

## Part 17

## Caleb's Reward (14:1-15)

**Inheritance**

- Persistent faith and spiritual conflict

**1. God directs the allocation**

- Only God influenced where the land would be

**2. Priestly ministry and royal ministry**

- A picture of Jesus

**3. Assurance of inheritance****4. Reward**

Inheritance is reward. It is what God wants to give us. It is the result of persistent faith and it invariably involves conflict of some kind. The Book of Joshua is a sample of how it is necessary for God's people to enter into conflict with everything that opposes God. In the days of Joshua this was done by military aggression; today the Christian knows that 'the weapons of our warfare are not carnal'. Yet the basic principles remain the same. The obtaining of our spiritual inheritance still involves persistent faith and spiritual conflict.

**1. God directs the allocation of inheritance.** For nine and a half tribes the inheritances were given by the casting of lots.<sup>■1</sup> ('Casting lots' is a way of making a decision or a selection by a method depending on 'chance'. Perhaps it was done by throwing marked stones as dice.) Two and a half tribes had their land allocated already east of Jordan River;<sup>■2</sup> the Levites had no rural territory at all.<sup>■3</sup> Joseph had been such an important figure in the life of Jacob that he was given a double inheritance. Two of his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, each became a distinct tribe; this brought the number up to twelve despite the fact that the Levites had no rural inheritance. The Levites lived in cities.<sup>■4</sup> All of this allocation of inheritance was followed according to the written instructions left by Moses.<sup>■5</sup>

The fact that the casting of lots was used as a method of choice<sup>■1</sup> meant that only God influenced where the land would be. Exactly how it was done is unknown. Another possibility is that there were two jars with tokens of the names of tribes and tokens of the names of areas. Then perhaps one 'token' was taken from each jar so as to match tribes and areas. This is only a guess but it must have been something like that.

**2. God gives the inheritance by priestly ministry and by royal ministry.** The territories were allocated via a priest, Eleazar, and by a ruler, Joshua.<sup>■1</sup> For the Christian this pictures the way in which we get our inheritance through the work of Jesus as a priest and the work of Jesus as a king. Jesus rules over us and over our lives; and at the same time He intercedes for us. The Christian moves forward for God as he trusts Jesus' royal power and Jesus' heavenly intercession.

**3. There is such a thing as 'assurance of inheritance'.** Heroes of faith get greater inheritance. Joshua 14:6 begins to deal with Caleb. Some important glimpses of how the receiving of inheritance takes place can be seen in the way in which Caleb received his inheritance. Caleb comes to Joshua for his inheritance. He has an assurance that inheritance is due to him.

The same thing may be true spiritually. Paul could say quite confidently 'From now on there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness'.<sup>■1</sup> Christians are familiar with 'assurance of salvation'. There is such a thing as 'assurance of inheritance' as well.

**4. Inheritance is reward.** Caleb quotes his works of faith of

■1 14:1–2

■2 14:3a

■3 14:3b

■4 14:4

■5 14:5

■1 14:2

■1 14:1

■1 2 Timothy 4:8

forty years previously. <sup>¶1</sup> Inheritance is based upon works of faith, and Joshua knows it!

## 5. Made certain by oath

**5. Inheritance is made certain by oath.** Moses took an oath <sup>¶1</sup>, and explicitly explained that the oath was a reward for his obedient faith. Moses explicitly underlines the fact that a large reward came to him because his large faith led him to follow the Lord fully. <sup>¶2</sup> It is the oath given many years before that makes Caleb sure that his inheritance is to come to him.

<sup>1</sup> 14:7-8

## 6. Time-gap

**6. Inheritance may be received after a time-gap.** Moses gave an oath ‘in that day’ but thirty-eight years had gone by since that time, and Caleb had not actually acquired it. The time of God’s oath and the time of the fulfilment of God’s oath may have a lengthy time-gap between them. At the time of Joshua 14, thirty-eight years have passed since the time when the oath was given by Moses. God has kept him waiting until the time of his obtaining the promise in actuality. One may obtain the promise by oath earlier than one obtains the promise in actuality. In such a case one has an assurance of inheritance without yet seeing what one knows is about to come.

<sup>1</sup> 14:9

<sup>2</sup> 14:9b

## 7. More opportunity + Serve God

**7. We notice in the case of Caleb that inheritance may open the way for more opportunity to serve God.** One might think that to receive an inheritance from God and have an ‘oath of reward’ fulfilled in one’s life is such a height of spiritual blessing that one should simply enjoy it for the rest of one’s life. Caleb does not quite see it that way. His desire is to press on and yet do even more for the Lord. God has kept him alive for forty-five years in order to see his inheritance in his old age. He is now eighty-five years old. <sup>¶1</sup> But a man is as old as he feels! And Caleb still feels young and strong. <sup>¶2</sup> He is delighted to have the mountain-area of Hebron because there is more to do for the Lord there! <sup>¶3</sup> He is looking forward to conquering the Anakim – the lawless fighters that had been feared by Israel. <sup>¶4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 14:10

<sup>2</sup> 14:11

<sup>3</sup> 14:12

<sup>4</sup> Numbers 13:22, 28, 33

## 8. Entering into rest

• Receiving after a period of conflict

**8. Receiving an inheritance after conflict is the same as entering into rest.** The phrase ‘entering into rest’ is known to us from the letter to the Hebrews. This is not the place to expound it, but Joshua 14:15 gives us a hint. Joshua gives Caleb the inheritance. <sup>¶1</sup> A final comment <sup>¶2</sup> lets us know that at this time of the giving of inheritances the land had rest. The ‘rest’ is the cessation of a period of conflict and the receiving of reward. ‘Entering into rest’ in the letter to the Hebrews is precisely this. It is God’s ‘well done’ after the fight of faith.

<sup>1</sup> 14:13–14a  
 <sup>2</sup> 14:15b



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