

Joshua 16:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.

Analysis

This verse records Ephraim's failure to complete God's command, introducing the pattern of partial obedience dominating Judges. The phrase 'they drave not out' (lo horishu, לֹא הָרִישׁוּ) indicates willful failure—they could have but didn't expel the Canaanites. Gezer remained Canaanite until Solomon's time (1 Kings 9:16). The compromise 'serve under tribute' (mas-oved, מַעֲבֵד) means forced labor—Ephraim enslaved rather than destroyed the Canaanites, violating God's command (Deuteronomy 7:1-5). This pragmatic compromise prioritized economic benefit over obedience, leading to spiritual disaster. The phrase 'unto this day' (ad hayom hazeh, אֶת יוֹם הַזֶּה) indicates this situation persisted when Joshua was written. From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates how partial obedience is disobedience—tolerating what God commanded destroyed inevitably corrupts. The pattern intensifies in Judges where incomplete conquest led to intermarriage, idolatry, and cycles of apostasy-judgment-deliverance.

Historical Context

Gezer was a strategic Canaanite city controlling the coastal plain approaches to Jerusalem. Archaeological excavations reveal continuous Canaanite occupation through Israel's early history, confirming Joshua's account. The city finally came to Israel as dowry when Pharaoh conquered it and gave it to his daughter, Solomon's wife (1 Kings 9:16). Ephraim's compromise began Israel's pattern of peaceful coexistence with Canaanites contrary to God's command. Judges 1 catalogs similar

failures across tribes: Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali all failed to drive out inhabitants, choosing tribute over destruction. These compromises led directly to the apostasy cycles in Judges and Israel's eventual exile.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What 'Canaanites' (tolerating sins, compromising obedience) have you enslaved rather than destroyed?
2. How does pragmatism (economic benefit, convenience) tempt you toward partial obedience rather than complete surrender?
3. What consequences of past partial obedience are you experiencing 'unto this day'?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא יָשַׁב בְּגִזְעָן אֲתָה הַוֹּר יְשַׁעַת בְּכִנְעָן יְשַׁבֵּן
H3808 And they drove not out H3423 H853 but the Canaanites H3669 H3427 in Gezer H1507 H3427

בְּקָרְבָּן יְמִינְךָ אַפְכָּן עַד כִּי יְמִינְךָ בְּקִנְעָן
but the Canaanites H3669 among H7130 the Ephraimites H669 H5704 unto this day H3117 H2088 H1961

לְמַס עַבְדָּה
under tribute and serve
H4522 H5647

Additional Cross-References

Judges 1:29 (Parallel theme): Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

1 Kings 9:16 (Parallel theme): For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife.

Joshua 17:13 (Parallel theme): Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

1 Kings 9:21 (Parallel theme): Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day.

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