

Preparing for Victory – Part 1

I believe that God's people today need to be prepared to enter into the Promised Land just as the Israelites were to be prepared to enter into the Promised Land as God brought them out of Egypt. The Lord had brought them out of Egypt with a strong hand, and we read about this in Deuteronomy 7:1-8 about the preparation of Israel. He had brought them to the land that flowed with milk and honey, and this was reserved for His people. He wanted them to get ready to enter into the blessings He had prepared for them.

What a rebellious people this was. They refused to live according to the will of God. Instead of submitting to God's will and enjoy all that God had to offer, they chose to live in rebellion. The Promised Land, which is Canaan, was theirs for the claiming, but they were not ready to possess it.

The Lord could not allow them to possess the land because their hearts were not right before Him. They were rebellious. They needed to get rid of the obstacles in their lives that kept them from being in a right relationship with the Lord. He couldn't allow them to possess the land of promise until they abandoned the hindrances that possessed them.

I believe that many people today have crossed the Jordan; they're saved. However, they're not able to possess God's richest blessings in the land flowing with milk and honey, that victorious Christian life, because they are not willing to possess it God's way. The Lord's made it possible for us to enter into the victorious Christian life by saving us. Now, He wants us to have that victorious Christian life by following His directions.

We're saved because we have trusted Christ to save us. The victorious Christian life is not being

saved over and over again; it is growing in His grace and knowledge. God wants the best for His children, and there will be times of trials and difficulties but we can prepare for victory in the Christian life by following the directions of our Lord. Let's look briefly at our text in Deuteronomy 7:1-8 and prepare for victory.

¹When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

²And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

³Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

⁴For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

⁵But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

⁶For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

⁷The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

⁸But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD

brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

The character of sin is the first thing I see in these verses. There were several nations mentioned in these verses, and after reading the text, I see that these nations represent certain things in the lives of God's people today. It's clear that God wanted those nations mentioned totally removed in existence from Israel. You see that in verse 2 and verse 16. If God wanted them removed from His people, Israel, then, He also, most certainly, wants what is represented by those nations to be removed from our lives, as well. Let's take a look and consider the nations spoken of.

First, you see the Hittites in Verse 1, and their name means "one who is broken; one who fears." These were a people that were not completely driven out by Israel and continually presented opposition. In order for us to be all we can be for God today, we must get rid of anything that will separate us from fellowship with our Lord. There can be no exception. If it is in the way of God's will, it must go. The word "compromise" should be removed from our vocabulary. There is no room for compromise in our Christian life in any way concerning God's will for us.

There are many times we have the fear of leaping out by faith. It's one thing to speak of trusting the Lord, and it's another thing of never finding the courage to fully step out by faith. One of Israel's greatest hindrances was that of fear. They concentrated on the giants instead of God. We cannot always tell where God is leading, but I can tell you this. There is no doubt that He is more than able to lead us where He wants us to go.

Notice with me now, if you will, the Girgashites found in Verse 1. Their name means "those

who arrive from pilgrimage." Not much is known about the Girgashites, so what is it that we need to learn from them? What is it that the Girgashites picture that God wants removed from our lives? We all have those secret things in our lives that hinder us. We all have those areas in which we are weak, where we continue to fail, that no one else but God knows about. If we are to live the victorious Christian life to dwell in Canaan, then we must be willing to get rid of the secret sins that we have been reluctant to abandon.

These would be the sins that Paul speaks of in the book of Hebrews. Paul says this:
Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Hebrews 12:1.

A weight is something that can slow us down in our Christian walk with God. Paul goes even further and says our sin can slow us down in the race that we are running as Christians in this world. The race, of course, I believe, is another way of saying "our Christian walk" or the contest of striving to be the very best we can be for our Lord. We must be willing to deal with the innermost part of our lives. Let us pray as David did when he prayed in Psalm 139:23, *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts.* And Verse 24 says, *And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* Are you willing to be honest with the Lord? Are you willing to forsake all that would hinder you? Are you willing to sacrifice the flesh for the power of God?

We see next the Amorites. These were a people whose name means "bitter; a rebel." If there's one thing that hinders a lot of churches, it is bitterness and rebellion. Far too many are not willing to let go of the past. They're not willing

to let go of that past. Many try to live with a grudge and still expect God to bless their lives. It's impossible to enjoy the blessings of God and be used of Him when bitterness lives in your heart. Hebrews 12:14-15 says this: ¹⁴*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:* ¹⁵*Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

Often, bitterness within leads to rebellion toward the will of God. You'll never be successful to your fullest in your Christian life if there is bitterness in your heart. I have no doubt that God wants to lead us into greater heights. Those who rebel against Him will not inherit the land of promise.

Notice, we see next the Canaanites. Their name means "merchant" or "peddler." This was likely the most well-known nation that Israel would have to conquer. They were a people notorious for their immorality and false worship of Baal. We've seen an increase of counterfeits in our day, false worship, false Bibles, false teachers, and so forth. Well, let me say that everything associated with ministry today is not Godly. There are those who are peddling false gods. They are merchandising the Gospel for their own gain.

Second Timothy 3:1 says this: *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.* Verse 5 goes on to say, *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

I am dedicated to the old way, the old-time way. It worked for past generations and it worked for me. We must be determined, have it fixed in our hearts, to stand for the true Gospel, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We cannot cut any corners or lower our standards. May we be a people who

are held to a higher standard and live holy and upright before the Lord.

Next, we're introduced to the Perizzites. These were a people who dwelt in unwallled villages. They give the idea of those who have no concern to prevent the outside world from invading their land. We're called to live among the world, but we're also called to be a separate people as Christians. Second Corinthians 6:17 says: *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.*

If we are to be what God desires us to be, then we must erect a wall of separation. Build some walls against temptation. Separate your family from the lure of this sinful world. Separation does not mean we are to have no contact with the lost. We are to witness to the lost and tell them how to receive Jesus and that, by receiving Him, they too can have eternal life.

Notice next the Hivites. Their name means "wickedness." They were known for being overconfident in themselves. They were unwilling to fight or protect what they had. They were similar to the Perizzites. They lived as if nothing could stop their prosperity. They were a people of prideful arrogance.

I'm not looking for trouble, and I don't enjoy conflict, but there are some things worth fighting for. When it comes time for us to leave this world, we need to be able to say as Paul the apostle said, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith,* II Timothy 4:7.

As Christians, we must endure not to be saved but because we are saved. The way we endure is not to depend upon ourselves but to depend upon the Lord, our Almighty Savior. We look to Him for the victory.

We'll start next time by looking at the Jebusites as we continue our study, "Preparing for Victory." Do you know Him today as your Savior? If you don't, ask Him to come into your heart. "Lord, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior." And if you do know Him, live for Him. Let Him lead you and guide you through this life, that you can be the best Christian possible. May the Lord bless you.

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