

## **Joshua 14–Covenant Rewards for Faithfulness: National & Individual**

Delitzsch, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Gill, Geneva, JFB, Poole, Trapp, Henry, Bezuyen, Maclaren, Calvin, Clarke,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There are many citizens who believe the government should guarantee everything they need from the cradle to the grave. They argue for affordable housing, subsidized heat, free wi-fi, subsidized public transit, and subsidized universal daycare from 6 weeks of age. They believe that by virtue of being a citizen or a permanent resident they are entitled to these things.

In Israel's case, rewards were always accompanied by duties – both on a national level and on an individual level. You will hear about these duties and rewards today.

Our headings are:

**National Covenant Rewards for Duties**

**Individual Covenant Rewards for Duties**

Our goals are: **That you will see how God rewards both the nation and individuals for faithfulness in their work, but at the same time, that you will see that when God rewards you, he is equipping you to continue your future work.**

### **National Reward for Duties Fulfilled**

1 These are the areas which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel distributed as an inheritance to them.

**1. God rewarded Israel for their faithfulness by giving them much of the land of Canaan. That generation was godly as opposed to the generation that left Egypt. They trusted in God's promises and defeated their enemies. To help in the distribution of the land, the leaders of Israel from both the religious and political realms participated.** Eleazar, represented the priests. Joshua represented the state. The leaders of the tribes represented the people. The plurality of leaders from various tribes was essential to remove any arguments of favoritism or privileges to friends by the religious or political leaders.

**You too have received an inheritance – a far greater inheritance – because Christ defeated the Devil for you.**

Ephesians 1:11 In Him also we have **obtained an inheritance**, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the **counsel of His will**,

**Psalms 47:4 He will choose our inheritance for us**, The excellence of Jacob whom He loves.

John 17:2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, **that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.**

**And isn't it wonderful to have a plurality of elders to govern New Horizon church today?**  
What a blessing! God did not save you and then abandon you to figure things out yourself. He

appointed godly leaders over you. How sad for churches that have all men equal in authority and no leaders to carry out discipline! (Congregational). Other churches err by having one pope-like figure ruling over his own fiefdom. (Hierarchy)

**But keep in mind that this allotted land was not the end.** God was equipping Israel with what they needed to continue to fight that was ahead.

2 Their inheritance was by lot, as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe.

**2. While there was a plurality of qualified men to oversee the distribution of the land, they all took their orders to distribute the land from the Lord.** God gave them their direction by lots.

**Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap, But its **every decision is from the LORD.**

Using “lots” removed any further question of prejudice. The Jews would understand that whatever reward they got was because of the hand of the Lord.

**Proverbs 18:18 Casting lots causes contentions to cease, And keeps the mighty apart.**

**Today you can compare “lots” to the Word of God.** The Word of God is more specific and detailed, of course, and forms the ground for any action any individual, leaders in the church or leaders in the state may make. This implies each one must know God’s Word well.

3 For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no inheritance among them. 4 For the children of Joseph were two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. And they gave no part to the Levites in the land, except cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for their livestock and their property. 5 As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land.

**3. Even though the Levites did not have a specific tribal home as part of their reward, they were assigned land in the midst of all the tribes.** The Levites served as a unifying order among all the tribes. They were the glue. Every tribe showed its obedience to the Lord by providing adequately for the Levites. All the priests were from the tribe of Levites and the other Levites assisted the priests in their supplication and sacrifice work.

**The obvious application is that you remember to provide food and honor** to those who are your spiritual leaders. **But there is an obligation to ministers.** Every part of the world needs the Gospel. Surely parts of Canaan did have not good weather, or good soil, or access to good water, but the Levites had to go there and work. Similarly, there may be people in unlikeable places, but those people needed the Gospel as well. Missionaries must go there too.

**4. God replaced the Levites with Manasseh, the son of Joseph in order to make up 12 tribes. The younger son, Ephraim was chosen by Jacob to take Joseph’s place. (Genesis 48)** What is interesting is that Manasseh, who was named for the tribe of Levite, was the largest tribe with more land. It was a deliberate honor. It emphasized the importance of the work of the priests.

## **Individual Reward for Duties Fulfilled**

6 Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: "You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea. 7 "I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart. 8 "Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the **heart of the people melt**, but I **wholly followed the LORD my God**. 9 "So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, **because you have wholly followed the LORD my God**.'

**1. God had promised Joshua and Caleb special rewards for faithfulness in their duties when they spied out the land of Canaan 45 years earlier with 10 other spies. They showed their faithfulness by remembering God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and encouraging Israel to go and fight for Canaan despite seeing the warriors there.** The other 10 spies became cowards when they saw the mighty warriors and made a bad report which made the hearts of the people of God fearful. Caleb and Joshua called on the people to "follow the Lord." "Follow the Lord" was a metaphor taken from a ship under sail carried strongly with the wind, fearing neither rocks nor sands. That was how Joshua and Caleb followed the Lord.

Numbers 13:30 Then **Caleb quieted the people before Moses**, and said, "Let us go up at once and **take possession**, for we are well able to overcome it." 31 But **the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people,** for they *are* stronger than we." 32 And they **gave the children of Israel a bad report** of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a **land that devours its inhabitants**, and all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature.

Look at the promise that God made that Caleb was claiming!

Numbers 14:24 "But My servant Caleb, **because he has a different spirit in him** and has **followed Me fully**, I will bring into **the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.**

**Faithless ministers will fill their congregation with faithlessness, but those who know the great and rich promises of God will not be bogged down by the challenges of this life.** They know that if God says they ought to do something, they need not fear. They will preach truth. This is true for you fathers as well.

**2. But only after the tribes had relative comfort did the old Caleb, now 85, come to ask for the land that God promised him.** He notably came with men of Judah in order to instruct them in God's faithfulness to his promises and to encourage them to trust this faithful God as he did.

**A good man saves up for his family and doesn't squander his property.** And on a spiritual level, you fathers and mothers would do well to remind their children of their heavenly inheritance promised to them at their baptism and that they would not disregard it or treat it with contempt.

10 "And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. 11 "As yet I am as

strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.

**3. Notice how Caleb recognized that it was not only that God made the promises to him, but that God had preserved him for 45 years in order that he might receive God's promises.** He understood Reformed theology. Yes, Caleb was a Calvinist. He knew about preservation of the saints, physically and spiritually by God's almighty power. He knew that because of the Lord's mercy he was not consumed! For even though he had God's promises he had broken covenant and deserved nothing.

**And will not God preserve his people through all the trials of life and bring them to heaven at the appointed time? And wasn't it the covenant faithfulness and covenant punishment of Jesus the means by which you are saved?** Simply put: If you build your life on God's promise in Jesus Christ, you are guaranteed a better future.

12 "Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. **It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out** as the LORD said."

**4. Even then, Caleb did not ask for an easy life. He asked for the mountain where the mighty warriors (the Anakim) were still living.** He was ready to fight them to get the land. This way, Israel could not say that they captured the land for Caleb, but that God did. And yet, he acknowledged that it may be that, while God promised the land to him, he might not be able to get it in his lifetime. He knew that some times he had to wait on God's timing. Such humility!

13 And **Joshua blessed him**, and **gave Hebron to Caleb** the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.

**5. So Joshua blessed him and gave him the land for which he asked.** And in order to confirm which land was Caleb's, the Lord reiterated it through the writer.

14 **Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb** the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. 15 And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim). Then the land had rest from war.

**6. But there is something noticeable here:** Hebron, the main place that belonged to Caleb, means "fellowship," or "communion." But don't think that the place was named Hebron at that time. According to historians and 1Chronicles 2, Hebron was possibly the name of Caleb's son or grandson. It was named Kirjath Arba at the time...which emphasized human accomplishments. So Caleb changed the name to "fellowship" with God.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him and make Our home with him.**"

1John 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Worship must be the center of your life. If it isn't, it is time to change.

**Even more interesting is this:** After Caleb captured his land, **he took Hebron, that prized city, and gave it to the Levites.** He wanted worship to be central to his people. He lived in humbler towns. I hope you can see the implication for you here. **This is what “redeeming the culture” means. You are to make servants of the entire world.**

### **Conclusion:**

Israel was well rewarded with much land by God for their faithfulness in fighting their foes in Canaan. This land was fairly distributed. Individuals were also rewarded – Caleb in particular. He was rewarded for his faithfulness for 45 years. But even with the rewards for Israel and for Caleb, they had to use their gifts to continue the fight to capture Canaan, the land from which the capturing of world would begin.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**God wants the church to be united and work well together to advance his cause, like the 2 ½ tribes worked with the 9 ½ on the west side of the Jordan.**

In order to do this, **God has provided everything the church needs for that job.** So use his gifts.

**Leaders and members must work well together, knowing that we are one body in Jesus Christ,** and work to advance that kingdom.

**At the same time, individual have individual gifts from God.** Some are leaders, so are teachers, some are given to prayer, some to being evangelists, and some are showers of kindness.

**Seriously ask yourself this: What is your gift and how are you using it?** Every Christian has some gift. Know yours. Develop it. And then work to advocate for Christ's kingdom.

Finally, only those who are Christ's will share in his blessings. His enemies he will destroy. If you want the blessings of Jesus Christ, ask him. He paid for it already. It is free for you. If you ask, he will put your sins on his body on the cross and share with you eternal life.