

Preparing to Enter the “Promised Land”

Introduction

1. God told Joshua to prepare the people to enter the “Promised Land” (Canaan).

Joshua 1:6, 11

- A. Afterward, an odd thing occurred. Joshua addresses the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh to remind them that they still need to fight with the other tribes in Canaan even though they had no intention of possessing that land.

Joshua 1:12-15

Close Enough

1. To understand what was happening in Joshua 1, we need to return to Numbers 32 when the people were nearing the border of Canaan.

Numbers 32:1-25 (scripture Reading)

- A. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh saw the land on the east side of the Jordan around Gilead (v. 1) and decided this was a good place for them and their livestock (v. 4).

Numbers 32:1, 4-5

- B. They did not want to enter into the Promised Land (v. 5). This area, to them, was “close enough!”

2. **Moses was upset at this request because it reminded him of forty years earlier (Numbers 13-14), when the people refused to enter the land (Numbers 32:8-15).**
 - A. **He wasn't going to have a repeat of that fiasco that cost them 40 years and a generation of people (v. 15).**
 - B. **Their compromise was to build places for their wives and children to live and help their brothers conquer the land (v. 16-19). Once they accomplished this, they would return, and the eastern side of the Jordan would be theirs (v. 25-27, 29-32).**
3. **In Joshua, chapter 1, we see that Joshua reminded those tribes of the promise they had made before God and Moses, and they affirmed that they would go (Joshua 1:12-18).**
 - A. **However, one may wonder why? Why would these people get this close to the "Promised Land" and say essentially to Moses and Joshua, "this is good enough?"**
 - 1) **The text of scripture does not give us their motivation beyond the fact that they liked the land for their livestock (Numbers 32:4-5).**
 - 2) **However, was there not plenty of grazing for the livestock in Canaan? Was this not the land of flowing with "milk and honey" as stated in scripture? (Exodus 3:8; Leviticus 20:24; Deuteronomy 6:3; Joshua 5:6)**
 - 3) **It's not like there wasn't enough room for them all. Why stop traveling now?**

B. Why did they not go into Canaan?

- 1) All we know is what we read in Numbers 32. Their livestock seemed to them a top priority, and when they found a place they thought would feed them, they were through traveling.
- 2) Interestingly, when they returned after the battles, Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh did it with the blessing and gratitude of Joshua and the nation
Joshua 22:1-4
- 3) Therefore, they parted on good terms.

Christians Are on a Journey to Heaven

1. Christians are not on an earth-bound journey, though. We are on a journey to Heaven, our “Promised Land,” if you will.
2. Unlike those in Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, if we stop too soon and say that we are “close enough,” it will not have the same ending!
3. Life is compared to a race in the New Testament. In this race, we need to finish, not simply run until we get close to the finish
1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- 4. What a tragedy to think that we traveled so many years and endured so much in terms of temptations and obstacles, only to quit when we got close to the goal.**

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Hebrews 10:35-39

Galatians 6:9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

- 5. What is it that could get any of us to stop on our journey to Heaven?**

Matthew 16:26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or **what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

1 Timothy 6:10 For **the love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

2 Timothy 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having **loved this present world**, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

- 6. Those in Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh may have left the others on good terms, but when it comes to our spiritual journey, quitting too soon and just getting “close enough,” will not result in a similar ending with God!**

Conclusion

1. **For all of us who are Christians, please – don't quit now, and don't give up!**
2. **We must stay on the course of the "strait and narrow!"**
Matthew 7:13-14
3. **We will be blessed and have a home in Heaven one day if we just endure a little while longer.**

Matthew 10:22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Hebrews 3:6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

4. **We may forget that we are "strangers and pilgrims" and wish to "put down roots" on this earth.**

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

5. **We must not do that!**
Revelation 2:10
 - A. **We must not be like those who stopped too soon, spiritually!**
 - B. **It will not end well.**
Romans 2:7-11

Invitation

Place

Date

Preparing to Enter the Promised Land.wpd
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