

Possess the Land (Some Things to Fight For)

I. Introduction

A. I want to address the lack of spiritual vitality you may be experiencing.

1. The problem of plateauing spiritually.
2. Stunted spiritual progress.

B. You have personal responsibility in your relationship with God.

II. Scripture: Exodus 23:20-31

A. Before Leviticus and after Genesis in the NT

III. Exposition

A. v. 20 “I send an angel before you...”

1. Moses. Joshua.
2. Spiritual leader. Pastor. Prophet.
3. 7 Churches of Revelation

B. v. 24 “you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but *you shall utterly overthrow them* and break their pillars in pieces.”

1. Complete work.
2. Don’t stop until all sin is dealt with!

C. vv. 25-26 Promises/Blessings always accompany obedience.

1. Jesus isn’t a genie in a lamp
2. God isn’t Santa Claus.

D. v. 29 “I will not drive them [Canaanites] out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you.”

1. Hard to accept victory when it isn’t immediate.
2. Looking for the path of least resistance?

3. v. 30 “Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land.”

D. vv. 31- Border from the Red Sea (Egypt) to Sea of the Philistines (Mediterranean Sea), and from the wilderness (East of the Jordan) to the Euphrates (Syria through Iraq).

1. Also see Numbers 34 for borders

E. **Focus:** v. 30

1. Possess the Land
2. Possess= Na- Khal’
3. To acquire, to possess (inheritance implied)
4. KJV- inherit, but the word is active on the side of the recipient.
5. They are active, not inactive in receiving this inheritance.

F. **Point:** Some of the most significant blessings of God require our active response.

IV. Possess the Land

A. Possessing involves what?

1. Conflict? Fight? Battle? Casualties? War? Expenditure of resources?
2. Possessing doesn’t happen during leisure time, recreation, laziness, sloth, or vacation.

B. Look at some of the times God refers to them possessing the land.

1. He often speaks of Him “giving them” the land and them “possessing it.”

Deut 8:1 “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers.”

Deu 10:11 “And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise, go on your journey at the head of the people, so that they may go in and possess the land, which I swore to their fathers to give them.’”

Ezekiel 33:25 “Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord God: You eat flesh with the blood and lift up your eyes to your idols and shed blood; shall you then possess the land?”

Numbers 33:53 “And you shall take possession of the land

and settle in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it.”

Nehemiah 9:23 “You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess.”

Joshua 1:11 “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in *to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.*’”

Leviticus 20:24 “But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples.”

C. **Note:** Possessing the promise land was costly and time consuming.

D. III. Numbers 32- Reuben & Gad want to settle in Gilead (East of the Jordan between Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee).

1. Num 32:5 “And they said, ‘If we have found favor in

your sight, let this land be given to your servants for a possession. Do not take us across the Jordan.”

2. Num 32:6 “But Moses said to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben, ‘Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here? [7] Why will you discourage the heart of the people of Israel from going over into the land that the Lord has given them?’”
3. Moses says they can have the land East of the Jordan if they cross over with the rest of the people to possess the land. They agree.

- E. **Note:** At Israel’s height, in terms of land possession, under King Solomon, they did not possess all God told them to possess!
1. v. 31 describes the borders
 2. They never possessed the land.
 3. Why? Full possession demands **obedience**.
 4. Full possession demands **endurance**.
 5. Full possession demands **persistence**.

V. It’s Time for You to Possess

- A. **Pastoral Pause:** A lot of ppl believe Christianity to be a

passive faith in Christ.

1. Certain unalienable privileges/blessings.
2. Our cooperation/participation is irrelevant.
3. **Note:** But Scripture tells us that God does not always act unilaterally!
4. We are invited to participate not as bystanders or self-made people, but to possess the promises of God.
5. Belief is this: If its not easy, it must not be God. **Boo!**

B. Ill. Addiction

1. Deliverance vs Victory
2. Keep fighting the battle to possess the land!
3. Driving out the enemy in areas he has long occupied!

C. Ill. Financial stewardship

1. Cut spending; increase revenue.
2. Is Jesus Lord of your finances?

D. Ill. Marriage

1. Marriage counseling: “Pastor, fix all our problems.”
2. I don’t have that kind of wand!
3. My ways of speaking, acting, reacting, etc must be possessed and brought under the Lordship of Jesus!

- E. **Pastoral Pause:** So many

today have adopted the defeated mind-set that they are victims of their own actions, when, in reality, they are the perpetrators.

1. I’m not a victim, I chose this.
 2. What I sow, I reap!
 3. What I give myself to, I become.
 4. What I set out to possess, I will inherit!
- F. **Pastoral Pause:** Many look at their present situation and deem it better than the promise land (Reuben & Gad).
1. No stomach for the conflict.
 2. No resolve to persist in obtain the promise.
 3. No endurance to possess the land (little by little).

VI. Conclusion

- A. **Point:** Are you willing to possess the land?
1. Marriage is hard, but divorce is hard. Choose your battle. Possess your land!
 2. Financial stewardship is hard to possess, but financial impropriety is costly too. ...
 3. Telling the truth is not w/out a price tag, but lying has a cost as well! ...
 4. Remaining sexually pure is hard to possess, but sexual

promiscuity has casualties.

5. Maintaining a clean life in a dirty world is a battle to fight, but reckless living will leave you eating pig slop! ...
- B. **Point:** You will reside somewhere, what land will you possess?
1. Will it be wilderness wandering?
 2. Will it be a return to Egypt/slavery?
 3. Will it be going to possess the promised land?
- C. **Point:** God has an inheritance for you, but you’ll never experience the promise until you’re willing to possess it.

Response: