Possessing Our Possessions

God designed many aspects of Israel’s history to teach lessons for our lives as Christians. Israel’s conquest of Canaan parallels our taking possession of what Christ has already given us (Exodus 23:27-33).

**You are not helpless. In Christ you can begin to possess your possessions. What must you do?**

**1. Recognize your new position.**

A. Joshua took Israel into *Canaan*

B. Jesus has seated you in the *heavenly places*

Ephesians 1:3; 2:5-6

**2. Cast away your old idols.**

A. *Listen* to Joshua’s command to put away idols

Joshua 24:23

B. *Look* to Jesus who is better than all idols

Colossians 3:1-1-10

**3. Make no covenant with your flesh.**

A. Israel’s failure became a *snare*

Judges 1-2

B. Make no provision for the *flesh*

Romans 13:14

**4. Prepare for extended warfare.**

A. “Little by little” teaches *dependence*

Exodus 23:29-30

B. Keep putting to death evil *deeds*

Romans 8:9-13

**For additional study or family discussion**

1. What did the Lord say to you today through His word? Did you learn some new truth about God or yourself? Did the Lord challenge you, convict you, or encourage you?

2. A *type* is a person, event, or institution in the Old Testament that was designed by God to point forward to New Testament truth. As examples of this general principle you may want to look at the following.

* The Passover lamb, redemption from Egyptian slavery, and the wilderness wanderings the include *types* of our Savior, our redemption, and our trials (1 Corinthians 5:7; 10:1-13).
* The partial rest Joshua gave Israel in Canaan is a *type* of the perfect rest we have in Christ (Hebrews 3-4).
* The sacrifices and tabernacle and Old Testament priesthood all point forward to Christ (Hebrews 9).

3. What kinds of things must a Christian simply put away and stop doing? On the other hand, why can’t we just stop sinning? Why must we always be putting the flesh to death? In other words, what is the relationship between decisive action against certain sins and a commitment to a long-term battle?

“He would do it gradually, in wisdom ([**Exod. 23:29, 30**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exod.23.29,Exod.23.30)), not all at once, but by little and little. As the Canaanites had kept possession till Israel had grown into a people, so there should still be some remains of them till Israel should grow so numerous as to replenish the whole. Note: The wisdom of God is to be observed in the gradual advances of the church’s interests. It is in real kindness to the church that its enemies are subdued by little and little; for thus we are kept upon our guard, and in a continual dependence upon God. Corruptions are thus driven out of the hearts of God’s people; not all at once, but by little and little; the old man is crucified, and therefore dies slowly. God, in his providence, often delays mercies, because we are not ready for them” (*Matthew Henry’s Commentary*).