

OBTAINING THE INHERITANCE

by Brian Bailey

The Lord desires to give an inheritance to each one of His children. We can learn how to obtain our inheritance in Christ by studying how the Old Testament people of God entered in and gained theirs. God used three people to lead the Israelites into obtaining their inheritance: Abraham, Joshua, and David. We need to recognize how their different ministries worked together to bring the people of God into their full inheritance.

Abraham received the promise of the inheritance from God. Although he received a vision from God, he did not receive the fulfillment of those promises. So Joshua was then raised up to lead the descendants of Abraham into the inheritance that God had promised.

Joshua started to possess the inheritance, but he did not complete the work. It was King David who went on to lead the Israelites into possessing the entire land and gaining the full inheritance that had been promised to Abraham's descendants.

We need to see how these different ministries are necessary for us to enter into our full inheritance in the kingdom of God. There is the ministry of an Abraham, who receives the whole of the promises, but perhaps only obtains a very small amount of the fulfillment. Then there is the ministry of a Joshua, who enters in to possess a part of the land. After this, there is a time when God will raise up a Davidic ministry to bring us into the fullness of the inheritance. Sometimes this will require the successive ministries of different leaders, or perhaps the Lord will cause us to function in each of these three ministries during different periods of our life. But we should recognize how ministries similar to Abraham, Joshua, and David will work together for us to obtain our full inheritance.

1. ABRAHAM RECEIVED THE PROMISES

Abraham was a man of God who received great promises. There were two parts to what he was promised: an earthly geographic inheritance, and a heavenly spiritual inheritance.

In Genesis 13:15-16, we read how the Lord promised Abraham, "For all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your seed forever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth..." The Lord told Abraham that as the "dust of the earth" his descendants would be given an earthly, geographic inheritance.

We go on to read in Genesis 15:5 that the Lord also promised to make Abraham's seed to be as the stars in heaven. This speaks to us of how there was also a heavenly spiritual inheritance given to Abraham through his seed.

OUR GEOGRAPHICAL INHERITANCE

There is a geographical inheritance that the Lord wants to give to his people. We cannot go just anywhere we want to go and claim that place. We must receive a vision from God concerning the boundaries that He has given to us, for us to take the land and possess it for the kingdom of God. The Lord may give to one local church a vision of reaching their local area with the gospel. To another, the Lord may speak and call you to be like Joseph who became a "fruitful bough that went over the wall" in Genesis 49:22. This may mean that you are to take neighboring areas or cities for Christ, or become engaged in missionary work.

Abraham was given a vision by the Lord that he would become the father of many nations in Genesis 17:4. His inheritance was not just for one or two cities; it was for nations. This is also the vision that we need for our time. God is saying to us in the last days, "Nations shall turn to the Lord in that day." Isaiah 55:5 says, "nations who do not know you shall run to you because of the Lord your God... for He has glorified you." There are nations who are waiting for the churches to enter revival and come into the glory of God. When this happens, there will be nations who will stretch out their hands to God, as it says about Ethiopia in Psalms 68:31. We need to have our vision enlarged to see that before the coming of the Lord there will be great revivals where entire nations will turn to the Lord.

As one studies revivals in the Church Age, we find that whole countries at times were blanketed by the Spirit of God and transformed until they declared that God was the ruler of their country. In the time of Martin Luther, the nation of Germany was transformed and turned into the ways of God. Even today, Germany is basically a Lutheran country because the revival had such a great impact upon the nation.

It was the same in England in the time of John Wesley. England was terribly backslidden; it was filled with drunkenness and worldliness. But after the revival that John Wesley led, the whole country of England was turned into the ways of God.

At the beginning of this century, Evan Roberts led the Welsh Revival. He had an impact upon his entire nation. The whole country of Wales turned to God because this one man was not content to just see the Spirit of God move in only one church or in one area. While the revival did not go over the national boundaries, the mantle of revival spread until the whole nation of Wales turned towards God.

I believe that we must ask the Lord what the geographic boundaries of our inheritance are. You must ask God to show you what He has ordained for you and for your church. The Lord might say to you, "I want you to believe for whole cities around you to turn to Me and be your inheritance." But I believe that in these Last Days, God wants to enlarge us and give many of His people the vision of Abraham. There are nations which are to be our inheritance.

OUR SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE

Secondly, there is a spiritual inheritance. It is not just the geographic or "horizontal" inheritance that we have to obtain, but we have to believe that there will be a spiritual or "vertical" inheritance whereby the churches will enter into the fullness of the spiritual inheritance that God has for us in these last days.

In successive generations and revivals, the Church has not only claimed certain geographical areas, but has also increased its spiritual inheritance to come to a higher spiritual realm. Luther had an impact upon all of Germany. He claimed that country for God. They left their idolatry and turned to serve the Living God in the light of the message that Martin Luther had received from God. Until today, the state church of the nation is Lutheran. So while the geographical boundaries were captured, Luther also brought them into the light of the spiritual inheritance that he had, which was justification by faith.

John Wesley entered into justification by faith, but he went on to also receive the message of holiness and a vision for missions work. The nation of England went on to become a missionary country largely because of that revival. The revival that Evan Roberts brought to Wales restored further truths about the work of the Holy Spirit to the people of God. Every great revival since the times of Martin Luther has helped to lead the Church into a greater light, so that the Church will be able to enter into maturity and obtain its full spiritual inheritance.

THE INHERITANCE COMES THROUGH THE SEED

While Abraham received great promises from God, yet he obtained only a little of the fulfillment of those promises during his earthly lifetime. The Lord told Abraham that he would be given the fullness of his inheritance through his seed, Gen. 12:15-16, 15:4-5, 22:17-18. Therefore the key lies in the seed.

Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. God took a very long time preparing Abraham, so that he would be ready to bring forth the son of promise. So often the Lord waits to fulfill His promises for our lives because of the quality He is seeking to prepare in us before He blesses and multiplies us. My wife and I saw a good illustration of this truth when we lived in the Northwest of America. Some Christian farmers there explained to us how they spent years perfecting a new variety of apple which they named the Golden Delicious. They carefully developed the seed for years, but once the seed was perfected, they then quickly began to multiply the trees and send their fruit out to many nations. In the same way, God often takes many years developing the nature of His promised Son within us, but when the pure seed is produced, then He can multiply it through the nations very quickly. Just as Abraham and Sarah had their promised son come forth when they were elderly and beyond natural hope, we will see Christ come forth from the Church at the end of this age. Christ will arise and bring the Church into its full inheritance!

2. JOSHUA BEGAN TO ENTER IN AND POSSESS THE INHERITANCE

While Abraham received the promises of God, he did not obtain the inheritance. He was a stranger in the land promised to him and his seed, and all that he owned was the field and cave where he buried Sarah in Genesis 23:3-20. The man whom God then raised up to start to possess the inheritance was Joshua. The Lord is looking for many "Joshuas" today, who can lead His people into their inheritance in these last days. We will look at the life and ministry of Joshua in three parts:

A. THE YEARS OF PREPARATION

The first time we read about Joshua in the Scriptures is when he led Israel in battle against the Amalekites, in Exodus 17:9. The Amalekites are a type of the flesh because Amalek was the grandson of carnal Esau (Gen. 36:12). In order to be a leader, we have to have personal victory in our lives over the flesh. Otherwise the Amalekites (the works of the flesh) will rise up again and destroy us, as they did in the life of Saul. King Saul was told by the Lord to utterly destroy Amalek in 1 Samuel 15:3, but he disobeyed. At the end of his life it was an Amalekite that killed him (2 Sam. 1:6-10). It is important to realize that if we are preparing for leadership, we have to have personal victory over the Amalekites. When we are young we should cry out to God, "Oh God, create in me a clean and pure heart. Lord Jesus, I want to face these areas of the flesh in my life. At an early age give me victory in these areas, so that later on when I am old, they do not rise up again and overthrow me."

We also read about how Joshua learned to linger in God's presence. Joshua went up into the mount of God with Moses in Exodus 24:13. Later we read how Joshua stayed in the tabernacle even after Moses finished his business and departed, in Exodus 33:11. Joshua stayed in the presence of God to develop a close relationship with Him. All true ministry is the result of our spending time meeting with God and having Him deposit His nature within us.

Before Joshua was selected as the new leader of Israel, he had first learned to be faithful as a servant to Moses, Ex.24:13. Responsibility is developed little by little as we are faithful in the small tasks of everyday life. Never promote someone who does not bear well the responsibility of the small tasks. If we are chosen to wash dishes or clean the church, perhaps no one else is watching, but God is. Then it is God who will promote the faithful to greater and greater responsibilities. Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." (Lk. 16:10).

B. THE CROSSING OVER INTO THE INHERITANCE

The Lord spoke to Joshua just before he was to lead the Israelites over the Jordan into the Promised Land, in Joshua 1:1-9. In verse 3, the Lord told him, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you." This is a repetition of the promise that God first made to Abraham in Genesis 13:17. Now the promise is repeated to the one who is actually going to possess the inheritance.

In verse 5, the Lord also gave Joshua a promise for his leadership, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." A leader has to have these *personal* promises from God. He cannot go only on the promises that the leader before him had. You cannot say, "I am going to be a pioneer pastor or a missionary because my pastor is sending me, and I can rely upon him." No, when you are far away, you have to have your own personal promises from God.

In verse 7, the Lord continued, "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law..." Before Joshua crossed over into the inheritance, the Lord met with him and told him to obey **all** the Law, not just part of it. It is so important for a leader to completely follow God's laws because the leadership controls how far the church will go on with God. If the leader allows doctrines that are not right and permits mixture, the inheritance will be contaminated. God wants a godly seed and holiness. The reason God was going to cast out the former peoples of Canaan was because they were very evil and they had polluted the land. Why should God give us the land if we have the same sins as the former people that God is going to dispossess? It is like when a man once tried to cast a demon out of someone, but the demon said to him "You are not going to cast me out, because my friend is in you!"

People sometimes say, "Why is there a need of a new church or a new missions work in a certain place, since there already are a number of them there?" The reason is often because the others did not completely follow God's laws. Christ is coming for a Bride without spot or wrinkle. That is why we want to be totally sold out to God. The ones who will be given the inheritance are the ones who seek for holiness.

Let us come to the actual crossing of the Jordan river. In Joshua 3:4, we are told that there was to be a distance between the people and the ark of about two thousand cubits. We understand that two thousand speaks of the Church Age. So when we read that the people followed the ark (which is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ) about 2,000 cubits behind, this speaks of how the Church is going to enter into God's inheritance in these Last Days, about 2,000 years after our Lord entered in.

The inheritance that the Church will enter into is also shown to us by the family of Abraham. He had three wives: Hagar, Sarah, and Keturah. Hagar represents Israel during the age of the Law (Gal. 4:24-25). Sarah speaks of the Church Age, and Keturah speaks of Israel in the millennium. But we read in Genesis 25:1-6 that while Abraham gave gifts to his other children, he gave his entire inheritance to Sarah's son, Isaac. In a similar way, the Church is to inherit everything. Everything that God has promised to Abraham is to be fulfilled spiritually in the Church.

We need to have our eyes opened to see what God has said in His Word for this generation. We have to believe that the Lord will return for a perfected Church without spot or wrinkle. We want to cry out to God and say, "Lord, I want to understand what You are going to release to the Church in these last days. Lord, I want you to work Your perfection, holiness, and beauty in me, so that I fall short in nothing that You have promised for the Church in these last days."

Let us now consider the spiritual meaning of crossing the Jordan. Many years ago when my wife and I first went to Israel, the Lord spoke to us that He wanted us to cross the Jordan River. As we crossed it I said, "Lord what does this mean?" The Lord spoke to me "This is the circumcision of the heart, this is the crucified life." The crossing of the Jordan is a type of the experience where we know that our old man is crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20 & Romans 6:6). We also read in Joshua 3:15-16 of the city of Adam in connection with the cutting off of the waters that flowed down to the Dead Sea. Adam speaks of our old sinful nature which must be cut off if we want to enter into our "Promised Land."

In Joshua 5, we see that the Israelites immediately came to Gilgal after crossing the Jordan. Gilgal is where the male Israelites were circumcised, which is a cutting away of the flesh. Spiritually it is a cutting away of the natural, sinful, Adamic nature we are born with (Rom.2:28-29). Gilgal is when God cuts out that which He spoke to us about in the crossing of Jordan. It can be very painful indeed when God cuts things out of our hearts and lives. Yet just as Abraham in Genesis 17:7-14 was told that he and his descendants had to be circumcised to inherit the land of Canaan, it is also spiritually true for the Christian that we cannot receive our inheritance until we are circumcised in our heart.

In 1981 when I was living in New Zealand, I had a visitation of two angels. One of the angels was very large, and he held out a sword that had the word "circumcision" written on the tip. The Lord spoke to my heart and said, "I have come to circumcise My people and I will start with the leaders. Those who allow Me to circumcise them will enter into their further blessings." The other angel was smaller and written across him was the name "Enforcer." The Lord said, "If My people are not willing for Me to circumcise them, I will send the other angel who will enforce My will." Regretfully, we have seen that second angel reveal and judge much sin.

C. THE POSSESSING OF THE LAND

The purpose of a "Joshua" ministry is to get the people across the Jordan, and then get them to start possessing the land. To get them into the land they have to be sanctified, but to actually possess the land there will then be battles where we fight against the enemy. The fact that God has cleansed us and cut wrong things out of our lives does not mean to say that we have possessed the land. That is only the preparation so that we can stand against the enemy.

To enable Joshua to overthrow the enemy, the Lord appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Lord of Hosts in Joshua 5:13-15. Every "Joshua" leader must have a revelation of Christ as the Warrior King. He must know that "It is not by power or might, but by My spirit" that the Lord is going to overthrow the enemy (Zech. 4:7). It is by the anointing that we will be able to dispossess the demonic powers and the wickedness that control the nations, to gather a great harvest of souls.

The first battle Joshua faced was the battle of Jericho. The Lord gave him the battle plan. Joshua did not argue; he obeyed exactly what God told him to do and they had victory. But as we study the ensuing battles, that battle plan for Jericho was never used again. You find this also in David's warfare (2 Sam. 5:18-25). There has to be a humility on the part of the leader to not presume but inquire of the Lord for His battle plan to overcome each enemy.

After Jericho, they came against Ai which was a small city. The advice that Joshua got from his captains was very simple. They thought that it was a very small city and there was no sense in having the whole army go up. That was human wisdom but Joshua did not inquire of the Lord and his army suffered a defeat. Then he fell on his face before God and the Lord revealed to him that there was sin in the camp. The sin of one man, Achan, brought defeat to the entire army.

To remove the sin from the camp, they stoned Achan in the valley of Achor (Josh.7:26). Yet Hosea 2:15 says, "And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope..." Achor means trouble in the Hebrew language. In this valley of trouble, God said He would put a door of hope.

The Israelites were defeated and discouraged but God said to them, "In this valley of your trouble, I have put a door of hope." Some of you may be going through a personal valley of Achor. Perhaps it is our own fault. Perhaps you did not ask God for His battle plan, or perhaps it is the sin in those around you that is stopping you from going on. But the Lord wants to say to you that in your valley of trouble He is giving you a door of hope. For after the cleansing and the humbling of the valley of Achor, you will be able to defeat your enemies as Joshua and the Israelites did.

One other failure that Joshua had is recorded in Joshua 9 where the children of Israel made a league with the Gibeonites. God told them that they were to completely destroy the inhabitants of the land but Joshua forgot to inquire of the Lord again and the Gibeonites deceived them into making an alliance. We have been in many countries of the world to help a number of organizations and mission works, and we have seen the situations from this chapter on the Gibeonites repeated many times.

You must be careful about making alliances with the people in the land which God intends for you to possess. If you do, you may not be able to possess *all* that God has intended for you to possess. There are often organizations and churches that want to divide up the land. They will say that this is their territory, and they will tell you to go work somewhere else. Or they will say that they are just like you. They say that they would like you to come but there is no

reason for having two groups, so you can just join in and be a part of their group. But if *God* has said that He wants to give you that place as an inheritance and you make a wrong alliance, you may not be able to possess it.

Joshua and the army of Israel conquered much of the Promised Land but they settled for partial victory and did not drive out all the enemies (Josh.13:1, 18:3). This is so true of the human heart. Many Christians reach a certain level in their walk with the Lord and they are content to dwell there, when they should be pressing on to defeat *all* the enemies and hit the mark of the high call of God! David was the one who later brought Abraham's descendants into their full inheritance, so we need to understand the keys to David's life that can enable us all to fully enter in.

3. DAVID OBTAINED THE FULL INHERITANCE

In review, we have seen that Abraham received the promises of God that he and his descendants would obtain a great inheritance. Yet Hebrews 11:13 tells us that he died in faith, not having received the fulfillment of those promises. After that it was Joshua who began to lead the Israelites into obtaining the Promised Land, but the people of God were content to compromise with the enemies and only possess part of the inheritance. So David was then raised up by God to complete what Joshua started. David brought Israel into the fulfillment of the dual vision of Abraham, of a natural geographic inheritance, as well as, a spiritual inheritance.

DAVID OBTAINED THE FULL GEOGRAPHIC INHERITANCE

David was a warrior king who conquered the surrounding nations to obtain the full geographical boundaries that Abraham had been promised. The last enemy that God had mentioned to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21 was the Jebusites. The Jebusites lived in the Promised Land right up to the time of David. But when David conquered the last of these enemies, he made their stronghold on the hill of Zion in Jerusalem to become his capitol city. David went on to rule over Israel and over all the surrounding nations from Zion. He said in Psalm 18:43-44, "You have made me the head of the nations; a people I have not known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me they obey me; the foreigners submit to me." David also wrote in Psalm 2:8 a specific promise of God which can apply to us, "Ask of Me and I shall give you the nations for your inheritance..." In these last days, the Lord will bring great revivals that will give us an inheritance in the nations. Ask the Lord what geographic boundaries are ordained for you and your church; not only in your area and nation but also in the nations. Even if we never travel to a foreign land, if we pray for the nations and help support those who go to minister there, we can enter into this inheritance.

DAVID OBTAINED THE FULL SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE

David was a man after God's own heart, who hit the mark of the high call of God for his own life. He experienced three anointings to fulfill this. The first anointing in 1 Samuel 16:13 was where he was called of God. We also need this anointing to open our spiritual eyes and give us understanding of the purpose for which we are called.

As David prepared to enter into his calling to become king, he was anointed a second time in 2 Samuel 2:4. This is where he was chosen to become king. The third anointing David received was when he became king over all Israel. He received this anointing because of his faithfulness. These anointings caused him to fully enter into his inheritance as one who was called, chosen, and faithful, just as Revelation 17:14 shows us that these same three qualities are needed in these last days.

David entered into obtaining the ministry of Christ, Who is our Prophet, Priest, and King. David then brought the people of God into partaking of the same spiritual inheritance.

David was a prophet who also helped bring a prophetic mantle upon many in his kingdom (2 Chron.29:25, 1 Chron.25:2). We need to cry out for a restoration of the prophetic mantle that David knew because this mantle is needed to help bring us into the fullness of our inheritance. In these last days, God is going to pour out His Spirit even upon our sons and daughters and cause them to prophesy (Joel 2:28).

David was also a priest. He wore the linen ephod of a priest when they were bringing up the ark of the covenant in 2 Sam.6:14. He placed the ark in a tabernacle on Mt. Zion; and he brought the nation into praise and worship. But Amos 9:11 and Acts 15:14-17 show us that the Lord wants to restore the Tabernacle of David to the Church. We need Davidic ministries to bring the people of God into the fullness of the priestly ministry in these last days.

David was not only a prophet and priest but he was also a king. He brought all the people of God into a mantle of kingdom authority, as Israel ruled over the surrounding nations. To bring the Church to maturity, we must also enter into this anointing of authority, to rule and reign with Christ.

My wife and I were living in Africa years ago teaching a primitive tribe. I was praying about what I should teach them when the Lord spoke to me, "I am going to have kings and priests out of every tribe, nation, and tongue. Teach the same truths to these primitive people that you teach in the developed nations because I am going to make them kings and priests to rule in eternity." This is a relationship that the Lord wants to bring all of His people into so that we may obtain our full inheritance.

DAVID'S FALL AND RESTORATION

I want to mention another aspect of David's life. David has been known not only for his godly virtues, but also for his falling into sin. In the books of 1 and 2 Samuel, the fallen nature of David is portrayed, but in the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles none of that is mentioned. The reason for that is because the Chronicles presents David as a type of Christ, whereas Samuel presents him as a man with a fallen nature.

First, let us consider why David fell. One reason is that he had many wives, which was a violation of the law of the kings (Deut.17:17). Secondly, David should have been in battle but he stayed at home (2 Samuel 11:1). When David went to battle God always protected him because he obeyed the laws of battle, but he did not obey the laws of marriage and that is why he fell in that area. God will protect us in every area where we seek to be obedient but in other areas where we ignore or reject God, the wall of protection around us may be broken down by God Himself (Psalm 80:12-13).

What I want to concentrate on is the restoration of David because I believe with all my heart that God wants to restore many who have fallen into sin back to their full ministry and calling in these last days. So let us look at a few points in the restoration of David or of any who have fallen into sin.

First, there has to be a genuine acknowledgment of sin, as with King David (Psalm 51:3). Secondly, there must be an acceptance of God's judgments (Leviticus 26:41-42, 2 Sam.12:10-14). I have seen people faced with this who have refused God's correction and punishment and they have turned out of the way; but King David accepted God's judgments upon his life. Third, there has to be a forsaking of that sin (Psalm 51:7-10). There must be this cry in our hearts, "Create in me a clean heart, oh Lord." There must not be a holding on to that wicked thing in our hearts, but we must cry out to the Lord for Him to take it away. Then the fourth point is that there must be a humble waiting upon God, as recorded in Psalm 40:1-2, until God completes the restoration.

The restoration of David was complete. He has been chosen to be resurrected to become the king of Israel during the one thousand year reign of Christ upon the earth (Jer.30:9, Ezek.37:24-25, Hos.3:5). He will be well qualified to bring restoration to the nation of Israel at the Second Coming of Christ. This is because David has been restored from slaying the innocent husband of Bathsheba, and he will be able to minister restoration and consolation to the grieving nation when they realize that they had killed their innocent Messiah upon the cross of Calvary (Zech.12:10).

Although God wants to warn us not to fall into sin like David, I believe that David's life is also to give great hope to those who have fallen into sin in our days. Jesus prophesied that the generation just prior to the Second Coming would be an adulterous generation (Mk.8:38). We can see this coming to pass with all the divorce, remarriage, and immorality among the nations. Yet we can be encouraged as we consider David. Even though he committed adultery, he was restored, and he is a type of those who will enter into all the blessings of God for the Church in the last days. The Lord wants to show us through this that He will restore many in the last days to their full ministry and calling. If you have failed God, He can restore you. God has not disqualified you; but He wants to use you again. God is saying to some of you reading this that His hand is upon you and His calling upon your life is going to be restored even as it was with David. God wants to cleanse you from all guilt. He loves you and wants to restore you if you will only let Him. Consecrate yourself afresh to the Lord and He will renew the call and use you once again. You can still have a part in the revival and harvest of the last days.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can see through the lives of Abraham, Joshua, and David how we can obtain our full inheritance in Christ. We first need to be men and women of vision who receive great promises from God as Abraham did. This will include a geographic, as well as a spiritual inheritance. Then we also need to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, as Joshua was, to enter in and start to possess the promises of God. But finally, we need to become men and women after God's own heart in order to enter into a Davidic ministry that will bring the people into the fullness of their inheritance. May the Lord help each of us to not be satisfied with anything less.