

The Conquest of Canaan (Joh. Xiii: 1)

by Seth Rees

Seth Rees emphasizes the necessity for Christians to actively pursue their spiritual inheritance and the vital role of the Holy Spirit in this journey.

Scripture: Joshua 1:3, Joshua 13:1, Psalm 139:23, Isaiah 58:11, Habakkuk 3:19, Matthew 28:19, John 4:14, Acts 1:8, Philippians 3:12

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Great Commission"

Description

Seth Rees preaches about the importance of fully possessing the land of our Christian inheritance, drawing parallels to the conquest of Canaan under Joshua's leadership. He emphasizes the need for the Church to go beyond mere crossing over into Christianity and to actively engage in spiritual warfare to claim the promises and blessings God has in store. Rees challenges Christians to not be slack in fulfilling the great commission and to be diligent in spreading the Gospel to the lost world, highlighting the urgency of the times with the majority of the world still unreached by the message of salvation.

Transcript

"There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." Josh. 13: 1.

The conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua was a most striking type of the conquest of Christianity under the leadership of Christ, the Captain of our salvation.

It is one thing to cross the River Jordan and sing a song; it is another thing to enter in, and quite another thing to shout down the walls of Jericho, to stone Achan to death at Ai, to go on until it can be said that the whole land is possessed. At the time these words were uttered it could be truthfully said that the land of Canaan was subdued. The Southern kings and their power had been broken at Horeb, and the North countries had been subdued at the waters of Merom. But when it came to the individual possession of their individual inheritance the people were so slack that Joshua threw down a challenge and cried out, "how long are ye slack to go up and possess the land which the Lord your God hath given to your fathers." Their hesitation is a striking picture, first, of the Christian age, and second of individual Christian experience. When we glance over the past wean not fail to note how slack, how reluctant Christianity has been to go up and possess the land, and to carry out the great commission of her glorified Head. How slack American Protestantism has been, and is, to publish the whole Bible to a lost world.

After nineteen centuries, two thirds of the population of the earth are without a knowledge of Christ, and nine-tenths of the people are without salvation. With the awful increase of heathenism during the centuries of sin, with the neglected masses in so called Christendom, and darkness that can be felt on every hand, we must see how slow the professed Christian Church has been to go up and accomplish the purpose of God.

God's purposes are most noble. He has some magnificent plans even for this old world if He only can find somebody who would carry them out, but in all the past ages it has occurred again and again, that He has had to make much of sanctified individuality, and sometimes has had to take a single individual with whom to accomplish that, which the whole Church ought to have done. Many a time He has lifted, even from the masses, somebody who could stay the rising tide of spiritual death, and turn back the powers of darkness and publish a gospel that would save from sin, and give another generation a chance. All along the ages the reluctance of His people has been apparent. It is all about us to day.

The necessity of this camp meeting, the fact that we are here as we are this morning is the result of almost universal lethargy and indifference about us. We are here from the force of circumstances. To see what the Lord will do and to see what can be done to carry out the great Commission so neglected by its professed friends. God have mercy on the empty profession of these times! Uncover deceit and bring such power upon us as will cause hypocrisy to cover its accursed head in everlasting shame. Lament these facts as we may, there is no earthly power that can change them. God must make bare His arm, let the power of His gospel fall down upon us. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him. This is not only a picture of the Church but a picture of individual Christian experience. Here questions will confront many of us that must be settled. God help us to meet them manfully and to settle them for the right. And "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." The weakness of the Christian Church is traceable to the fact that she has never received the Holy Ghost. The weakness of the so called Holiness movement is traceable to the fact that they have failed to recognize the Holy Ghost, and go on to possess the land. Many have doubtless received the Holy Ghost, but by ignoring His gifts and graces have grieved Him and quenched Him until He has withdrawn. The weakness of the Holiness movement and its inglorious defeat in many places is traceable to the fact that the people have failed to receive the gifts of the Spirit, have not recognized Him as Captain of the Lord's host, and have failed to keep Him in the front.

Many of us have desired to be leaders ourselves. We have called upon Him to help us when we ought to have recognized that the work was His, and we are the helpers. We have called upon Him in our emergencies when we ought to have recognized that He is the sole proprietor of all that concerns us. We have come to Him in times of trouble when we ought to have trusted Him to keep us out of trouble. Some have made the mistake of supposing that entire sanctification is the ultimatum of Christian experience when it is only the beginning of a triumphant, victorious, conquering tread which means to possess the land to the going down of the sun. Thousands have failed to keep step with God, and the worst thing that could be said about them is, that they are left behind. Many of them still profess holiness and testify to it straight, but they are certainly deserted, empty, and powerless, and making a disgraceful failure. Many forget that entire sanctification is not only instantaneous. but gradual, and the gradual phase of this experience is sadly neglected in these days. It is instantaneous in its reception and the destruction of inbred sin takes place in a moment of time, and the coming of the Holy Ghost to His temple is sudden, but sanctification is gradual in its out workings and out puttings of the Spirit in every day life. While our hearts are made clean in a moment, our lives are conformed to His image as the years go by. This requires time, patience, labor, and waiting upon God, that the highest purposes of God may be accomplished in and

through us and that we may possess the land.

The principles of the art of stenography may be learned in a comparatively short time, but the easy and rapid development and practical exercise of these principles requires time. There are great many things in Christian experience that we can get in a moment which it may require years to learn how to use with perfect ease. Paul says, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therein to be content." I have learned them. Some things come by revelation and some things come by learning. Paul says, "I have learned how to be abased as well as how to abound." There are a great many people who are abased but they do not know how, Paul says, "I know how to be abased." He knew how to have comforts, to have comfortable circumstances without allowing it to puff him up; on the other hand he knew how to be abased. He knew how to sleep on the floor of a dark, dingy room without complaining. He knew how to do it. It is one thing to have to do it and another to know how to do it.

This gradual phase of Christian experience is so sadly neglected that many are shorn of their strength and have utterly failed to keep step with God. It was the Lord that said unto Joshua, "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed;" and at the time He uttered these words there were thirty-one headless sovereigns lying at Joshua's feet, and thirty-one mighty strongholds in his grasp, and yet there remaineth very much land to be possessed. They downed the representatives of the land they possessed, they had possessed the strongholds but God says, "Do not conclude that you have reached your climax." There are greater lengths to be traversed and higher heights to be scaled. Go on to the going down of the sun. With many of us our former education is against us, we have been wrongly instructed. It has been laid on in such thicknesses that the Holy Ghost must take it off in layers; layer by layer. Peter was such a Jew that he had to have a sheet experience to stretch his head after his heart had been made clean. If we will walk with God, we will go on to find tremendous things, things we have never dreamed. We will find the Lord talking to us about our body, and will be led to trust Him with our physical condition, with our circumstances, with the strange providences that come into our lives, the things that never can be explained, and He will guide and protect us under awful pressure. In the most perplexing and trying surroundings, we will find the Holy Ghost hushing our soul's cry, singing some sweet song which will put us to sleep. To follow on, to know the Lord is to trust Him in the strangest and most aggravating circumstances.

We may find ourselves enveloped in difficulties, trials and circumstantial darkness, yet singing like a nightingale, rejoicing evermore, and drinking from a fountain of such depth that there is no possibility of exhaustion. The opposition to a whole Gospel in the so called holiness movement is traceable to the fact that the people have not kept step with the Holy Ghost. They may have had as genuine a Pentecost as any one, but if they object to anything between the lids of the Book it is because of a lack of acquaintance with the Author of the Book, and persisted in, will produce leanness of soul. If some of you who listen this morning had kept step with Him, He would have whispered to you about the picnic that is to take place in the skies.

If you had walked in solitary retirement with the presence of the Lord, you would have known the secret of His coming back to earth again. With the real progressive saint there are times when friends have proven false, everything seems unfavorable, heartbroken, filled with sorrow inexpressible, suddenly the whole scene changes and He whispers to you about His coming back to pick you up and take you out of the coming tribulation and house you up in the New Jerusalem, where you shall not see the awful things which are surely coming upon the inhabitants of this earth. Those who receive the Holy Ghost do not have to have much theology to know the value of salvation. They may need it to know how to tax the patience of

the people with their dry sermons but they never need the theology of the schools to get the old fundamental truths from God. Man does not have to leave his business and glean libraries to make him orthodox. The Lord may have to knock out of him a lot of things the schools have put in, but He is able to do it. God not only scrapes the heart and enlarges the head but men with only a few ounces of brains have been used to accomplish more than the heavy weights in theology.

The wholly sanctified see the city that is out of sight; comprehend the incomprehensible; understand the mysterious and know the things that the thousands of earth never know. The Lord will whisper secrets to you that would astonish lords, counselors, and kings of earth. If you walk with Him you will get acquainted with Him and His works. You will find great comfort and consolation in trials, in sorrow, in bereavement. It is simply unexplainable. Nobody can understand it; but they who shut themselves up in the secret place of the Most High and talk with the Comforter and He bathes their souls in the water of life, and pours in the oil -- the pure beaten oil, and they sit in His presence. If He seems to be silent at times they are not restless. There is something most satisfying about sitting in the silent presence of one whom you love. His comforting presence gives consolation and solidity; He holds us steady with remarkable fixedness while we go on to possess the land. Brother, sister, are you going on? Have you reached the banks of Jordan?

Canaan is spoken of as being bounded on the right and on the left, but in front of us there is no boundary line, it is to the going down of the sun. This glorious morning some of us are sitting upon the summit of a great blessing, but it only enables us to see another range, and when you reach the top of another peak, there are still other ranges, other heights of spiritual blessedness. You will go on bounding and bounding, and some of these days, like bounding Paul, you will go bounding into the city of God.

There is something in this progressive, this arm to arm walk with the Holy Ghost, that is like nothing else in the universe. On and on, we do not stop with the downfall of any city, or the beheading of any king, we go on to obtain our individual inheritance. Let us lift up our eyes this morning and behold the magnitude of His purchase for us. Some of these times we will go over there where Achsah's blessing is found. When she was married, she requested her father, Caleb, to give her not only the Southland, which was her inheritance, but also "the upper and nether springs." The Southland was located under a burning sun, and often scorched with burning heat, but she succeeded in getting, not only the lower springs, but the upper springs, and from the springs in the mountains, fed by the constantly melting snow, she had waters that not only cooled and refreshed, but fertilized the Southland. When under the scorching sun her pools, rills, rivulets and brooks dried up, when the rills of the valley were no more, here came the streams from the upper springs. They were never falling. The others would dry under torrid heat, but she had demanded springs which would never dry up no difference what came. Achsah was a most striking and beautiful type of this wonderful blessing of sanctification. O, there is a place, thank God, where we may, not only have the nether springs of earthly joys, companionship of friends and loved ones, of temporal blessings which the Lord bestows upon us, but when these are all gone, and every earthly joy is dried up, and the last human prop is fallen, then from the upper springs of God's bountiful ocean of love and grace will come the cool, refreshing streams upon our souls that will cause us to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

There are times with all of us when earthly springs fail; the joys of this earth will fade. I have known some who once lived in palatial homes, drove fine horses, and rode in splendid carriages, but their earthly resources have fled away and they are living in a humble cottage, but I find them with streaming eyes, with shining faces; I find them drinking of the springs that never fail, the upper spring. Thank God there is a place of never failing fountains! It is mountain water, it comes from the hill tops of Heaven, it comes from

the streams that make glad the city of God. Here the saints are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house, and they drink of the rivers of His pleasure. The saints who have persevered through and who have accomplished the most for God have always had these springs. Abraham found them on Mt. Moriah. Moses found these springs among the hills of Midian. David found them when he had to flee for his life from the face of his enemies, and hide in caves and desert places. He drank, and drank, and drank, he sang about the rivers "the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

Isaiah, in the midst of the darkness and trials which surrounded his life, found these upper springs and sang of the glorious streams and fountains, and would break out sometimes and say, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Habakkuk found these springs when the pastures were dry and sear; when the flocks had failed; when there was nothing in the herd or stall; when the crops were all dried up and there was nothing in the vineyard, he sat down under his own vine and fig tree and sang, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Paul and Silas found these springs in the old prison at Philippi, and they sang the doors open and sang the prisoner free, for they had these upper springs of never failing joy. John Bunyan found these springs in Bedford jail and said one day, "So they had me off to prison, I sat me down to write. I wrote and wrote, for joy did make me write." Mary Dyer found these springs on the scaffold on Boston Commons, and she drank and drank until her soul took its flight to the city of God. Her shining face, after she was in the coffin box, witnessed that she drank until she was intoxicated from the holy water of the upper springs beyond the stars. Beloved, don't mistake yourself. These springs are still running. Don't you believe that they are all dried up. Don't you believe that a spontaneous Christian experience is a thing of the past? Christianity has not changed. They may tell you that we are less emotional and that education has changed our feelings, but don't you believe it, sir. The spirit of this world has not changed and the spirit of the Gospel is the same forever. When the school men tell you that we have outgrown an emotional religion you just take another drink from the upper springs. When you are puzzled how to sufficiently thank God for what He has done for you, join the Psalmist and say, "I will take the cup of salvation." If the ponds and pools about you are empty, and the rills have gone dry, remember that you can drink from the upper springs and thirst no more.

In every age where men have accomplished the purpose of God in any marked way they have had to cut new channels. They have had to leave the old land marks, they have had to go alone. They have had to cut new channels for fuller tides. And, sir, if you are in this movement to have something merely ordinary, I can not go with you; but if this congregation will join us in seeking something extraordinary, even if we have to cut new channels, to leave the old beaten paths and get out of the old ruts, to go the whole way with God, regardless of men or devils, I am with you forever. The men and movements who have accomplished the most for God have been those who have utterly ignored the beaten paths of a worldly religion, and have done things regarded as extreme, extravagant, unreasonable.

They have never tried to make Christianity harmonize with human reason or human smartness. Abraham was a pioneer; Jonah was the first missionary to Nineveh; Moses had to turn his back upon all the learning of forty years and go out with nothing but a crooked stick. With all his knowledge of medicine, with all his learning, for he was laden with literary honors, he had to turn his back upon it and simply put a piece of brass upon a pole for folks to look at. Martin Luther, George Fox, John Wesley, and every one who has accomplished any great thing for God has had to go at it misunderstood, and has had to do seemingly outlandish and most extreme things to accomplish the purpose of God, so, if we are going to go on we will have to cut new channels. New trials will come to us, very difficult things will appear before us, the enemy will accuse, plan, scheme and come from various quarters, but if we are going to walk with the Holy Ghost,

thank God, we will possess the land. For one, Beloved, I am going on to possess the land. I have prayed and wept and written articles and preached about the coming Pentecost too long to back down when it comes. It is folly for us to write about it and tell about it and then get frightened when we see the billows of glory breaking in upon us. God is my witness, there is not in my soul a trace of compromise, and while I am here on earth and God gives me breath I am going to do my utmost against sin and to possess every foot of territory possible. Beloved, we are not back to Pentecostal power, we are not back to Pentecostal manifestations, but some of us are headed that way. We are going after the sunset. We see that "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." If squatters have taken possession of our plains that is their lookout, we will have to look after our own affairs. They must retreat, we must possess the land. All we have to do is to put our foot on the territory and the Lord says we may have as much as we walk over. I purpose to walk myself to death. I must possess the land.

While in my room, before I came to this platform, I heard from the skies. I saw that for this camp meeting "there remaineth yet much land to be possessed." Somebody must take it. Somebody must pitch their tents that way. The coming of the Lord has been delayed because the land has not been possessed. One generation after the other has been swept off the earth. God is waiting until He can find a generation who will go up and possess the land. What if it might be us? It seems too exalted to be true, but I would like nothing better. I believe if God can have His way with it, this very movement, will finally bring about the consummation of this present age. Every seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb must be taken. The last seat may be taken soon, then our Lord will rise up, gird Himself, and we will meet Him in the air and will go in to the marriage supper of the Lamb. I must be there.

You can not go up to possess the land unless you are in it, and you can not get in unless you are fully saved. So many will have to begin at the beginning. I have before me a lot of people who if they had given attention to the gradual phase of sanctification would have been years and years in advance of where they are, and instead of running in for repairs at every camp meeting, would be preaching and singing and shouting for God; perhaps on the other side of the world. I wish this morning you would go down and get something so that you would never have to go to an altar again. I wish you would get something so that if Gabriel himself should come down to preach to you he would have to go back and say, "I cannot get those folks to the altar." Shall we go on to possess the land and keep step with the Holy Ghost?

You may have to drink from the spring under very peculiar circumstances and strange surroundings, but thank God, He will be with you. I feel somehow like the Lord had put iron timbers in my soul. It is wonderful! If you keep step with God and He sees that you are going to have hard things, rugged things to encounter; He will put in some iron ribs. Glory to God! I feel like jumping. It is the progress of the saint, it is the united efforts of God's own people under the leadership of the Holy Ghost, that will cause this earth to feel the shock of an earthquake. When a sinner sees you rejoicing in God under great trial and perplexity, in great distress, when he sees you at such a time drinking at the springs that are out of sight, it is then he will call for a drink himself. He says, "That is the kind of religion I want." If we do not drink at such times God is watching and the sinner is watching; and if we do not sing, shine and shout in hard places, it will be against the interest of our King and His Kingdom which we claim to represent. O, God help us this morning to possess the land! I am looking out for another hill top. I am expecting to see another range. I am not considered very demonstrative, but if I have got to turn somersaults, I am going on. Anything that is in the Holy Ghost is always in order. Have you new light? Could you take God for your body this morning?

I believe some people here are going to loosen their grasp on things below and reach up and take a firmer hold on the things that never die. This world will pass away; it is to be consumed. We must have

something that will not burn up. Let us rise up and go forward. Let us see the heights and depths. We are spoiled for this world anyhow. The Church can hardly endure us. We might just as well see what there is in salvation. If you find that you are not in the land will you not get up and go over? You can not afford to fail. Do not criticize; do not ask questions, but go up and go on. Do not talk about yourself; do not tell the Lord how much you have given up, and what you are doing, but tell Him how loving He is and what a fool you have been; how slow you have been, and how stupid. Do not go the altar and tell Him how much you have surrendered to Him. He knows that there is only a hand full of it anyhow, and I have heard so much about what you have given up. It makes me sick at heart. I want to hear you talk more about God; about His resources, His willingness, His faithfulness. I want to hear you say that He is more willing to do it than you are to have it done.

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