

CAUTION FLAGS FOR ISRAEL

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed for wisdom and read the Bible to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes below to meet the needs of your students.

Lesson Aim: Encourage Christians to conquer every known sin in their lives by faith in Christ's power.

Suggestion: Give next week's Student Lesson to your class to answer the questions. Let them share their answers in class. The questions below will reveal important truths you may want to emphasize.

Introduction: Israel had an impressive list of initial victories over her enemies in the Promised land, but the job was not done yet until all her enemies were destroyed. This task was more difficult than it first appeared. Canaan was divided up between the 9½ tribes. Each tribe was to drive out or destroy all the wicked people in their land. They were not to marry or make any alliance with them. They were to destroy every aspect of their religious worship. The LORD promised to help them conquer all their foes (13:6). To do this they needed to stay close to the LORD like Joshua and his leaders did. However, the next generation departed from the LORD when Joshua and his officials died. So it is with most Christians in the battle against their spiritual enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil. Many Christians settle down in their spiritual lives and become satisfied with mediocre performances. They compromise with sins that are difficult to overcome and later those sins become thorns in their sides. But Christians can win the battles like Joshua, if they will walk by faith in obedience to Christ. "Whatever is born of God overcomes the world: this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith" (1 Jn 5:4).

How did Caleb do his part in cleansing Judah by conquering Hebron? 14:6-14 He did it by . . .

1. Confidence in the LORD's promise: He told Moses to give Caleb Hebron, where he had been sent to spy the land, because he gave a good report about what he found - 14:6, 9.
2. Certainty in his heart regarding the LORD's plan: Caleb gave a report that was in his heart. He knew Israel could conquer Hebron with the LORD's power - 14:7.
3. Compliance to the LORD's will: Caleb wholly followed the LORD God - 14:8, 9, 14.
4. Contentment with the LORD's time: Sin in Israel caused Caleb to wait 45 years to receive Hebron. The LORD could not give it to him sooner - 14:10.
5. Courage from the LORD's strength in him: Caleb trusted in the LORD to enable him to drive out the giants in Hebron -14:11-12

Follow the principles of Caleb for driving out the enemy "giants" in your life.

Why did the 2½ tribes construct the altar of witness? 22:21-29

They thought the Jordan River might separate them from the 9½ tribes, so they built an altar to be a witness that they are one people. The 2½ tribes created this problem when they coveted the land east of Jordan and asked Moses for it before Canaan was conquered. Moses permitted the 2½ tribes to inherit that land if their soldiers fought to conquer Canaan with the other soldiers. However, Christ's Millennial Kingdom does not include this land; Jordan is the border (Ezk 47:18).

Whatever you covet is idolatry (Col 3:5) and it will trouble your spiritual walk with the LORD.

How did Joshua counsel his leaders that would outlive him? 23:1-11

Joshua reminded his leaders how the Lord had fought for their nation and had given them a homeland in Canaan. Furthermore, he told them the Lord would continue to fight for their nation until they drove out all their enemies and possessed every part of their land, if they would meet three conditions: (1) they would keep the law of Moses (v. 6); (2) they would keep away from entangling alliances with the heathen nations (v. 7); and (3) they would cleave unto the Lord with genuine love (vs. 8, 11). If they would do this, one of their men would chase a thousand of their enemies, because the Lord would fight the battle for them (vs. 9-10).

Rules for success: obey the Scriptures; separate from the world; draw close to the LORD in love.