

## Persistence

Ponder: Keep on, or quit?

Scripture: “As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day (Josh. 15:63, NKJV).

Why did the tribe of Judah fail to drive out the Jebusites? Why did their close neighbor and ally, the tribe of Benjamin, share in that failure (as indicated in Judges 1:21)?

It wasn't from lack of instruction and warning! Through Moses the Lord cautioned His people not to neglect driving out all the Canaanites. “But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides” (Num. 33:55).

And it wasn't from lack of divine assistance. God had promised to send hornets before Israel (Exod. 23:28). Whether one views these metaphorically, or as literal stinging insects, the point remains that God actively helped Israel expel the Canaanites.

After battling various Canaanite tribes for several years, however, it appears that all of Israel (not just Judah and Benjamin) became weary of it. While we might understand their desire to settle down in their newly-won territory, their disobedience and failure to take God's word seriously comprise a disgraceful blot on their record.

Just as the Lord had warned, the Jebusites became a thorn in Israel's side. Long after the conquest, when King David was moving his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem, he had to overcome the Jebusites who were firmly entrenched there (2 Sam. 5:6-8). Even during the reign of Solomon, the Jebusites were still there; Solomon put them to forced labor (2 Chron. 8:7-8).

Rather than imitate Israel's negligence, let us closely heed the word of God! He never promised that faithful obedience to Him will be easy. Quite to the contrary, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Whether it is in sound doctrine, evangelism, morality, or any other aspect of faithful obedience, we must “not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Gal. 6:9)

Song: “Onward, Christian Soldiers”

Prayer: Almighty God, we praise You for Your faithfulness in keeping Your promises and giving us success in the work You have given us to do. Please lift us up when we become weary. Help us not to give up or quit, but to persevere, confident that You are always with us and that You will not leave us or forsake us. In Jesus' name, Amen.