



REST  
PART THREE

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“The Promised Land.” What does it mean? It doesn’t mean material prosperity. It doesn’t mean houses or lands on this earth. It doesn’t mean earthly success. It doesn’t mean being able to demand things of God so we can spend them on our pleasures. “Lord, I demand a new house from You”. “I demand you give me a better paying job.” “I demand a spouse from You.” “I demand a better government.” “You have to give me these things because the Promised Land is mine.” There are churches that preach that this is what it means. But they’re wrong.

This is not a new error. From the time that Jesus was incarnated on the earth, people have wanted to believe that the Promised Land is something earthly. Some theologians believe that the main reason Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus was that he believed Jesus was going to save Israel from the Roman occupation and establish an earthly kingdom. Judas believed that the Promised Land was an earthly kingdom. But Jesus preached that the kingdom of God is built in men’s hearts, and furthermore He promised people nothing more than death, resurrection, the transformation of their souls and eternal life with Him. So Judas was disappointed with Jesus and betrayed Him. How often are we disappointed with Jesus when He doesn’t bless our earthly life in the ways we think He should? Some of that has to do with our ideas about what the Promised Land is, and what it means to conquer it.

**The Promised Land simply means Jesus Christ, and the relationship we have with the Father through Him. I repeat, the Promised Land simply means Jesus Christ, and the relationship we have with the Father through Him.** Glory to God! He is sufficient for us.

Do you like the idea of a Promised Land like that?

Would you like to know how to conquer it?

**To conquer the land means getting to know Jesus more, cultivating our relationship with the Father and the transformation of our soul so that God may be glorified in every aspect of our existence.**

Our soul is transformed by the renewing of our mind (see Romans 12:2) Renewing our mind means submitting our way of thinking, our emotional life, and our will to God and His word. **Jesus described this whole process as taking up our cross daily and following Him.** As we do this, we are transformed, we come to know Jesus more, and we cultivate our relationship with the Father. And so we conquer the Promised Land.

If we have been born again, Jesus is already ours. We already have a relationship with the Father through Jesus. We are already saints because we are in Him and He is holy. We have already surrendered our lives to Him. God has already told us, “I have given you the Land.” So what is there left to do?

Joshua and Caleb told the people, “Let’s go up, because God has given us the land.” Then they had to go up and conquer the land. Like Joshua and Caleb, we should say, “Yes Lord, I believe. I am in Jesus and He is in me. I am holy in You. I have a relationship with my heavenly Father. I am a new creation. The land is mine.” We should start there.

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And then **we must go up and take the land, by taking up our cross daily and following Him.**

We co-labor with God in this, trusting that Jesus is enough for our every need. The Promised Land is a good land, full of wonders. So we mustn't allow anything to hinder us from conquering it. **We must allow nothing to get in the way of our relationship with the Father through Jesus.** Whatever stands in the way of our transformation must be removed.

**WHY DOESN'T  
GOD GIVE US  
THE VICTORY  
ALL AT ONCE?**

*If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them?* (Deuteronomy 7:17 KJV) There were powerful nations in the land. They threatened

to hinder the conquest. What are the powerful nations that face us? The temptations and attacks of Satan. Areas of our minds and hearts that have yet to be renewed. Matters of the heart. Our sins. Our sense of failure. Our sense of shame. Our sense of weakness in the face of opposition. At times, faced with these powerful nations, we feel like boxers in the ring, pushed against the ropes. But what does God say? *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:8-9) Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*(1 John 4:4)

*Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; 19The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.* (Deuteronomy 7:18-19) Egypt represents your life in the world before you became a Christian. God saved you, didn't He? He set you free from the slavery of your sin, from Satan's slavery, from the slavery you lived in without Christ! That was a miracle, wasn't it? Remember that! (See Romans 5:8-10)

*Moreover the LORD thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.* (Deuteronomy 7:20) *Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob. 5Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. 6For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. 7But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us. 8In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever.* (Psalm 44:4-8) **Just like our salvation was an act of God, our transformation doesn't depend on our own efforts. God is the One who deals with our enemies, with the giants. We have to take the steps of obedience that He shows us, but it is God who gives us the victory.** "Lord, I know that I'm saved, I'm already a new creation, through Your power. My old life has died. I know that there are still areas in my life (attitudes, habits etc) that need to be transformed, brought into line with Your will, brought into line with who I already am in You. **I will take the necessary steps of obedience that You show me. But You are the one who will change me, by Your Holy Spirit.**" *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ... Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* (Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13) (See also Galatians 3:1-6)

At times God brings us face to face with wrongful attitudes in our hearts, areas in which we need to repent. How should we respond to this? "God, I recognize my error. I agree with you and I'll take the steps you show me. I trust that YOU WILL CHANGE ME." *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. 8They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. 9Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.* (Psalm 20:7-9)

*Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.* (Deuteronomy 7:21) Don't faint before them. At times we feel like fainting in the face of our struggles, failures, weaknesses, and the opposition of others.

*And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.* (Deuteronomy 7:22) **HE** will put out those nations before you. All at once? Did God give the land to Israel all at once? Yes, and no. All at once He said that the land was theirs.

But they had to conquer it little by little, following His instructions and depending on Him every step of the way.

In the same way, we conquer the Promised Land of our soul little by little. *In your patience possess ye your souls.* (Luke 21:19)

*We must not think, that because the deliverance of the church, and the destruction of the enemies of the soul, are not done immediately, therefore they will never be done. God will do his own work in his own method and time; and we may be sure that they are always the best. Thus corruption is driven out of the hearts of believers by little and little. The work of sanctification is carried on gradually; but at length there will be a complete victory.* (Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on the Bible)

**W**hy doesn't God give us the victory all at once? We have to learn to manage our inheritance. Character is formed in the crucible of trial. Trials help us to turn to Him. God values greatly the relationship that is formed between Him and us as we work together with Him. While Israel conquered the Promised Land, God gave them different battle plans for each battle and each city they had to conquer. So **they couldn't develop a formula and distance themselves from Him. They continually had to look to and depend on Him.** In the same way, as we move forward in this life we have to continually depend on Him and be guided by His Spirit. Trials make sure that we don't become self-sufficient.

*But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. 24And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.* (Deuteronomy 7:23-24) God destroyed the nations, but delivered their kings up to Israel so that Israel would destroy them. This was a co-laboring. What does this mean for us? In our lives, what are the nations and what are the kings? And what of their destruction?

Let's focus on two aspects of what this represents. The nations represent the sinful nature, which God destroyed on the cross of Calvary. Our old nature already died on the cross and now we are new creations. This work was accomplished by God. They also represent the lies of Satan that confront us, trying to discourage and divert us. Satan's power was broken on the cross and we have been delivered from his dominion. This work was accomplished by God.

And the kings? The king is the one who has the power to make decisions. These bad kings represent our tendency to decide to serve sin or believe Satan's lies. Even though we are new creations, and God has already destroyed the nations, **we have to daily decide to serve God and not to serve sin; to trust God and not believe Satan's lies.** We have the power to decide. So we put the kings to death by deciding to say "no" to temptation and "yes" to the Lord.

*The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God. 26Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.* (Deuteronomy 7:25-26) The graven images represented the religion of those kings. Their system of thought, belief, and action. It was not enough for Israel to destroy the kings. They had to destroy every vestige of their wicked religion, so it would not be a snare for Israel. Israel had to burn and totally destroy them.

What does that mean for us?

We have to go deeper than deciding daily to say yes to God and no to sin and Satan's lies (destroying the kings.) We also have to destroy every last vestige of worldly, wrongful thought, belief and action in our lives. The graven images represent the worldly, wrongful thoughts, beliefs and actions that remain in our souls, or that at times Satan tempts us to accept again. It's our responsibility to burn those thoughts, beliefs and actions in the fire, to destroy them totally. In other words, we have to renew our minds and align our attitudes and actions with what God says, through obedience to Him. That's how we burn those graven images and make sure they don't hinder our relationship with God.

**WE HAVE TO  
DESTROY EVERY  
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How will we recognize the graven images in our lives; those wrongful attitudes and actions? God gave the kings into the hands of the Israelites, and that's how the Israelites discovered the graven images.

In the same way, **it is God's responsibility to show us wrongful areas in our lives.**

*I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed. 38I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet. 39For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. 40Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me. 41They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not. 42Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets. (Psalm 18:37-42)* We have to show no mercy to our wrongful attitudes, beliefs and actions. No mercy to our fears. We must not tolerate Satan's lies and temptations. We mustn't tolerate anything in our heart that comes between us and God. We should take the same approach as King David in this Psalm. God is my strength, and through my obedience to Him, we will put this enemy to death. As the enemy is displaced and destroyed, we will take the land and rejoice in our relationship with the Father.



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"IF ANYONE THIRST, LET THEM COME TO ME AND DRINK"- JESUS  
(JOHN 7:37)