

The High Cost of Compromise

A message from our Lord!

April 09, 2020

by

Rev. Charles W. Pendleton, Jr.

Judges 1:22-36

²²Now the tribes of Joseph attacked Bethel, and the Lord was with them. ²³When they sent men to spy out Bethel (formerly called Luz), ²⁴the spies saw a man coming out of the city and they said to him, “*Show us how to get into the city and we will see that you are treated well.*” ²⁵So he showed them, and they put the city to the sword but spared the man and his whole family. ²⁶He then went to the land of the Hittites, where he built a city and called it Luz, which is its name to this day.

²⁷But Manasseh did not drive out the people of Beth Shan or Taanach or Dor or Ibleam or Megiddo and their surrounding settlements, for the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. ²⁸When Israel became strong, they pressed the Canaanites into forced labor but never drove them out completely. ²⁹Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to live there among them.

³⁰Neither did Zebulun drive out the Canaanites living in Kitron or Nahalol, so these Canaanites lived among them, but Zebulun did subject them to forced labor. ³¹Nor did Asher drive out those living in Akko or Sidon or Ahlab or Akzib or Helbah or Aphek or Rehob. ³²The Asherites lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land because they did not drive them out. ³³Neither did Naphtali drive out those living in Beth Shemesh or Beth Anath; but the Naphtalites too lived among the

Canaanite inhabitants of the land, and those living in Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath became forced laborers for them. ³⁴The Amorites confined the Danites to the hill country, not allowing them to come down into the plain. ³⁵And the Amorites were determined also to hold out in Mount Heres, Aijalon and Shaalbim, but when the power of the tribes of Joseph increased, they too were pressed into forced labor. ³⁶The boundary of the Amorites was from Scorpion Pass to Sela and beyond.

PRAYER

Well, this section of our passage today starts out pretty well. “*The tribes of Joseph attacked Bethel, and the Lord was with them.*” Let’s talk about this for a minute before we move on.

It doesn’t exactly appear to be the noblest of war tactics – attacking by sneaking into the city instead of attacking the main gate – but certainly, it was successful. Who are these “tribes of Joseph?”

They are Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph. If you look at the twelve tribes of Israel, and then look at a bible map of the tribal allotment of land, you’ll notice two names missing from the list of the sons of Israel (Jacob) – Joseph & Levi. Now Levi wasn’t given any land mass to settle within the land, but were instead given cities throughout the land, in each of their fellow Israelites inheritances. They would live there, and then would each take their turn in fulfilling their priestly duties wherever the tabernacle of the Lord was set up; and then in Jerusalem after the building of the Temple. Joseph’s two sons (Ephraim & Manasseh) were each allotted territory in place of Levi and Joseph – thereby, Joseph being doubly rewarded.

Bethel fell into the allotted area of Ephraim, but that is where the glory of the story ends.

The rest of this first chapter has failure stamped all over it.

We are told this about the rest of the tribes mentioned in this chapter.

- Benjamin, the warrior tribe permitted the Jebusites to dwell with them and did not drive them out. There is not even a reported attempt. The command of the Lord was wholly ignored by them. They were in the worst condition (chapters 20-21).
- Manasseh failed to drive out the people of more than 5 cities.
- Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer.
- Zebulun and Naphtali both failed to dislodge the enemies God had commanded them to destroy entirely.
- And Dan instead of conquering, was conquered. The Amorites forced them into the hill country.
- Asher – for everyone else we read that “they failed to drive out the Canaanites living in their regions. But for Asher we read (vs. 32) ³²*The Asherites lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land because they did not drive them out.* So, Asher didn’t even occupy the land – THEY were the ones allowed to live there – given some space, rather than continue fighting.

We have to ask ourselves how all of this unfolded in this way. Did God give them victory because He was unable to remove these Canaanites from the land? No!

Unbelief, lack of confidence in Jehovah, was the cause of it all.

Let me move for a moment from a devotional thought, to a preaching opportunity.

These Canaanite enemies here are *typical* of the flesh and the fleshly lusts in the heart of a believer.

These lusts, the carnal nature, must be put and kept in the place of death within the believer. To do otherwise is to give life to these lusts.

The only way we are enabled to do this by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit, who is given to us of God.

If we do not walk in the Spirit, that is, *in faith*, we shall be overcome by these things; instead of conquering we will be conquered.

The failure of these tribes to utterly destroy the Canaanites from the land – per the command of the Lord – was their downfall. Failure to obey, led to the Lord removing His hand of compassion from Israel. It led to His ceasing to go before them in battle and defeating their enemy. There has been no sweeter expression in all of our reading up to now than the thought that “*Not one of their enemies withstood them; the Lord gave all*

their enemies into their hands.” (**Joshua 21:44**) But sin and compromise with the enemy led to defeated living – even with their feet set upon the Promised Land.

It is true still today that, the old nature not triumphed over will bring us into bondage as it is with so many of God’s children. We will learn more about this as we travel through the book of Judges. Suffice it to say that we must still stand with Joshua and say, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” And then, we must stand.

Are you controlling the situation, or is the situation controlling you?

Care, in the midst of crisis.