

(It Was In Mine Heart)

Joshua 12:1 – 14:15

~ Joshua and Caleb were the only two Israelite's to enter the Promised Land out of the entire first generation - an estimated two and a half million Jews - that came out of Egypt in Exodus. Friends, that's not a good statistic; even by safari standards. I think we all need to critically examine ourselves now and see if we are in the faith. In this report, we can give our answer to that question to the Lord in prayer - as we examine some potent lessons from the lives of these two men. Our expedition through the entire Word of God picks up as Joshua suddenly becomes old and stricken in years – as God puts it. Even so, we know there is much more to do. No matter how much effort, time and hard work we attempt in this life, we are never going to accomplish all that God wants to do. Let's pray before we read on that the Lord will give us the strength to possess all the land He has promised us – in spite of the giants that we will have to overcome; and pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment in Holy Writ.

We're not going into detail regarding the roster of the kings of Canaan found in chapter twelve, because it just isn't thrilling reading, and I don't find a whole lot of spiritual meaning in it. That doesn't mean the spiritual meaning isn't there – because it is there – it just means I can't identify it. I know that's a frank confession for someone as arrogant as I am to admit; but one impressive aspect of this is the level of detail the God of this universe assigns to accounts such as this. Because our study is of the Bible, it would seem natural if all of our topics were mind-shattering, earth-shaking profound issues requiring us to think about them for days at a time. But fortunately, or unfortunately for some people, the Word of God simply gets right down to the nitty-gritty of our everyday life in the places we live and have our being.

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So many Christians – me included – seem to hesitate to bring all of the details of our lives to Him in prayer. Sometimes we think we ought not to talk to God about this or that, and maybe we shouldn't say certain things to the Lord. Well, those just happen to be the things God is interested in regarding us. It's important to trust God with the day to day, minute to minute – second to second – issues that are going on in our lives. God is very much interested in all of those miniscule details of life; you may be sure. The chapters and passages that are dull and boring to us just happen to be thrilling and interesting to God. I promise you if this record of these kings were unimportant, they would not be included – they would be forgotten. This is a list of all the kings who surrendered to Joshua; and it records the way in which Joshua took the land.

The liberal is ALWAYS attacking the fundamental like me for taking the Word of God literally, as I do. Well, I believe God has books in Heaven as Scripture indicates there are - and I believe God reads them regularly – and that's one reason I write all the time. Here's a book and a chapter that you and I would know nothing about if we didn't have this message from God. Since God took the time to record it for us, I'm sure He intends for us to read it. Our book in Heaven is part of the book of works and every detail of everything we have ever done is accounted for. But we are in the all-important Lambs Book of Life if we love, trust and obey the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. If your name is written in Heaven, and if you're in the Lambs Book of life, that's the only way it is there. Perhaps we should also pray for revelation in this report.

Many things in my life that are dear to my heart would be absolutely unmeaningful to you if I told them to you - and vice versa. Well, this is the way I was shown to convey truth and teach the Bible; because if the Word of God doesn't work down here in the home, in the workplace and when placed in the real-time hopper of our lives, then it becomes just a bunch of speculative conjecture and subjective theory. People speak to me of people I don't know, places I have never been, and experiences in their lives that I have no idea of – but God knows. They are the ones you're going to find in

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YOUR book, too; and that information should add a great deal of perspective to our life. It's impossible to esteem others better than ourselves and consider the welfare of others above our own without the love of the Spirit of God living through us....

XII

1 Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the river Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east:

2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon;

3 And from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea on the east, the way to Bethjeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdothpisgah:

4 And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei,

5 And reigned in mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon.

6 Them did Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel smite: and Moses the servant of the LORD gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

7 And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baalgad in the valley of

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Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions;

8 In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites:

9 The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one;

10 The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one;

11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one;

12 The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one;

13 The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one;

14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one;

15 The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one;

16 The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one;

17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one;

18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one;

19 The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one;

20 The king of Shimronmeron, one; the king of Achshaph, one;

21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one;

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22 The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one;

23 The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one;

24 The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

XIII

~ There are tremendous truths in the first verse of chapter thirteen. We're more than halfway through Joshua and, already he is an old man stricken in years. Joshua knows he is old and stricken because the Lord reminds him of it. Joshua has taken Israel a long way as the God-appointed leader of His people, but he will be unable to lead the children of Israel much longer. Joshua is pushing one hundred years old at this time; and, from reading the accounts we have, it seems as if time has gotten away from Joshua. It seems as if time is moving much faster than it did out there in the wilderness. Of course, the time in the wilderness was long and drawn out, and we had so many reports in it that I, personally, didn't know if we would make it out alive. Remember, Moses knew all about the wilderness - and he called it a terrible place. Well, now they're in the land of milk and honey - and they're laying hold of it - and that's when time will begin to slip away from all of us. Time hangs heavy on many Christians who are not living a life for the cause of Christ. Naturally, as we age, time slips by increasingly faster, years begin to turn over on the calendar page like weeks. Before we know what happened, we have discovered we're old and on the brink of death - just like Joshua is discovering here. A young man gets busy and soon discovers he is in middle age; and right about the time of that realization - the "golden years" begin to dog us....

1 Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

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~ Now, we considered this carefully in our previous report and, honestly, I thought the children of Israel were doing pretty good as they marched in and drove a wedge right through the center of the land. Then, as they moved to the south, they seemed to have quickly conquered that area as well. It seems they had done a very fine job. Even so, there was much land to be possessed. Well, that's the story of your life and my life, too. Any true and honest servant of God will have to tell you they never accomplished all the things they would like to have done for God. Paul said, "... not as though I had already attained, either had I reached full maturation: but I follow after if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." This means Paul had been called to do a certain thing and that certain thing had not been fully realized at that moment in his life. Well, God had given Joshua every inch of land his foot had treaded upon, but the children of Israel still didn't walk on all of the land. You and I will NEVER be capable of possessing all the spiritual blessings God has given to us.

There are self-professing believers who act as if there is nothing more for them to learn or know about the Bible or God. They act very satisfied with their Christian-selfie walk and personal life. What they don't see is that God sees how they lack any desire to press on towards the mark of high calling of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, after forty years of victory after victory, and conquest after conquest for the children of Israel – there is still very much land to be possessed. If you are sincere, you realize you never reach the place where you have "made it" in terms of a spiritually successful career; and that complacency is one of the biggest dangers being taught in the "church" regarding the Christian life. The modern-day theologian says, "... it's alright – everything is good – God wants to be your buddy – so go be successful in whatever you want to do." That gives the impression that you have done everything God wants of you by simply believing. As our faithful safari travelers know, the end result of that teaching is Christian Tragedy. One of the glory's and wonders of going to Heaven is that Heaven is the place where we can reach goals and attain that which we should have down here on earth - but failed to. Paul could say he finished his course,

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but he also understood he never reached total spiritual maturity – and that should really tell you a WHOLE lot about YOU, my beloved.

So, in this chapter, the land will be allocated to the tribes - even though they are not in possession of all of it. We have considered twice thus far on safari that the children of Israel only occupied about ten percent of what was given to them – and that was in the heyday of King Solomon and King David. Joshua’s command was to oversee this distribution and, most importantly, to confirm to the two and a half tribes that inheritance which Moses had promised to them. That’s a very important note to make, also....

2 This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri,

3 From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites:

4 From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians, unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites:

5 And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath.

6 All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim, and all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

7 Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

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8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them;

9 From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon;

10 And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon;

11 And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah;

12 All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for these did Moses smite, and cast them out.

13 Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

14 Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

15 And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families.

16 And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba;

17 Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamothbaal, and Bethbaalmeon,

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18 And Jahazah, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

19 And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zarethshahar in the mount of the valley,

20 And Bethpeor, and Ashdothpisgah , and Bethjeshimoth,

21 And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country.

22 Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.

23 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

24 And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families.

25 And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah;

26 And from Heshbon unto Ramathmizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir;

27 And in the valley, Betharam, and Bethnimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward.

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28 This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families.

30 And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities:

31 And half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.

32 These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward.

33 But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

XIV

1 And these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them.

2 By lot was their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half tribe.

~ So, we have the confirmation of the inheritance and it's important to note that half of the tribe of Manasseh did go over to the correct side of the Jordan River. Also, here we see Caleb is given Hebron; and we haven't

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heard much about Caleb, the second of two men to enter the land out of the two and a half million who came out of Egypt. Caleb was every bit as remarkable as Joshua was. If you have a good Bible with a map you can see the position of all twelve tribes. It's rather important to visualize how the tribe of Dan was up in the north, and Simeon is furthest south; and the expression "... from Dan to Beersheba" is a recurring expression in the Word of God. That phrase encompasses every person in the nation Israel who went into the land as God had commanded....

3 For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them.

4 For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell in, with their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance.

5 As the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea.

7 Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God.

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9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

~ We're talking about a man who "... wholly followed the Lord." The recipe for a good and satisfying long life is to WHOLLY follow the Lord thy God. It's really just that simple, and yet, it's just that complicated. We see Caleb make this statement at eighty-five years of age; and he says he is as strong this day as he was the day he went with Joshua to spy out the land. During the forty years Caleb spent in that terrible wilderness, every other man of his generation, except Joshua, died. It would seem as if Caleb found the fountain of youth that Ponce was searching for later. All of those other men who spied with Caleb saw the giants and they were satisfied to return to the chains, shackles and brick yards back down in Egypt. It would seem they totally forgot about their groaning and how they had been given no straw to make the bricks.

Well, the Lord Jesus said that if a man has put his hand to the plow, then that man is to continue plowing. Jesus also commanded the lame man to take up his bed and walk. The Puritans believed that no arrangements were to be made for a relapse into the old life. Caleb told Israel to do as the Lord had called them. The forty years in the wilderness hadn't affected Caleb one bit – in fact, Caleb seems to have found it a healthy learning environment. I'm sure there was much complaining about the heat by the

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other people, and about how bad they had it – Caleb didn't know what they were talking about.

Naturally, Caleb would have noticed the thermometer rising to one hundred eighteen plus degrees but, Caleb was thinking about Hebron – the place that Abraham had loved – and about those grapes of Eshkol he had seen so long ago. Caleb wanted that place and was bound and determined to have it. Even in the wilderness, Caleb was able to think about the future and the great hope it held and, therefore, Caleb didn't age a day. I'm sure the rest were feeble and sickly people dying an agonizingly slow death on the wilderness march.

Do you want length of life with health? If you do, then you have to follow the formula God prescribes. I understand we ALL do a fair amount of complaining – but – what about our hope? How often do we thank Him for that? What about the future? Are you scared of it or determined to possess it? I think Caleb enjoyed all of his spiritual blessings each and every day he wandered the wilderness. Are you enjoying ALL – or how about just any – of the spiritual blessings God has for you today? Many people – myself included – can say this life is terrible. The question is: do the trials and tribulations in your life “come to pass?” – Or, do they come to stay? Hope in this life makes all the difference between a genuine Christian attitude and the attitude of a make believer....

12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

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14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

15 And the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war.

~ Well, the "Anakims" were the giants – as we have seen before. When we were in Genesis, we saw "Hebron" means "communion." That would be the place of fellowship. Caleb had enjoyed fellowship with God, and he truly desires to go and reside in that place. So, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb; and that for only one reason, my friends: because he WHOLLY followed the Lord God of Israel. Your reward in Heaven isn't going to have anything in the world to do with the amount of work you have managed to produce for God. Prominence, position and popularity will have no impact on your reward in Heaven. I urge you to ask yourself today: are you WHOLLY following the Lord? That's all important in this life – and that's what Caleb was concerned with doing ~

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