

Episode #512 Judges 1 Part 2 – The Conquests of Caleb

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God's works and ways.

II. Israel was planning to continue the conquest of Canaan after Joshua's death. Judah and Simeon went together to defeat the Canaanites left in their mutual territories.

A. Judges 1:4-7. The defeat of Bezek.

1. Verse 4. They defeat Bezek (Lightning), a city of Canaanites (Low Country) and Perizzites (Villagers).
2. Verse 5. Adoni-Bezek = Lord of Bezek, their king.
3. Verse 6. This seems violent and cruel, but see the next verse!
4. Verse 7. Their king is paid back for his own actions. A warlike king would collect conquered kings in his household as a kind of living set of trophies. This cutting off was to humiliate them and keep them from ever going to war against him. Note bringing to Jerusalem. Though it was in Benjamin, it already was becoming a kind of center of activities for Judah.

B. Judges 1:8-10. Judah victories at Jerusalem, the Negeb, and Hebron.

1. Verse 8. Jerusalem = Teaching of Peace. Apparently this does not include the stronghold (fort) attached to the city, which was not defeated until II Samuel.
2. Verse 9. More conquests of Judah. South = Negeb.
3. Verse 10. Hebron = Association. Later David's early capital over Judah. Early Kirjath Arba = City of Arba (Fourth). Sheshai (Noble), Ahiman (My Brother is a Gift), and Talmi (Furrowed) were sons of Anak, giants of the Rephaim.

C. Judges 1:11-15. Caleb's exploits.

1. Verse 11. Debir = Sanctuary. Kirjath-Sepher = City of the Book.
2. Verse 12. Caleb was one who survived the wilderness with Joshua. An old man, but blessed by the LORD. Achsah = Anklet, his daughter. Probably from a younger wife.
3. Verse 13. Cousins or half-uncle and niece? A hard one. Marrying an uncle or aunt was not allowed, so probably this means they were cousins, which was not contrary to the law.
4. Verse 14. She wants more inheritance than she was given originally. Land without springs of water is little good. This was a problem in our own west.
5. Verse 15. She asks herself, rather than her husband. Caleb grants it.

D. Judges 1:16-21. More victories over the Philistines.

1. Verse 16. Kenites = Smiths. Moses had encouraged his father-in-law to join them. Apparently he did, and some of his relatives as well. City of palm trees seems to be Jericho. Arad = A Wild Donkey. They will among Judah, instead of Moses' tribe of Levi. Remember, Levi was scattered among the other tribes.
2. Verse 17. Zephath = Watchtower, Hormah = Devotion, because of what they did to it.
3. Verse 18. Gaza = Strong, Ashkelon = Migration, Ekron = Torn Up by the Roots." These were primary cities of the Philistines. Interesting that the Philistines retook them later.

4. Verse 19. Judah cannot take these lowland peoples because of superior technology that they had: iron chariots. Later we will see why the LORD allowed this.
 5. Verse 20. Anak = Long Neck. Caleb had especially asked for the land of the giants, he was so confident in the help of the LORD to aid them.
 6. Verse 21. In spite of Jerusalem's conquest, these Jebusites remain. Again, this was in the stronghold or fort, whereas they took the rest of the city.
- E. Judges 1:22-26. Joseph (Ephraim and half Manasseh) conquer Beth-El.
1. Verse 22. Beth-El = House of God. Where Jacob saw his ladder (stairway).
 2. Verse 23. Luz = Almond Tree. The local inhabitants ignored Jacob's new name, but the Israelites adopt his name when they conquer it.
 3. Verse 24. A man tries to sneak out of the city and is caught. Joseph realizes he must have a secret entrance, and want him to tell them what it is.
 4. Verse 25. He shows them, and so they capture the city.
 5. Verse 26. He builds a new city named after the old city he gave up to Israel.

III. The Israelites were given a command by God: wipe out the Canaanites. Judah, Simeon, and Joseph were faithful to do this. Caleb, the faithful spy who was confident that with Jehovah's help they could conquer even the giants, proved this true by conquering them himself at this time. Do we believe that, with the help of our Lord, we too can conquer all this world throws at us?