

Joshua 17:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong.

Analysis

The mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down—Joshua's solution: work hard and trust God. The verb bara (ברא, 'to cut down/clear') means intensive labor. The forested hill country required clearing before settlement, but it would be theirs. **Thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots** affirms divine enablement supersedes military technology.

This verse balances human responsibility ('cut it down') with divine promise ('thou shalt drive out'). Faith without works is dead (James 2:17)—they must labor, but God guarantees victory. The 'though' clause eliminates their excuse: iron chariots don't nullify God's covenant.

Historical Context

Hill country forestland was less desirable initially but offered security and resources. Clearing forests for agriculture was grueling work in Bronze Age Palestine, requiring iron tools ironically obtained from defeated Canaanites. This prepared Israel for eventual dominance.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What hard work is God calling you to while promising ultimate success beyond your ability?
2. How does this verse challenge both passivity (waiting for God to act) and self-reliance (trusting your own strength)?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	רַ	בְּ	רִ	כִּי	יְהִי	לְ	כִּי	עָרָ	כִּי	אֵ	הַ
H3588	But the mountain	H2022	H1961	H0	H3588	shall be thine for it is a wood	H3293	H1931			
וְ	בָּ	רָאַתָּ	וְ	יְפִי	הַ	לְ	תִּצְאַת	וְ	כִּי		
				H1961	H0		and the outgoings	H3588			
								H8444			
תּוֹךְ	וְ										
of it	shall be thine	for thou	shalt drive	out							
H3423				H853							
כִּי	כִּי	בְּ	כִּי	אֶת							
כִּי	כִּי	בְּ	כִּי	אֶת							
the	Canaanites										
H3588											
כִּי	לְ	כִּי	לְ	כִּי	לְ	כִּי	לְ	כִּי	לְ	כִּי	לְ
though	they have	iron		H0	H3588	and though they be strong	H2389	H1931			
H1270											

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:6 (Parallel theme): So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Romans 8:37 (Parallel theme): Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Romans 8:31 (Parallel theme): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Joshua 15:9 (Parallel theme): And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim:

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org