

Why the Promised Land Is Just a Prophetic Shadow of the Kingdom of Heaven

Have you ever found yourself reading a Scripture you know or have heard many times in church, but on that particular day, its meaning becomes brand-new to you? We should always be looking for and expecting new revelation when we come to read and study God's Word. When this happens to me, I am inclined to go deeper into God's Word to see what else He wants to show me concerning the word or idea.

This article started as a prophetic word. During a Tuesday night service at the church I pastor, Crusaders Church in Chicago, I prophesied about moving into a good land. After delivering that word, I began to do a word study in the Scriptures regarding "the land"—the land of Canaan, the promised land, inheriting the land and the good land.

The good land is a picture of kingdom living—living in the glory realm and in the promises of God. The good land is God's country. It is a place where goodness, abundance, prosperity, excellence, refreshing, beauty, nourishment, blessing, satisfaction, plenty and glory are ways of life. It is the land of the finest, best and choicest of meat and grain. It is a place where we are nourished, shielded and safe. We receive abundant harvests, and all our works are fruitful in the good land. It is a place where becoming fat and large is a spiritual picture of prosperity, wealth and the anointing. I have a passion to see people live in prosperity, abundance, peace, joy and victory in the land God has promised us in Christ.

The good land is also a picture of the promised land to which God was leading the Israelites upon their exodus from Egypt.

He was leading them to the physical place called Canaan. God Himself brought them into a good land, a land of milk and honey (Exod. 3:8; Num. 14:8; Deut. 31:20; Ezek. 20:15), as He promised their forefather Abraham (Gen. 12:7).

Today, God's people enter the good land through Jesus Christ, as we have now by faith become the spiritual seed of Abraham (Rom. 11:11-31). The good land is no longer a physical place but a spiritual representation of what was purchased for us by the finished work of Jesus at the cross. It is a metaphor for our spiritual inheritance in Christ and the blessings we have as a result. So now because of Christ, the saints of God dwell in this land and possess it by faith.

Our Inheritance

"Earth" in the Bible's original Greek language is *ge*, which literally means "land." That's a big distinction, because when you hear or read the word earth, you may think of the entire planet. But when you think of land, the concept of the physical area adjusts to mean only a portion of the planet. Of course, when God sent the Israelites in to possess the land, they were not going in to possess the entire planet. They were possessing the land of Canaan. God gave them parameters (Num. 34:1-12).

When Jesus said in Matthew 5:5 that the meek will inherit the earth, He had certain spiritual boundary lines in mind. Though the verse is commonly quoted, there is a lot more to it than meets the eye. Jesus did not mean the entire physical planet but a special spiritual land set aside for those who love Him, which they inherit as they come into fellowship with Him.

Several Scriptures talk about the good land. Psalm 25:13 says, "His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth [the land]." In Psalm 37, the phrase "inherit the earth" (or land) is mentioned five times (v. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34).

But the book of Psalms was written almost 1,000 years after

Joshua led the people of Israel into Canaan, yet still we find several references in Psalm 37 to inheriting the land. Why is the Word of God still talking about possessing the earth?

First, I believe that all the promises of God are fulfilled in Christ. Christ is the fulfillment of all the Old Covenant promises and all the Old Covenant types and symbols. As part of the Old Covenant, God told the Israelites, "I am going to bring you into a good land. This is going to be your inheritance. This will be your possession" (see Deut. 5:31, 6:1, 26:1). But the inheritance of the physical land was something that was temporary, earthly, physical and natural. It was a type of something greater, which we find in Christ.

Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, the priesthood, the sacrifices—all these things were types and shadows of a greater reality in which the fulfillment is Christ. So when Scripture says, "The meek shall inherit the earth," it is an Old Covenant picture of what we inherit in Christ. The land is Christ; Christ is the promised land. Christ is our inheritance. So blessings, prosperity, peace, *shalom*, favor, land flowing with milk and honey—all these are types and symbols of what it means to live in Christ and to walk and live in the Spirit.

So many people today, especially Christians, are focused on the physical piece of land housing Israel, the Gaza Strip and Palestine, as if that is to be the focus of the kingdom. They miss the fact that the land God sent Israel into—and please catch this because you must understand types, shadows and figures in order to rightly divide the Word of God—is a natural representation of something much greater in the Spirit. Though they were sent into this physical land, we must understand that God has something much bigger in mind than just a physical piece of land. The kingdom of heaven is much bigger than that.

Receiving this broadened perspective can be a problem for some

Christians whose eyes are so locked on the natural and the physical that they miss the spiritual reality of what we possess in Christ.

What we possess in Christ is a fulfillment of the picture and shadow of what the people of Israel possessed by going into a physical land. Literally, Christ is the good land. Living in the Spirit is the good land, and that is the land given to us.

Allow me to lead you through an example of how a type and shadow may be read in the Old Testament and then seen in the New Testament as fulfilled.

Deuteronomy 8:7 says, "For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs that flow out of valleys and hills."

What does water represent in the Bible? It represents the Spirit of God. Jesus said in John 7:38b (KJV), referring to the believer, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." And in John 4, He said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (v. 14).

The good land is a picture of living a Spirit-filled life: worship, prophecy, words of knowledge and wisdom, discernment, tongues, interpretation, miracles. That's what we have in Christ. Life should never be boring when you have the Spirit of God flowing consistently. Your life should be full of water, full of fountains, full of depth and full of the river of God (Ps. 46:4). The water of the Spirit of God should always be flowing in your life; if you are not experiencing that, you are not living in the good land. And if you allow it, the enemy will rob you of what it means to live in the good land, to live in the blessings of the Spirit of God.

As you study all the things the people of Israel inherited, realize these are types and shadows of what you have in Christ. When Christ says, "Blessed are the meek: for they

shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5), He is not referring to something physical. He is referring to something much greater than the physical. He is referring to living in salvation, redemption, abundance, glory and shalom. This is the good land.

Blessed Are the Meek

If you are wondering who "the meek" are in Matthew 5:5, let me uncover the mystery: you are the meek. The good land is part of your inheritance in Christ. You are blessed and an heir to the land. It is yours in Christ!

My paraphrase of Isaiah 1:19 says, "The meek are humble, teachable, and able to be corrected by God. They are willing and obedient; therefore, they eat the good of the land."

When you read the phrase "blessed are the meek," know that it is all about Jesus and our restoration through salvation to His image and likeness. Jesus is a picture of the meek. In Matthew 11:29, He said He was meek and lowly in heart. He has inherited the earth in the sense that He possesses the entire world.

Psalms 2:8 (MEV) tells of the promise of the Father to the Son, who becomes the King: "Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession."

Christ's dominion is over the entire earth. Jesus is the embodiment of meekness, and when we enter into Christ, we take on all that He is; therefore, we take on His meekness. His meekness becomes part of our lives. We cannot be meek apart from Christ.

All the promises that are revealed to us through Scripture and by the Spirit of God are found and fulfilled in Christ. So blessed are the meek—blessed are those who are in Christ, the meek one—for they shall inherit the earth, or possess the

land.

Appropriated by Faith

Being in Christ is more than being saved. It's more than going to heaven. It's more than just being justified. But many believers have not allowed themselves to live in the good land because of tradition, religion, fear, doubt and other people's interference. They never use their faith to appropriate the land.

When Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15b), we are witness to Peter's revelation of who Jesus is: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v. 16b). My desire is that people get a revelation of Christ and thereby get a revelation of the good land.

The enemy will work overtime on your mind and emotions to keep you in an exhausted and frustrated state so that you will believe the good land is for super saints and not for you. This is a lie. Like many people with potential, there may be times when you feel stuck outside of your promises because you have unconsciously partnered with the lies of hell. This is one of Satan's strategies to get you to believe his lies, to make vows and partner with him, and to empower demon spirits to wreak havoc in your life.

You may hear words such as, "Things will never work out for you." You begin to agree with the deception and speak it over yourself: "Things will never work out for me." This is the work of the enemy, and as he influences what you speak, his demons will honor your word. They understand the realm of covenant and keep you on the outskirts of the good land by sowing lies into your heart and mind. You must rise up, break those lies, renew your mind and begin to prophesy the blessings of the good land. The good land is not just for others; it is for you!

Believe what God is saying to you in this hour. I believe that

by faith you can inherit the promises, rest, joy, peace, favor, glory and all the great things that belong to us as a result of inheriting the land. The land does belong to you as a child of God. It is a spiritual inheritance. It is a spiritual land that belongs to you. And you can have it by faith if you understand what the land is, what it represents and how we possess it in Christ.

I believe God wants you to live in the good land to enjoy His blessings and promises that are in Christ. The more revelation and understanding you receive, the more you confess this and believe and walk in this. Whatever your current situation is, faith will turn your whole life around. Faith will cause you to move out of a place of poverty, stress and fear, and into a place of abundance, victory and favor.

Begin to confess this and believe it, appropriating it by faith. Rise up. Come out of bondage. Come out of the wilderness. Come out of that dry place. Get into the good land and dwell there all the days of your life. {eoa}

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