrophic changes that you cannot really explain all of the phenomena by the idea of uniformitarianism.

In the book Earth in Upheaval, he gives some very solid evidence for the universal flood of Noah, though he isn't really trying to prove the flood. He talks about the deposits of the bones of various animals that have been found in the caves in England, the bones severely fractured. All of them seem to be deposited at the same time by some violent thrust.

But saber-toothed tigers along with rabbits and all kinds of animals that are really antagonistic towards each other, and yet all heaved in there and crushed and broken at the same time and planted there. He

gives some powerful evidence of violent upheavals, which, of course, the Scriptures do testify have taken place upon the earth in various periods of history. But God intervening.

Now, you see, we are prone to subconsciously think of God as far off and unrelated to the affairs of our lives. We so often think of God in a remote sense, not of one who is actively interested in me at this moment in what I am doing. I think of God as just being out there, remote from me, sort of governing over the whole universe, but certainly He has no personal interest in me or in my daily problems.

Now, one of the most important things that all of us need to develop is that consciousness of God's presence with us at all times, in all places, and the realization that God is vitally interested even with those just piddling little things about your life. God is concerned with you. He's concerned with those things that are worrying you.

The Bible speaks about God's ear being open to the righteous. When you call unto the Lord, and God talks about not oppressing the poor because when they cry unto me, the Lord said, I will hear, and I will surely avenge their cause. Now, when you're poor, when you're needing money, and when you're there saying, oh God, I don't know what I can do about these bills.

This guy's really pressing me, Lord. I don't know what to do. He's really pushing me to the wall.

The Lord hears your cry, though you don't think that He does. And yet the Lord is vitally concerned in your life. And here is a guy just like you and me who is fighting a battle.

They've got the enemy on the run, but it's getting towards evening. Oh, if the sun goes down, we won't be able to finish wiping them out. Sun stands still, and suddenly the sun stands still in the heaven and stays in that spot all day long.

Now, you may believe that God can heal your sore toe or an earache, but we don't think of God as really intervening in a dramatic, powerful way within our lives. When I was starting a church out in Corona, in order to meet the needs of the family, I was building a motel up in Idyllwild. I had a daily radio program on KREL, 15-minute Bible study every morning.

And I used to like to listen to my program when I would drive up to Idyllwild, because it would just help pass the time of day, and I could also critique myself. But driving, oh, hundreds of miles every week, commuting back and forth to Idyllwild, because I had several Bible studies going at night, I'd have to drive down at night, have my Bible studies, drive back up to Idyllwild the next morning. My car was really getting some real wear and tear.

And the front speaker had gone out in my radio, and I could only play the thing on the rear speaker. And I was headed up to Idyllwild, and I went to turn on my radio broadcast so I could listen and pass the time and critique it. And I was out about the area of March Field, going out towards San Jacinto from 395, and there was so much static on that radio that I couldn't hear my program.

And so, I sort of started complaining to the Lord. I said, Lord, I came down last night so I could teach the Bible study. I'm running the wheels off my car and off of me, trying to serve You.

I need to feed the family. That's why I'm building the motel up in Idyllwild. And Lord, I don't like this drive.

It gets monotonous. And the radio does help, Lord. I really wish I could hear my program and listen to the radio, because it just helps the drive not be so long.

And I don't want to complain, Lord, but it sure would be nice to have my radio. And I was really just talking to the Lord like that, as I was driving along about the area where they were building the dam for Paris Lake. And while I was sort of just laying this trip on the Lord, I had a vision in my mind.

I saw the rear speaker, and I saw a little two-prong connection going into wires that came out of the rear speaker. And I saw that connection loose and jiggling. And I saw this vividly in my mind, so vividly, that just as you're going up the hill and making that turn around where you come down into the valley towards San Jacinto, I pulled off the side of the road right there.

And I popped my trunk lid open, and I climbed underneath to see what kind of connection they had to that rear speaker on my radio. And sure enough, just as I saw in my mind a loose connection dangling and jiggling, so this connection was loose, I pushed the thing in tight, closed the lid, ran around quickly, and turned on the radio. Clears a bell.

And I said, wow, Lord, that's unreal. You mean you're interested in me and in my listening to my radio? That's all right, Lord. I love it.

To realize that God is so close and desires to be deeply involved in your life. You just don't give Him the chance. You say, well, God's never spoken to me.

Have you ever asked Him to? Have you ever asked Him a direct question and then waited to get a direct answer? Now, I have to admit, I wasn't really expecting an answer. I was just sort of complaining. But then I began to discover that if I would ask God direct questions, I would often get direct answers.

And I realized that so many times I just had not because I had asked not. God was there. God is interested.

God wants to work. He's not remote, off somewhere in the universe. That's what Elijah was taunting those priests of Baal concerning their God.

Maybe He's off someplace on a vacation. Maybe He's playing golf. You know, cry a little louder.

But God is not remote and far off. He is vitally interested in you and in your life and even in those little things that are troubling you. You're His child.

He doesn't like to see you distressed. He doesn't like to see you worried or fretting. He wants to reach out and help you.

Don't think of God as way off, untouchable, unreachable, unapproachable. As Paul said to the Athenian philosophers, the Epicureans, for in Him we live, we move, we have our being. God is interested in us.

God wants to demonstrate His presence, His power, His love to you. You have not because you ask not. Become aware of the presence of God.

Begin to realize, hey, God is here. God is with me. So, God demonstrated here in a very powerful way His interest, His presence to Joshua and to the people.

Now, having conquered these kings, they really, at this point, conquered the major enemies within the land. The major conquests were made all at this one shot when these kings came out against them. So, from there on, it was almost like just going out and mopping up.

So, in chapter 11, the other kings, when they heard of what had happened to these kings that had come out against them, they also went out with their hosts. And these are now the kings that are in the area of the Galilee and Upper Galilee region. In the first three verses, clearing up to Mount Hermon.

And they went out and all of their hosts with them, many people, even as the sand is upon the seashore, a multitude with very many horses and chariots. And these kings met together and they came to the waters of Meron to fight against Israel. And the Lord said to Joshua, be not afraid because of them for tomorrow about this time, I will deliver them all slain before Israel and thou shalt heal their horses and burn their chariots with fire.

So, again, Joshua came with all of his men suddenly upon these people. And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them and chased them even unto Sidon, clearing over the upper part or the lower part of Lebanon there, the upper part of the area of Israel. And Joshua took Hazor, which of course is up in the Upper Galilee and one of the major cities at that time in that area.

And he smote all of those with the edge of the sword and he utterly wiped out the cattle and the horses and burned the chariots and did all this the Lord had commanded Moses to do when they took the land. So, verse 23, Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said unto Moses. Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes and the land rested from war.

Now, he took the whole land and yet there were pockets of resistance that they did not take. There was a failure on their part to inhabit the whole territory that God had given to them. Now, God had said every place you put the sole of your foot, I have given it to you.

One of the tragedies was the incomplete conquest of the land. For instance, the Jebusite city of Jerusalem was not taken by Joshua. In fact, it was not taken until the time of David.

And David took the city of Jerusalem and hence it was called after that the city of David. But we will read of other areas, Gaza, Ashdod and so forth that they did not take at that time. Yet they conquered not all the land.

Now, that was a tragedy that they did leave unconquered territory. And because they left it, it did become a problem later on to them. Now, in chapter 11, it gives a list of the names of the kings that were in this land that they destroyed or that they had come against.

And so chapter 12 gives you a roster of the kings that they defeated. In chapter 13, now Joshua was old and stricken in years. It means that he was beginning to be a little feeble.

The idea of stricken in years refers to more or less the feebleness that oftentimes accompanies old age. And there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed. This, as I said, was one of the tragedies.

Is there failure to continue until they had taken all of the land that God had promised? Now, there is a sequel to that in our own spiritual lives. As I have told you before, coming into the land of promise and taking the land of promise has as a spiritual sequel the life of victory, the walking in the Spirit that God wants you to know, the victory over the flesh and your old flesh life. Now, God has promised you victory

over your flesh life.

It is a victory that all you have to do is go in and claim, lay claim to it. Every place you put your foot, God has given it to you for a possession. Now, the tragic thing with so many Christians is they start off in the Spirit in a very powerful way, and they make great initial spiritual strides in their lives.

But then they will hit a spiritual plateau where a complacency will settle over them, and they are no longer eager for conquest. They are no longer really striving towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God. But they begin to sort of kick back in spiritual ease and resting upon the past victories, so that oftentimes when you talk to them, their conversation is always of some past spiritual victory and blessing that they experienced in their life.

But there is nothing fresh and up-to-date. Most of the spiritual victories are relegated to some historic period in their own walk and experience, and they are always relating the glory days of the past. Oh, I can remember the days of the tent and glorying, you know, in the work of God in my life while we were in the tent.

Or the days in the little church. But it is always a sign of spiritual stagnation when you've got to look back to relate some vital experience with God. God wants you to have an up-to-the-moment experience of His grace and power and love in your life and His victory.

Now they came to the place where they were satisfied, they were content, they didn't press on to the full victory. Beware of spiritual plateaus. Beware of that spiritual complacency where you come to the place where you're spiritually satisfied.

This is as far as I need to go, as far as I desire to go, as far as the rest of the things in my life. Well, I can live with them. Whenever you can start living comfortably with your flesh, you are in danger spiritually.

Our flesh is a constant enemy to our walk in the Spirit. The Spirit is lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit, and these two are contrary, the Scripture says. They're opposed to each other.

And thus, how important that we press on to the full possession of that which God has promised unto us. But there remained yet very much land to be possessed. And so it tells the territories that they had not yet conquered.

Now God had told them to divide it by lot to the Israelites for an inheritance as I have commanded you. Verse 14, only under the tribe of Levi there is no inheritance. The sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance as he said unto them.

Now Moses gave to the tribe and the children of Reuben the inheritance according to their families, and he describes the borders on the other side of the Jordan River that belonged to Reuben. And then to the tribe of Gad he describes from verse 25 to the end the borders of the area that were given to Gad, again on the other side of the Jordan River east from Jericho. Now in chapter 14, we have the interesting account of this fellow Caleb.

When Moses had sent out the 12 spies to go into the land, Caleb was a companion to Joshua, and they spied out the south country of Israel from near Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, the Valley of Eshkol, on over to the Valley of Elah, and southwards towards Hebron and Beersheba on down to the southern border of Kadesh Barnea. Now when they came back and brought the good report that, hey, that land is great. They

had a big bunch of grapes that they carried on a stake between them.

They got this pole and they tied this huge bunch of grapes. And I'll tell you, there in the Valley of Eshkol, they have some beautiful, beautiful grapes. Some of the most, oh, can't talk about it.

They are good. They are eating grapes. The Jews only really grow table grapes.

And they're just a delicious, or that is the Muslims only grow the table grapes, the Jews grow the wine grapes, but the Muslims grow the eating grapes because the Muslims don't believe in drinking wine. And so they only grow table grapes. And the area, of course, there in the Valley of Eshkol, Hebron, and so forth, is Muslim territory, the Arabs.

But they have some of the most delicious grapes, even to the present day, and huge bunches. And so these guys picked one of these great bunches of grapes. They were some of the first tourists to go into the land of Israel.

The word spies is actually the word for tourist in Hebrew. And they brought back souvenirs, this big bunch of grapes. They said, wow, that land is all right.

You know, it's flowing with milk and honey. Look at this bunch of grapes that we picked. Oh, it's a good land.

But the 10 other spies said, oh man, it's a land that eats up its inhabitants. They have huge cities, big walls, and they're giants there. We were like grasshoppers.

And these 10 spies put fear in the heart of Israel. They turned away. Now Moses, when God said, all right, you know, you're going to have to wonder.

Moses promised Caleb. He said, look, Caleb, when we take the land, you can have that territory that you spied out. That's yours.

So they had covered, they conquered pretty much the northern part, the upper Galilee region, the area of Samaria. And now Caleb came to Joshua and he said, Joshua, when you and I spied out the land, when we came back and gave our report to Moses, you'll remember that Moses promised me that I could have for my family the territory that we spied out. He said, now look, I'm 85 years old, but I'm just as strong as the day that we spied out the land.

And he said, I want your permission now to go down and take that land that was promised to me. I love the grit of this old fellow. 85 years old.

He says, man, I'm ready to go to battle. I'm ready to take that land that God had promised to me that Moses promised that I could have. I want your permission now to go down and take it.

And so Joshua gave unto Caleb the permission to go down in the area of Hebron and those areas around Hebron, the areas that were promised to Caleb. And so Caleb went down and conquered that area around Hebron. He was from the tribe of Judah, and Judah actually had that entire area south from Jerusalem, east to the Dead Sea, Jordan River, Dead Sea, and west all the way on over towards the Elah Valley, where from there to the coast was the tribe of Dan.

So Joshua blessed him, verse 13 of chapter 14, and he gave him Hebron and the environs about it for his inheritance. And the reason being given the end of verse 14, because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. So in chapter 15, he describes the portion that was given from Judah, and he tells the borders of the land that was given to Judah, going over at one point clear to the Mediterranean, the area of Hebron, and the area basically south of Jerusalem.

Then it tells of the various villages and the cities and all that were in the land that was given to Judah. In verse 62, one of the interesting cities is En Gedi, which is down by the Dead Sea. It is still existing there today.

It is one of my favorite places to visit. They have fantastic dates in En Gedi, and they also have a beautiful waterfall, fern grotto, just an absolutely gorgeous area. We've got some beautiful pictures of En Gedi, and we are hoping to get our film edited pretty soon, sort of a travelogue of Israel, and let you see some of that beautiful, beautiful country.

In chapter 16, he describes the areas that were given then to Manasseh and to Ephraim, the sons or the descendants of Joseph. Now, part of the tribe of Manasseh settled on the east banks of the Jordan River, but the other part settled on the west banks of the Jordan, from the area of Jericho on up through Bethel, and the area basically just north from the area of Jerusalem, and going north from there, north of Judah. And so verse 10, chapter 16, they drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites, and to this day, and they serve under tribute.

So again, the failure of totally conquering the land. And as we get into the book of Judges, we'll see the cost of this disobedience, of failing to totally take the land, but allowing some of the people to remain. As the Scripture had predicted, they did become thorns in their sides and pricks, and they became a real problem to them in time to come.

We'll cover that as we move on into Judges, but we'll finish the book of Joshua next Sunday. Now, in some of the reading that we skipped over tonight, the listing of all those names, you can't even find the ruins of all those cities anymore, so it's no sense of reading all those names. When you get to those listing of names, just jump over them, else your Bible reading will become tedious indeed.

So, just jump over whenever you start getting a list of a lot of names. Now, I do suggest that you get a good Bible map of the division of the land to the twelve tribes, and a good map will do a lot more for you to understand the places where the twelve tribes lived than trying to read the borders of the cities that don't even exist anymore. So, just get you a good Bible map, and you can study it on a good Bible map, the apportionment of the land.

Now, what they did is that they would draw out the area, and then they would have all the tribes' names in a little box or something, and they'd pull, you know, they'd say, okay, now this area on down from Jerusalem on south and so forth, all right, now who's going to have this? They'd draw the lot, and oh, Judah, okay, that's Judah. And so, they apportioned the land by lot, by the drawing of lots, and they would circumscribe an area, then draw lots, and it would go to that tribe who was drawn for that particular area. So, next week we move on to the finishing of the apportionment of the land to the various tribes and to Joshua's final charge to the people and his death.

Shall we stand? May the Lord bring you into a special consciousness of his presence, of his love, of his interest in your life, and may you walk in the consciousness of God's grace and be led by his Spirit. May

you come into a new relationship with God, a very personal relationship with God. In Jesus' name.

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