

Joshua Chapter 17 the Millennial Inheritance

by A.B. Simpson

The Millennium is a time of peace and prosperity on earth, a period of time when God's people will live in harmony with Him and with each other.

Scripture: Hebrews 12:26

Topics: "Faith and Obedience", "Millennial Inheritance"

Description

A.B. Simpson explores the theme of millennial inheritance in 'Joshua Chapter 17 the Millennial Inheritance,' emphasizing the connection between the earthly Canaan and the heavenly inheritance promised to believers. He highlights that while Canaan was a land of conflict, heaven represents a place of ultimate victory and rest, free from adversaries. Simpson asserts that the true Joshua, Jesus Christ, will usher in this millennial glory, and only those who exhibit faith and obedience will inherit this promise. He encourages believers to prepare for the coming of the Lord, which will bring both conflict and victory, ultimately leading to the fulfillment of God's promises and the eternal presence of Christ as our inheritance.

Transcript

"Whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. 12: 26-28.)

Christian hope has always loved to link the land of promise with our heavenly inheritance. The sacred poetry of the past is full of this sweet imagery. Jordan is the swelling flood of death, and the sweet fields beyond are the images of that heavenly land,

"Where everlasting spring abides,

And never withering flowers,

And death, the narrow stream, divides

That heavenly land from ours."

The vital objection to this theory is that heaven essentially differs from the earthly Canaan in most of the features which chiefly distinguished the latter. That was a land of conflict and hard-won victory, while heaven shall have no foes to overcome, and all its crowns shall be those of accomplished triumph and peaceful recompense. Heaven will have no Jericho, no valley of Achor, nor failure such as that of Achan, and no sad declension such as that which followed Israel's entry into Canaan.

And yet, there are some points in which the misinterpretation is not without its lessons. Canaan was Israel's home, their place of rest after the conflicts in the wilderness, and the realization of long-deferred hopes and promises. And so, there remains a rest for the people of God on the heaven side of the grave, where they shall be at home, and "shall rest from their labors while their works do follow them"; and where the long-deferred hopes and expectations of life shall be realized at length, and all their wanderings and trials shall forever cease. God forbid that we should abate aught of the blessed meaning of heaven, where all the ransomed wait in unspeakable felicity for the greater inheritance that lies still farther beyond!

It is of this better inheritance that the ancient Canaan was really the type; for there is a better inheritance even than heaven. Christian hope is always connected in the New Testament Scriptures, not with death and the state of the departed, but with the second coming of the Lord Jesus, and the millennial glory which is then to be ushered in. Even the earthly Canaan itself was but the transient home of the seed of Abraham; it looked forward both in type and promise to a future age when Israel shall inherit their full patrimony, and when all the children of faith shall possess, through the age of glory, their true Land of Promise.

CHRIST WILL BRING IT IN

1. Like the ancient Canaan, it is to be introduced by the true Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no millennium promised in the Scriptures apart from His personal coming. The heavens have received Him, according to the language of the apostles, "until the times of restitution of all things"; but He is coming again, and His appearing and His kingdom will be simultaneous.

There came a day, in Scotland, when the great heart of the Reformers went out to John Knox. They felt it was he whom they needed, and his coming would settle every question. When at last the tidings went abroad, over hill and valley, and hamlet and city, "John Knox has come!" all hearts were thrilled with confidence that the crisis was passed, and strong men gathered at the rallying-places, and tyrants trembled on their thrones; for they knew that his single presence was worth the combined strength of all their armies. And so, the need of our people is not institutions, and organizations, and people, but the coming of the King Himself.

2. Like the ancient Canaan, only the children of faith and obedience will possess this inheritance. Perhaps many of the ancient Israelites were saved who never entered the Land of Promise; and so it is possible to belong to the people of God and yet lose much of the glory and recompense connected with the hope of His appearing. "Unto them that look for Him will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "They that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

There is a faith that brings salvation, but there is a faith that will bring the recompense promised at His coming, and there will yet be a generation whose faith will keep them from the power of death, and bring them the translation glory.

Often have we seen the children of God struggling through some tremendous trial of soul or body, and it seemed as if their faith did not quite win the victory here. But it was sweet to believe that what they had missed in this world would be given as the recompense of their faith, at His coming. Not one single grain of true faith is ever lost, and although it may seem to have missed its mark on this side, it is all reserved for His coming, and many a soul that has wept and wondered will wonder yet more, when it beholds the crown laid up for it there when the tears shall have long ago been forgotten.

But obedience is as necessary as faith. They who are to be among the first fruits of His appearing have followed the Lamb whithersoever He goes. "You are My friends." He says, "if you do whatsoever I command you."

MUST BE WON

3. The Millennium, like Canaan, must be conquered, too. Not without resistance shall He enter upon His kingdom. The world's greatest conflict will just precede its millennial Sabbath. The mighty Captain of the millennial armies sits upon a white horse with garments dyed in blood, and a name upon His vesture and upon His thigh, King of kings, and Lord of lords; and comes forth as a mighty Conqueror, treading under His feet the hosts of Antichrist and the powers of hell, and scattering His enemies at the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; for "He must reign until He put all enemies under His feet." The battles of Joshua and the conquests of David are the living types of the advent struggles, and the Armageddon war.

The promises of His coming are all given to the overcomer. God is not going to throw away His crowns and thrones on those who have lived for earthly rewards. He has a "little flock" to whom He will "give the kingdom," and He is picking them out every day, through the tests that come to them and the victories which they win.

Gideon started with thirty thousand men, but God only took three hundred of all that army. They were not only picked, but they were picked again and again. The first thirty thousand were taken out of Israel, then ten thousand were taken out of the thirty thousand, and then three hundred were taken out of the ten thousand, and with these three hundred the victory was won.

Day by day, each of us is meeting the enemies who come to prove whether we can be trusted with a crown.

UNIVERSAL VICTORY

4. The Lord's coming will bring not only conflict, but victory. Joshua's campaign was an uninterrupted and complete triumph until it was finished. There was no king in all the Hittite confederacy that had not been overthrown; and so our Lord is to put down all authority and opposition and reign without a rival over the millennial earth. The day is surely coming when every evil thing that lifts its head in proud defiance shall be laid prostrate at His feet. Not forever shall right be on the scaffold and wrong upon the throne. "He will avenge His own elect."

Error shall at length cease to delude, selfishness to prey on holiness, and injustice, vice and crime to defile and destroy the creation of God. The hour is coming when the adversaries of the Church and of the soul shall be remembered only as a vanished dream. We shall seek for them and they shall not be found. The proud empires of the world, the blasphemous and defiant power of Antichrist, and even Satan himself shall

be given to the saints of God and the Prince of Peace. The conquests of Canaan were not a truce with the adversary, nor an attempt to transform their adversaries to peaceful friends; but their utter extinction.

And so the coming of the Lord is to involve the destruction of His enemies. The Gospel age is the time for evangelization and the day for the world's peaceful submission and conversion, but when the Master comes it will be to "consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and to destroy with the brightness of His coming, everything that exalted itself against the obedience of Christ."

OUR INHERITANCE

5. His coming will bring us to our inheritance. Then will Abraham and David possess the literal fulness of their ancient covenants, and the land on which their feet rested for a time shall be their own and the home of their offspring. Then shall the disciples who followed Jesus in His days of rejection, "sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Then shall we possess our complete redemption, spirit, soul and body, perfectly restored to the image of God, and our lost dominion over the earth given back through our exalted Head. Then shall the saints of God receive the recompense of their lives of service and suffering, and those who have overcome shall wear the crowns of victory and glory which He has promised to the faithful and triumphant. Then shall each soul find its perfect sphere and enter upon the service for which its earthly training has qualified it; and doubtless there will be a Hebron of exalted fellowship and love for every brave Caleb; a Kirjath-Sepher of boundless knowledge for every conquering Othniel; a fountain of life, with its upper and nether springs, for every true Achsah who has dared to claim her full inheritance; a double inheritance for every true Ephraimite that has dared to conquer it in the days of earthly battle; a city of honor and service for every Levite who has been true to his consecration, and a Timnath-Serah of everlasting light and glory for every faithful Joshua.

Our full inheritance is yet to come. All we know of Jesus in His indwelling fulness and victorious life is but the type of the glory that awaits us at His advent. All we know of truth here is but through glass darkly, then "shall we know even as we are known!" All we know of holiness here is but a shadow of that hour when "we shall be like Him," as we see Him as He is. All we know of physical redemption is but a prophetic foretaste of the glorious life that will thrill every frame with the resurrection joy. All we know of service for the Master is but the blundering attempt of the schoolboy as he learns the mere alphabet of knowledge, compared with the mighty faith and divine power with which we shall be workers together with Him, in the transformation of the millennial earth, at the inauguration of His glorious kingdom.

He is educating us to bear a far "more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." Let us be apt learners and by and by we shall look back with amazement to our earthly childhood and scarcely recognize the trembling and blundering beginner who once struggled through the years of time, and claimed the inheritance that was to be so much more vast and transcendent than his brightest earthly dream.

HIMSELF

6. And best of all, He will be Himself our Eternal Inheritance. "Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men and God Himself shall be with them and be their God." How much is meant by the presence of Jesus! How much it used to mean in the old apostolic times! What a difference it made to that little company when suddenly He stood in their midst, and thrilled their hearts with the sweet words, "Peace be unto you." "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

Only four or five times did that wondrous Presence appear to Paul, but oh, the power of one such moment upon his life! What cared he, that day, as he rode into Damascus, for any earthly or heavenly power? What to Him was the name of Jesus? But suddenly, like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, the face of Jesus blazed out from the glory, the voice of Jesus spake to him, and Paul was prostrated upon the ground broken and subdued, and crying, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" One moment with Jesus had transformed the mightiest will of the age.

Look at him again, crushed and discouraged, in that dungeon in Jerusalem, wondering if he had made a fatal mistake, and sinking, doubtless, in deep depression. But suddenly the Master appears, and with one word assures him. "You have testified for Me at Jerusalem, you must bear witness for Me at Rome." Instantly Paul's heart was on the heights of glory, even as the one flash the sailor gets from the sky and the one observation he takes of the sun, will carry him through long weeks of clouds and storms. Look again at that little company on the stormy Adriatic. For days the ship has tossed on the wild Euroclydon, but, suddenly, Jesus appears to Paul. One single message is all: "Fear not, you must be brought before Caesar; I have given you all these that sail with you." Paul is a victor again, and standing on that tossing vessel, he inspires with his own courage the sinking hearts of the men with him. They reach the shore, and by and by, the capital of the world.

Oh, what will it be to have that wondrous Presence with us forever, and every moment be able to look into His face, to hear His voice, to have Him with us, and to be "even as He"? Thank God that blessed Coming is near at hand! God is saying to many hearts today, as He has said so often in His Word: "Yet once more (it is a little while) I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. Yes, I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come."

Surely, He is shaking the nations today. Surely this terrible financial trouble that is distressing all the world, making hundreds of thousands of paupers, bringing distress of nations and perplexity, surely this is one of the harbingers of the coming of the Son of man, and the quaking earth is keeping time to the tread of the heavenly march. Only a few days ago, tidings reached us from across the ocean and the continent, that the very heart of Asia had been shaken by the most significant earthquake of modern times. Surely, if there is one place on earth that is the seat of heathenism and the very citadel of its strength, it is Thibet, and that great monastery, where thousands of priests surround the Grand Llama of Buddhism, the Pope of five millions of Asiatic people; and yet, a few weeks ago, that very spot was shaken by the hand of God, that great monastery crumbled into a heap of ruins, and the Grand Llama himself has disappeared, with hundreds of others, and filled the minds of his followers with consternation.

God help us to understand the meaning of our times, and to hear Him saying to us, "How do you know but that you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

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