

LIVING TO THE FULLEST

Joshua 17:14-18

Introduction: Israel has finally reached and settled into the land of promise according to God's plans. The tabernacle has been placed in the center with all the tribes surrounding it. This is a reminder that just as God decided who got what in the promised land, so God decides who gets what gift given to each believer by the Holy Spirit. Just as the life of Israel revolved around the presence of God, which the tabernacle represented, so we are reminded that the Christian's life revolves around the presence of God living with the heart of each believer.

Sadly, one of the tribes didn't like what God gave them, so it is also true today that some Christians are not satisfied with what God has chosen for them in life. The goal of each believer is to live his/her life to the fullest with Jesus Christ in the center.

I. THE TRIBE OF JOSEPH COMPLAINED (v14)

1. The tribe of Joseph complained that they had not received what they thought they deserved. They thought they were more worthy and deserved a greater reward than what was given to them.
2. A reminder to us all that the "enemy" is still strongly entrenched with big weapons in the "land."
3. One's greatness has nothing to do with what one is given to do by the Lord.
 - As the tribe of Joseph was not satisfied with what they were given, so many Christians are also dissatisfied. They want a greater area of service.
 - As the land given to the tribe of Joseph was filled with the enemy (such was also with the other tribes), so is the enemy still entrenched in the life of the complaining Christian.
4. Christians have great trouble in driving out the enemy and instead, they want a change of scenery, another job, different circumstances, a better location, about anything except driving out the enemy.
5. Most Christians are not living their fullest where they are.
 - Satan is still strongly entrenched in their life.
 - It's easier to just run away, go somewhere else, do something else.
6. God will never give the complaining Christian anything else UNTIL the enemy has been removed and that Christian is living his/her fullest for God.
7. Tragedy usually results when a Christian ignores God's plans and goes off on his/her own.

II. THERE IS A WAY FOR THE CHRISTIAN TO HAVE MORE FROM GOD

1. The instruction of Joshua is fitting today for the dissatisfied Christian.
 - If you are so great, then use your greatness to drive out the enemy!

2. What was the tribe of Joseph doing to rid their land of the enemy? NOTHING!
- If a Christian is dissatisfied with his/her life, as the question, "What are you doing with what you have where you are?" "Have you driven the enemy out yet?"
3. God might very well ask, "What about the things in your life that block your progress, obscure your vision, which rob you of victory? Get rid of them!"
4. Christians need to stop crying for greater blessings, greater opportunities until they have done the work in the place where God has placed them.

III. THE ENEMY HAS NO RIGHT TO DWELL IN THE LAND GOD HAS GIVEN YOU

1. Sin has no right to have a foothold in the life of a Christian. Satan has no power in the presence of God (the Holy Spirit).
2. The greatness of a Christian does not come from his/her own accomplishments but from the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. If opportunity seems limited, then maybe it is because the Christian has been limiting God and the enemy is still firmly entrenched in the Christian's life.
4. God will hold the Christian where he/she is until he/she has learned how to receive more power and grace. The Christian must get rid of that which is robbing him/her of victory.

CONCLUSION:

1. If any Christian wants more from God, to do more for God, then he/she must get rid of the enemy.
2. The greater the obedience, the greater the discipline, the greater the faith, the fuller and more complete the allegiance to the Lord, the more God will give to be done to that Christian.
3. The Christian who rejects the path of obedience and discipline and refuses to get rid of the enemy (Satan and Sin) will have little capacity for spiritual growth.
4. Take a look back at Israel. Learn from their mistakes.