

## The Rebellion of the Chosen People

*Judges 1:1 - 3:7*

### OUTLINE

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## Mingling with the Nations to be Dispossessed

*Judges 1 - 2:5*

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# Judah's Conquest, Leaning on Simeon for Courage (1:1-20)

## CHAPTER 1

1 And it came to pass after the death of Joshua that the children of Israel asked Jehovah,

saying, Which of us shall go up against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? **2** And Jehovah said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

**3** And Judah said to Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, and let us fight against the Canaanites, and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot; and Simeon went with him. **v.3** To insist on another's company in laying hold of our blessings is to lose the simplicity of faith; and to lean on an arm of flesh.

**4** And Judah went up; and Jehovah delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they smote them in Bezek, ten thousand men. **5** And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him, and they smote the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

**6** And Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. **v.6** They did not follow Joshua's example of previous executions (Josh. 10:24-26). Mutilation is just human retaliation. They were allowing fleshly anger, which characterizes the world, to influence their methods in conquering the land. In a similar way, in Church history we see the Church allowing worldly methods and attitudes into the things of God.

**7** And Adoni-Bezek said, Seventy kings, with their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gleaned under my table: as I have done, so God has requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died. **v.7** In a certain sense, by bowing to the government of God he was more righteous than his captors. As a practical application, Satan wants to make us like these seventy kings. He wants us to be under the table not at it. He wants to take our "*great thumbs*" so we can't hold fast, and our "*great toes*" so we can't stand fast.

**8** And the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire. **9** And afterwards the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the hill-country, and in the south, and in the lowland. **10** And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron — the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba; and they slew Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai. **11** And from there he went against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir before was Kirjath-sepher.

**12** And Caleb said, He that smites Kirjath-sepher and takes it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter as wife. **v.12** Kirjath-sepher means: "the city of books"; therefore, it might represent the educational world.

**13** And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. **v.13** Spiritual faithfulness in Caleb stimulated spiritual energy in Othniel. This interchange is a healthy thing to see between the older and younger generations. The same account of Othniel is given in Joshua 15. Why is it repeated twice? Because individual faithfulness is needed in the dark days (Judges) as well as the bright days (Joshua), whether in Israel, or in the Church's history. We are in a similar position as Othniel. Our possession is a result of our relationship with Christ.

**14** And it came to pass as she came, that she urged him to ask of her father the field; and she sprang down from the ass. And Caleb said to her, What wouldst thou? **15** And she said to him, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a southern land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

**vv.16-35** Note the step-by-step declension: it is really worldliness. Ruin is not merely declension. Rather, ruin is the final state of declension. We see declension in Ephesus, and ruin in Laodicea.

**16** And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, had gone up out of the city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which is in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt with the people. **17** And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it; and they called the name of the city Hormah. **18** And Judah took Gazah and its border, and Ashkelon and its border, and Ekron and its border. **19** And Jehovah was with Judah; and he took possession of the hill-country, for he did not dispossess the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron. **20** And they gave to Caleb Hebron, as Moses had said; and he dispossessed from thence the three sons of Anak. **v.20** Caleb had the privilege of driving out the same enemies that Israel had feared in unbelief (see Numbers 19).

## Benjamin's Failure to Drive out the Jebusites (1:21)

**21** And the children of Benjamin did not dispossess the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

## The House of Joseph Takes Bethel - Failure Results in the Creation of Luz (1:22-26)

**22** And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Bethel; and Jehovah was with them. **23** And the house of Joseph sent to search out Bethel; now the name of the city before was Luz. **24** And the guards saw a man come forth out of the city, and said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, how *we* may enter into the city, and we will shew thee kindness. **25** And he shewed them how to enter into the city. And they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family. **26** And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called its name Luz, which is its name to this day. **v.26** Contrast this man with Rahab. Rahab identified herself with the people of God when given the opportunity. This man leaves the people of God and goes off into the world!

## Manasseh's Failure to Dispossess: the Canaanite Pays Tribute (1:27-28)

**27** And Manasseh did not dispossess Beth-shean and its dependent villages, nor Taanach and its dependent villages, nor the inhabitants of Dor and its dependent villages, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and its dependent villages, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and its dependent villages; and the Canaanites would dwell in that land. **28** And it came to pass when Israel became strong, that they made the Canaanites tributary; but they did not utterly dispossess them.

**vv.28-34** Notice the progression of worldliness:

- v.28 Leaving our first love – giving the world a little place, which results in disobedience.
- v.29 The world assumes an established role in our hearts and lives.
- v.32 Now we are decidedly taking our place in the world.
- v.34 Finally the world has forced all spirituality from our lives and we are spoiled of our inheritance.

## **Ephraim's Failure to Dispossess: the Canaanite Dwells Among Them (1:29)**

**29** And Ephraim did not dispossess the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt among them in Gezer.

## **Zebulun's Failure to Dispossess: the Canaanite Dwells Among Them (1:30)**

**30** Zebulun did not dispossess the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries. **v.30** Compare Exodus 23:32 with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:6) and the Canaanites (Judges 1:30, etc.).

## **Asher's Failure to Dispossess: they Dwell Among the Canaanite (1:31-32)**

**31** Asher did not dispossess the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor Ahlab, nor Achzib, nor Helbah, nor Aphik, nor Rehob; **32** and the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not dispossess them.

## **Naphtali's Failure to Dispossess: they Become Tributaries to the Canaanite**

## (1:33)

**33** Naphtali did not dispossess the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; and he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, but the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became tributaries to them.

## Dan's Failure to Dispossess: they Forced Out of Their Possession (1:34-36)

**34** And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the hill-country, for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley. **v.34** The enemy forced the children of Dan into the mountain: *"for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley"*. In Ahab's reign, the Syrians said that God was *"the God of the hills but not the God of the valleys"* (1 Kings 20:28). The hills are the high places of theology, where we know the doctrine. The valley is the place where fields are plowed and sown, where houses are built, and where businesses are run. The valley is the place where the Christian life is played out. The enemy would like to force us up into a position where we only talk about spiritual things and hold them as theory, but never put them into practice. If Satan can keep us up in the hills he will have nothing to worry about. We are glad that God is God of the hills and the valleys.

**35** And the Amorites would dwell on mount Heres, in Ajalon and in Shaalbim; but the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, and they became tributaries. **36** And the border of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akrabbim, from the rock, and upwards.

## The Angel of Jehovah Promises the Nations to be a Snare to Israel (at Bochim) (2:1-5)

### CHAPTER 2

**1a** And the Angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim, **v.1a** Gilgal represents self-

judgment. Bochim means “weeping” or “sadness”. When we neglect self-judgment the Lord may bring in trials to draw us back to Himself.

**1b** and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you to the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you; and as for you, **2** ye shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not hearkened unto my voice. Why have ye done this? **3** Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be *scourges* in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. **4** And it came to pass, when the Angel of Jehovah spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept. **5** And they called the name of that place Bochim; and they sacrificed there to Jehovah. **v.5** The book of Judges is characterized by Bochim while the book of Joshua is characterized by Gilgal.