

18. We Are Well Able

For we have become partakers of Christ IF INDEED the source of our substance and **assurance we should hold firm until all completion. As it is said, “Today, If you should hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the provoking.” Who were those who provoked God even though they heard? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt with Moses? ...To** whom, then, did He swear that they would not enter into His rest? Was it not those who refused to be persuaded? And so we see that they were not able to enter in through unbelief, [that is, through the absence of faith] (Hebrews 3:14-19).

This is the context of the seventh most important verse.

Confidence. We will look more closely at Joshua next, but now we will focus on Caleb, who seemed here to be the leader of the two. Nonetheless, everything of Caleb also fits Joshua.

However, the primary word defining Caleb is “confidence,” and that same word also defines Joshua. And CONFIDENCE is the jeopardy of the gospel, the absence or presence of which makes all the difference.

In this lesson, then, Caleb leads and Joshua follows, and in the next lesson, Joshua leads and Caleb follows. And from both we want to know the meaning of confidence and how it fits our entrance into Christ.

Defining “Rest.” See how the writer of Hebrews is connecting three things together as the same thing. First is “partaker of Christ,” second is “enter into His rest,” and third is entering “the Promised Land,” a land flowing with milk and honey, that is, abundance.

Thus we assert that the entrance of Israel into their promised land IS, in every respect, representative of our entrance into knowing all the fullness of Christ.

More than that we can define God's "rest" from this picture. Rest means no need or desire to look to any other source than eating and drinking of Christ, for all that we need and want is found there in overflowing abundance.

Two Opposing Covenants. We are talking about our right to partake of all that is Christ. For that reason, we must place God's larger picture before looking at the specifics of Numbers 13 & 14.

These are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai into the procreation of slavery, which is Hagar (Galatians 4:24). Most Christians in our world today imagine that these two covenants are the same, that the covenant God made with Abraham is merged with the covenant God made with Israel.

God is a Keeper of Covenant. The covenant with Abraham was based upon God and fulfilled with the resurrection of Jesus. The covenant with Israel was based upon Israel and fulfilled in their execution upon the cross.

The True Promised Land. The fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham is life forevermore, life into which we are freely invited. The fulfillment of God's covenant with Israel through Moses is death, and the cessation of that covenant, thank God.

– **"CAST OUT the slave woman and her son; for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit along with the son of the free woman."** So then, [Gentile] brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but we are children of the free woman (Galatians 4:30-31).

Thus we see everything from Exodus to Malachi as a foreshadowing of the true Promised Land, the Church.

A Covenant of Life. Moses and Caleb, David and Isaiah, all of these people are today part of the Church, partakers of all the life of Christ.

The covenant of life that God made with Abraham, according to Paul, requires all former Jews and all former Gentiles, having perished upon the cross of Christ, to enter into the resurrection life of Christ through the same wide-open door of CONFIDENCE. Nothing remains for any “natural Israel,” for they are all condemned and executed. If one died for all, then all DIED!

Thus we INSIST that the entrance into the promised land refers ONLY to our entrance into Christ and His Church.

Defining “Christ.” And God put ALL under the feet of Jesus and gave Him to be head, that is, the one who UNITES, for the sake of ALL the Church, that is, of all the gathering together. The Church is His body, the fullness of Christ, that is, the full meaning that is Christ filling full all inside of all, that is, Jesus filling with Himself everything in everyone (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Christ is two things. First, Christ Jesus is our own personal Connection with God, thus we approach with gusto everything inside the Holiest as partakers of God Himself.

And Christ is a many-membered body, the Church, thus our entrance into Rest is our entrance into Church Life.

The Jeopardy. Here is the issue, the jeopardy of the gospel. It is reserved for some to enter into that rest, and those who first received the gospel did not enter in because they refused to hear. – We should be eager, therefore, to enter into that rest, so that no one should fall in the same pattern of refusing to hear (Hebrews 4:6 & 11).

And what do we hear? We hear Jesus speaking us in all goodness and in all the issues and circumstances of our life.

Yet only those turned around inside of God hear Jesus speaking them in that way. Thus God through us together is the Promised Land.

Both Aspects of Salvation. Now we are able to apply the full meaning of Numbers 13 & 14, as well as the victory of Joshua, to our own present life, both life personally and life together.

Salvation has two aspects. The first aspect is our own personal life inside of and out from God our Father. And the second aspect is our life together as the Church, the outward form and appearance of the Lord Jesus.

The urgency I am attempting to convey, then, is that we apply every element of Old Testament foreshadowing to our own life of God-with-me, AND we apply it in full, just the same, to our life together of God-among-us.

Two Conclusions. Moses sent twelve spies into the land to determine the conditions there. When they returned all of them gave a true report concerning both fruit and opposition. The difference was not in the report, but in the conclusion.

*“We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.” – **“The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants... and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”***

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”

To Overcome. The most important thing for us found in this story is the placing of the word “overcome” into a context of meaning. In writing, the verb rules both sentence and meaning. “To overcome” is the action verb of the Bible, of God’s story, and of the universe.

The actual Hebrew word, however, means “well able,” but it’s repeated twice, thus requiring the word “to overcome.” What is it that we must “overcome?”

We have defined our Promised Land as (1) knowing all the fullness of God personally, and (2) knowing the expression of Christ that is the Church, Christ Community.

Not Knowing God. The “giants” and “fortified cities,” then, reference anything and everything that prevents or blocks or hides the experiential knowing of these two aspects of our Salvation.

Paul said, **“To know even more the surpassing, beyond-all knowledge of the love of Christ, that you might be filled unto and with all the fullness of God.”** And Augustine said (paraphrased), “Because Christians are still evil, they cannot know being filled with all of God.”

Augustine speaks for the entirety of the Christian church through the centuries. The church then re-defined the “promised land” as “heaven” – after you are DEAD.

Our Bread. The difference is so very simple and clear. How do you see? Do you see yourself without God or with God?

Caleb said, “We are well able to overcome.” But then when they were rejected, Caleb and Joshua together expanded on what that meant. **“If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us... Only do not ...fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them.”**

But they are stronger than we are!

“I Am the Reason (God lies).” Now, the name Caleb means “wholehearted and faithful,” and the name Joshua/Yeshua means “savior.” To Caleb and Joshua, “We” means “God with us.”

ALL who refuse to believe the big verses of the New Testament offer themselves as the reason why that line cannot be true in reference to them. All see themselves, even while deliberately refraining from seeing God.

I have observed this phenomenon countless times and have never understand why people look at themselves in reference to what God speaks.

Rejecting God. When I look at “filled with all the fullness of God,” “rivers of Spirit flowing out,” “casting down all accusation,” and so on, I see and hear GOD SPEAKING! I know it’s weird, but I’ve always been like that.

The statement “I can’t do that,” is meaningless. DUH! Why on earth would God imagine that you could?

Then the Lord said to Moses: “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me?” God’s word is His will. It is God’s will that I be filled with all of God. The idea that I could “do” such a thing is beyond preposterous. To look at myself, that I “can’t” is EVIL.

The False Image. Why did Augustine think that he was NOT filled with all of God? This ties in directly with the last lesson. Augustine had an IMAGE in his mind of a “super-Christ.” He said, “BECAUSE I still do things that are not right, that do not fit my image of ‘Christ,’ then GOD CANNOT fulfill His Word.”

Yet that’s not quite the issue. The issue is KNOWING the Father. Seeing one’s self alone as the big verses come one’s way IS refusing to know the Father.

In my own vulnerability and inability, I have always just thought that God does what He says, that all doing is God.

Knowing Father. Understanding symmorphe, however, has brought me to the same place as Caleb. I never say, “God, not me,” for everything is God-with-me.

How do I know the Father as I have come to know Him now? For eight years I have said to myself, in quiet certainty and rest, “God, You fill ME with ALL that You are. Father, You are part of me; You share my life with me.”

Sin? Sin belongs to Jesus. He is quite capable of bearing it; He has a special room where He keeps it – His empty grave. More than that, it is Jesus, my Savior, who is always making this connection between Father and me to happen.

Tucked into God-Speaking. To possess this part of our Promised Land is to know the Father in all that knowing Father might mean. Much of my purpose in *A Highway for God* is to know the Father, and to know how to call Him into our experience.

Here, then, is how we overcome. Every time any word God speaks comes our way, we respond with wholeheartedness, that is ‘Caleb,’ “Let it be to me according to Your Word.” And then we believe.

Do you see how this response does not eliminate ‘me,’ but rather tucks ‘me’ right into the impact of God-speaking. That is so simple, yet it is also the ONLY thing real.

Life Together. Let’s now look at the other part of our full salvation, and that is our possession of life together as the Church.

And this is something else quite weird about me. I have never considered nor allowed knowing God apart from also walking with a people who know God. My problem is that I have read my Bible – 24 times. God is all about a people. God is all about the Church.

There is a simple reason for that. God is LOVE ONE ANOTHER, and God cannot be known apart from believers in Jesus walking together. The Church IS God’s appearance in creation forever.

The Giants inside of Church. And so, “God with me” becomes “God among us.” Just as we call ourselves by “Father with me,” so we call ALL our interactions together by “Father among us.”

Any and all inequity is Jesus’ business, and He does know what He is doing.

The giant in the land that prevents knowing God-among-us is “*I am right, and you are wrong.*” – Which is saying, “*God approves of ME, and I disapprove of you.*” People hurt people expertly, continuously, and without even thinking about it. And so for 2000 years, an evil report has declared the Church to be a failed experiment.

Upon Firm We Stand. Now, we cannot know Numbers 13, 14, and 16 as the jeopardy of the gospel without also knowing Joshua 1-6 as the assurance of the gospel. The two experiences must be known together, as the writer of Hebrews shows.

Caleb is confidence; Joshua is rest; and the passage of one to the other is – upon firm we stand, repeated twice in the seventh most important verse. And so the next lesson is the counterpart of this. – Rest is the fruit of confidence. – Confidence is the source of rest.

How do we bear with one another? Of truth, this is the largest topic of the Bible.

We Are Well Able. What we are finding in this study is a repetition from one story to the next of God saying the same simple thing, “I am with you; believe in Me.” And we are finding that God’s specific words in the Old Testament stories fit the revelation of Christ as He has taught us in this Word of Christ our life.

And it is into this simplicity that God wants to place our present reckless confidence that we would call God into our world and that we would call 100 million believers in Jesus into their place inside of God.

We are well able to do such a thing. We are well able.

Reading for Next Time. The next lesson is titled “Joshua and Rest.” Since we laid the foundations in this lesson, we will be able to apply a whole lot directly from Joshua’s experience to ours.

For the next lesson, read Joshua Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, & 6. Joshua and Jesus are the same name, just following rules of different languages as they come into English.

Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan. – Until everything was finished.

Let’s Pray Together. In our prayer this morning we are calling God into our world, using the confidence and wholeheartedness of Caleb as our example.

We let God fill our eyes, our consciousness, and our persons, spirit, soul, and body. We see ourselves, most definitely – filled with God coming through.

“Father, You say, ‘love one another.’ For that reason we know that it is Your will, Your desire and intention, to come through us, out from our hearts, and into all our interactions together. Father, You fill all the space that exists among us.”

To Know You. “Father, we know that Your entire Church is filled with all of Your fullness just as much, every single one who belongs to Jesus. We know that You are already all interaction among them, all the fullness of love.

“But they do not know it, Father. And because of their ignorance of You, they stumble into death in unbelief.

“Father, cause Your people all across the earth to KNOW YOU as You are. Father, remove from them all the seals of ignorance that we have cast down in our prayers together. Let there

come upon Your people a sobriety, a humility, a seeking for, a turning from this world and all false belief.

Into Love One Another. “Father, by our Atonement won by the Lord Jesus, we call You into Your wayward and wanton Church, that she might be pure, that she might know You alone.

“Father, we call You into the knowledge of Your people that they might know Father at home in their hearts, that they might turn around upon Your Mercy Seat and become the revelation of Christ into this world.

“Father, we call You into being “Love One Another” in the knowledge of all who belong to Jesus, that they might know God-among-us, that they, together with us, might become Your full dwelling place, that creation might know You.”