

Gatekeepers: Asher

A Teaching by Ron Brown

“Your bars shall be iron and bronze, and as your days, so shall your strength be.” Deuteronomy 33:25 (ESV)

In Ezekiel 48 we find a passage about the 12 tribes of Israel and city gates relating to each one of the tribes. There were three tribes stationed at each of the gates—North, South, East, and West—and each one of them had a specific purpose in Ezekiel’s vision. When the gatekeepers are there, when they’re at their post and they’re doing their job, the last words of the book of Ezekiel says, “The Lord is there.” It talks about when everybody’s on their post and when everybody’s being the gatekeeper and fulfilling their responsibility that the Lord is there. There is a unity and an order in the structure and God’s government comes to bear—and the Lord is there.

As I was thinking about that, it reminded me of how we want the Lord to be here at Teen Challenge of Southern California. I started thinking about what the implications are for this passage of scripture for us in our gatekeeping role, as gatekeepers of this ministry, as gatekeepers for the kingdom of God. And so the next few times that we’re together, we’re going to look at each one of the tribes and see what the blessing was that they received from Moses.

The Asher Anointing Brings Happiness and Strength

In Deuteronomy 33, we find the blessing of Moses that was spoken prophetically over each one of the tribes—that they had a prophetic destiny and a prophetic purpose. So when you look at each one of the tribes having a place of watching on the gates and I think of their name and their blessing, there is something we can glean from that for ourselves. From each one of those tribes, there are some lessons for us based on what God was doing through their lives.

I want to look at the blessing of Asher first. In Deu-

teronomy 33:24–25 we find the blessing that Moses gave to the tribe of Asher. It reads: “Of Asher he said, ‘More blessed than sons is Asher; may he be favored by his brothers, and may he dip his foot in oil. Your locks will be iron and bronze, and according to your days, so will be your strength.’” That’s the blessing that was pronounced on Asher and there’s a number of things that we could look at from what I’m terming the “Asher Anointing” under the whole title of the “Gatekeepers’ Anointing.”

The word Asher means to be happy, to be prosperous, to be honest, called to be blessed and called to be happy, because when Leah gave birth to Asher, she was very joyful and very happy. And so his name literally means “to be made happy” or “the blessing of happiness.”

The last part of verse 25 says, “According to your days, so will be your strength.” When you’re laboring and you’re working under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, there is always a continual strength so we need to stay in alignment. And this is where most of my remarks will come from today—about how to walk in the strength of the Lord as a gatekeeper because there are many things that come to rob your strength, to steal your vigor, and to keep you from being fully focused on the mission at hand. And so there’s a number of things that we can glean from the Asher Anointing but I want to focus on the strength.

One of the things that I noticed on a recent trip was people asking me, “Do you get tired?” I was gone for three weeks and I ministered for 17 days out of those three weeks, many times more than once a day, and God kept my strength. I stayed healthy, I didn’t get sick. I would be on my feet for hours and hours and hours praying for people and several of the pas-



Stirrings—inspired by 2 Timothy 1:6, Amplified Version—is an abridged summary of devotionals and leadership teachings by Ron Brown, Executive Director of Teen Challenge of Southern California. They are presented at regular meetings of the TCSC Leadership Team as part of its commitment to excellence, personal growth, and spiritual vitality. The complete audio is available at <http://www.teenchallenge.org/stirrings>.



tors said, "How do you do this? You are twice my age but I see you're able to stand here and do this all day long and come back the next day, chipper and smiling and ready to go again." And I began to tell them, when you're under the anointing, and you're moving in prophetic destiny in the assignment that God's given you and you don't get out of alignment with that, there is a strength that goes with it. So "as your days are, so shall be your strength." God kept up my strength because this is what he anointed me to do for him at this time.

Staying in Alignment Brings Strength

In a similar way there's an anointing that is on each one of your lives today for the work that God has given you. It's very important that you stay in alignment with what God has anointed you to do so that you're able to walk in strength, so that you don't get into health problems and all kinds of health issues because you're getting into things that steal your strength. We'll talk a little bit more about that in just a moment.

But as your days are, so shall be your strength. Psalm 37:18-19 says, "The Lord knows the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever. They will not be ashamed in the time of evil, and in the days of famine they will have abundance" (NASB).

If we are in alignment with God's purposes, if we are functioning under the anointing that God has placed us in, then even though there might be days of famine, there may be days of difficulty, we will have abundance of strength, we will have abundance of power to fulfill what God has said, and also the provision for what God has ordained will be upon us. Also in Psalm 39:4-5 it says, "Lord, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am. Behold, you have made my days as handbreaths, and my lifetime as nothing in your sight. Surely every man at his best is a mere breath" (NASB).

Our lives are so transient and they're so short. They're like a vapor. We cannot afford to be out of alignment with God's

Stay in alignment with what God has anointed you to do so that you're able to walk in strength.

will and purpose for us because we have such a short amount of time to fulfill what God has ordained for our lives. So it's wise of us if we stay in contact with the Holy Spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us because there are people who come into your life who will steal all of your strength. You'll end up pouring your strength into other people and you will not have strength to give to people whom God has actually assigned to you to minister and to disciple because there are other people in your life who've taken all your energy.

Rick Warren said something at our district council this year that stuck with me. He said that everybody has the same amount of hours every day but not everybody has the same amount of energy. And he said you have to be careful that you're spending your energy on the things that God has ordained for you to spend your energy on. We all have the same number of hours but we all don't have the same amount of strength and if you waste your strength on things that are not feeding your purpose and feeding your destiny then you're going to come up short and it won't be because God played a trick on you. It will be because we were not wise and discerning enough on how to use our little breath of life and the energy that he gives us to fulfill his greatest call and his greatest purpose.

Be careful that you're spending your energy on the things that God has ordained for you to spend your energy on.

Psalm 90:12 and 14 says, "So teach us to number our days, that we may present to you a heart of wisdom....O satisfy us in the morning with your lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days" (NASB). God wants us to be glad all our days. Remember, I said that one of the definitions of Asher is to be glad or to be happy and so the Lord wants us to sing for joy and to be glad all of our days. As a gatekeeper, if we walk in this Asher Anointing then we should have a joy and we should have a strength and there should be a gladness about our lives because we are functioning in what God has for us to do. Now we all know that there are mundane and routine things that go along with leadership. Those are just some of the management things that we have to do as a function of our work. God will give us the energy to do those things too as long as we spend the greater part of our energy doing those things that really feed our central purpose and our central focus that God has given to us.

Praying in the Spirit Brings Anointing

It also says in this Asher Anointing, "May he dip his foot in oil." Oil represents the anointing in the way that I'm presenting it today so our feet need to be dipped in the anointing every day, moment by moment, and it will keep tiredness and weariness from overtaking us. How do we keep our foot dipped in the anointing? We need to pray in the Spirit every day. Jude verse 20 says "Build yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit" (NASB). So if you're not praying in the Spirit every day, you are missing out on an opportunity to dip your foot in the anointing, to stir up the gift of God that is in you.

Paul told Timothy, "Stir up the gift of God that you've received" (KJV). That gift is inside of us and we have to stir

that gift. And one of the ways that you to stir up the gift of God in you is by praying in the Spirit, praying in the Holy Ghost, praying in tongues. It is very important to do that. It causes your mind and your spirit to be alive to God so that you're able to hear his voice more clearly. Romans 8:26 says we don't know how to pray as we ought to but the Holy Spirit joins with our spirit and prays the will of God. And so praying in the Spirit I think is one of the ways to keep our feet dipped in the oil of anointing and we can walk in that Asher Anointing in that part of the gate that God has called us to keep.

The Anointing Brings an Ability to Work

The purpose of the anointing is to give us the ability to do work. That's what the anointing is for. The anointing is God's ability, supernaturally, to do work for him. Jesus said in Luke 4:18 that the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon me, he's anointed me to preach the gospel, for what? To do! To heal the sick and open blind eyes, and to set free those who are captive. We have a lot of folks who come to us who are captive. We have a lot of people who come to us who are blind. We have a lot of people who come to us who are lame by all of the things that addiction has stolen from them. We need to have our foot dipped in oil. We need to have the anointing of the Holy Spirit and all of our staff does too so that we are able to work the works of God and see people set free.

Acts 1:8 says that when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, he'll give you the power to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the othermost parts of the Earth. The purpose of the anointing is to do work. It's not just to sit around and say, "Oh, aren't you anointed today?" Well, the way we know you are anointed is that you're doing something that is making a difference. You're doing something that is separating people from bondage and into wholeness.

Acts 10:38 says how Jesus Christ of Nazareth was anointed with the Holy Ghost and power and he went about doing good, healing all who were oppressed of the devil for God was with him. So the anointing is for us to do work. And so part of the Asher Anointing is that we can walk in the Holy Spirit and we can do the works of God that God has ordained for us to do and make a tremendous difference and not get buried with weariness and tiredness from the mundane drudgery of all of the tasks that are set before us on a daily basis.

God's Anointing Brings Wisdom

So what do we need to do? We need to make sure that we discern which works are ordained for us and the season for those works. And that's one of the things that we're doing. We're looking at Jubilee year as we're setting the course for the next season of productivity for the ministry of Teen Challenge of Southern California. We're saying "God, what is your

season? What are we supposed to do now? For 50 years you've been faithful and brought us to this place. Where do we go from here?" We need to make sure that we are hearing from God so that we are moving in step and in time with him so that we are walking in the anointing. We need to know when a door has closed and when to move on—when the glory cloud has departed.

Sometimes the glory cloud has departed from some of the things that we do so we should not say, "Well, we've always done it this way" or "We keep doing the same kind of outreaches because these are the same things that we've done for the last 30 years." But perhaps God has something new we're supposed to do. So we need to be open and discerning to make sure that we're moving in step with God so that his anointing rests on us. We must be people of prayer, I just mentioned that, led by the Holy Spirit to know what to say yes to and what to say no to because people always are coming with some idea that they want to present to us, of how they want to help us, or how they want us to help them and those things will bog you down. They will steal your time.

You'll get to the end of your day and you'll ask "What did I get accomplished today?" because you are answering phone calls and e-mails from people who were just sucking all of your energy away from you and they were accomplishing absolutely nothing but distracting you from God's purpose. So you need to pray so the Holy Spirit will put a guard around your eyes and your ears and your mind so that you make good decisions and stay out of unfruitful relationships that steal your energy and then you don't have any energy left to do what you're really supposed to be doing. We need to stay in step with the Holy Spirit so that we will not fulfill the flesh.

Don't Give Birth to Dead Works

Galatians says we are to walk in the Spirit so we don't fulfill the lusts of the flesh. If we don't stay in the Spirit then our flesh can take over. We can start getting angry. If you look at those works of the flesh in Galatians 5—anger, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness. All those kinds of issues will begin to take over in our lives if we do not walk in the Spirit or stay in step with the Spirit. I believe that part of the Asher Anointing is to stay full of the Holy Ghost so that you're walking in the presence of God and you don't fulfill the lust of your own flesh. We become ambitious and just start doing stuff. We say, "That's a great idea, we can do all of this," and we get into all of this ambitious stuff that may not be what God is wanting us to do at all. So we have to make sure that we are staying in step with

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the Holy Spirit so we don't fulfill the lust of our flesh.

When we think about the lust of the flesh, we always think about certain sins that we can get into our flesh by trying to do good stuff. If it's not what God has given us to do, it is vanity, it is flesh, it is dead works and we should not allow ourselves to be in the position to give birth to dead works that

If you have given away your gatekeeper responsibility to someone else, your gate has been left untended.

God is not involved in. So that's why we have to say to God, "Fill me, teach me, lead me, and guide me." We have to know when to let people go. We need

to know when their season is over. It keeps us from giving time to those whom God has assigned to us, who really need our attention.

Sometimes we hold onto people because we're familiar with them, they've been there a long time, and sometimes they just might need the transition. And so we need to be aware of what's happening on our team, in our team, and in the organization at all times because sometimes we can guilt people into staying longer than they should because we tell them how much we need them and that they need to stay here when God might really be stirring their heart to transition them. And so we just need to be wise and discerning so we get the best kind of advice and the best kind of insight and input into people's lives. They are a treasure and a trust that God has given to us.

Many times when folks come out of TCMI, they come on our team, they do some very valuable stuff. But perhaps they were only supposed to be there for a season. They were not supposed to be there for the rest of their lives. And they start getting a stirring, they start getting restless. You see their work performance start dropping off and they start coasting and they've checked out. They're really no longer there. We need to engage these folks and help them find their place in the body so that they can be productive and we can continue to move in step with the Holy Spirit and not just try to drag people along who really are not supposed to be there.

Gatekeepers Must Make Wise Decisions

Know when and what can and cannot be delegated to others. There are certain things that we have responsibility for as gatekeepers that you cannot delegate to someone else. As valuable as they are, as important as they are, as gifted as they are, there are certain things that as the gatekeepers of the ministry that God has given you responsibility for, you cannot delegate. If we get into a pattern of coasting ourselves and doing things that we are comfortable with ourselves, we can get into a pattern where we actually end up delegating the

things that we need to have primary focus and primary charge over. So we need to know what we can and cannot delegate and what we should and should not delegate so that we're not giving away our gatekeeper responsibility. Because remember, the people at the gate are the ones who allow everything into the city.

In the revelation of the church that the Lord gave to Peter in Matthew 16, he said that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. So there is a warfare that we're in. Deuteronomy 33:24–25 says of Asher, "More blessed than sons is Asher; may he be favored by his brothers, his feet will be dipped in oil. Your locks will be iron and bronze." He's saying that the locks on your gate will be iron and bronze. In other words, we are to have a security at our gates. And if you have given away your gatekeeper responsibility to someone else, your gate has been left untended, and that is a dangerous thing because you can give wisdom and insight and make decisions where someone else can't because of the anointing that is on you.

Yes, you have experience, you have wisdom because of your experience, but beyond that, there is an anointing that God has placed on you and that's why he has placed you in the position that you are in. You are anointed for the position that you are in. And so there are anointed decisions that come from you that nobody else can make but you. And if you give away that authority, you're going to leave your gate unattended and the enemy will be able to start getting in and suddenly bring in division and all kinds of stuff to your team. Know what you can and cannot delegate.

Also know when God is bringing a new season. Know when there is a new wineskin that God is bringing. Maybe he wants to bring new wine because the form or the structure of what we did before is not appropriate for this season. We have to know when there is a new wineskin that God is trying to bring forth.

Ministry Brings a Parenting Anointing

It's also very difficult to correct illegitimate sheep. Hebrews 12 says that God is our father and the father disciplines his sons. Disciplines his children. Sometimes we're trying to discipline folks that God has not given to us and that can be very, very frustrating. When you have people who come—we have a lot of volunteers, we have a lot of people who are all around this ministry—and if you try to discipline them it can be very frustrating. You don't go across the street and discipline your neighbor's kids. You just don't do that because you didn't father them. You discipline your own kids.

There are a lot of folks who can get attached to you who you didn't father. There are people who we inherit, but God can give us a fathering and mothering heart, a parenting heart for

them. But there are some people who don't accept your heart. They haven't bought into your leadership and so you are trying to correct people who you have no fathering or parenting authority over and those sheep—I call them illegitimate sheep—but those sheep can end up stealing a lot of your time, a lot of your effort, and they're going to end up hating you for trying to correct them because they don't belong to you. But God will give you eyes to see so that you will know who belongs to you, so that you will know who you are supposed to be correcting and laboring with until they come to the full measure of the stature of Christ.

That's really what the fivefold ministry from Ephesians 4 is—it's a parenting anointing. The apostle/prophet/evangelist/pastor/teacher is fathering anointing because the purpose of it is so that everyone grows up into the full measure of the stature of Christ with every joint supplying what they're supposed to supply. So the purpose of fivefold ministry is for parenting. And so there's a parenting anointing on you because of your call of God. Because of the ministry position that you're in, you have a parenting anointing. Make sure that you're parenting the right folks.

Drive Out the Enemy!

When you look at the Asher Anointing, there were some enemies that Asher did not drive out (Judges 1). Remember when they went into the Promised Land they had to dispossess the land before they could fully inherit their land. Many of the tribes didn't want to fight and they didn't follow through on dispossessing all of the enemy that God had told them to and Asher was one of those tribes that didn't fully dispossess the land and they ended up serving and living among Canaanites.

Judges 1:31 says, "Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob. So the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out" (NASB).

When we talk about the Asher Anointing and being a gatekeeper and we talk about something that we can glean from the blessing of Moses on the life of Asher, I think that we need to look at these enemies that they did not drive out and what they mean. I believe every word that God speaks he's spoken on purpose and that it wasn't just to fill up the page. When I look at these names, there is significance as to why God put them in here so if we don't dig those things out and take a look at it, we can just miss and say that it's just background noise—and God doesn't put background noise in the book. Every word that he puts in here, he measures and his words are powerful and so every word that he speaks, he speaks it on purpose, for purpose. There are many levels of meaning and understanding that are there that the Holy Spirit

will lead us to because Jesus said the Holy Spirit will come and lead and guide us into all truth. And so it's interesting sometimes to look at some of those names and what they mean.

I think about David. When you look at the life of David, I think there are 57 or 58 chapters of the Bible dedicated to his life. Now, it's a nice history lesson to look at what God did but I believe that those 57–58 chapters have so much to say about leadership and how God works and God's ways. He wasn't just giving us a history lesson on David but there's a whole lot of stuff that he wanted us to learn and that's why he put those things in there. So I looked up those names of these people, groups that Asher did not drive out.

Don't Have a Mindset of Limitation

The first one mentioned that Asher did not drive was the inhabitants of Acco. These are people that were on the portion of land that God had given to Asher. The word "Acco" means "to hem in," "to be put in a corner." You know how somebody can hem you into a corner so you can't get out? As I was thinking about this for us today, I think that stands for "having a mindset of limitation." We have to get rid of anything that would limit us from believing the greatest vision and the greatest plan that God has for us.

Ephesians 2:10 says that "We are...created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we would walk in them" (NASB). We should say "I want to walk in everything that God said he ordained for my life and I'm not going to be hemmed in by limitation, thinking 'I don't have the right education, I don't have the right connections, I don't have the right contacts, I don't have the right-this and right-that,'" and I begin to limit God, based on what I have in my hand.

God has made it clear that he can take what's in your hands and multiply it. Think about the little boy's lunch and the widow's oil

and so many other things.

God can take little and make much out of it, so don't

allow yourself

to have a mindset of limitation. We need to drive that out of our land completely so we are fully able to walk in the Asher Anointing and be the gatekeeper God's called us to be.

We have to get rid of anything that would limit us from believing the greatest vision and the greatest plan that God has for us.

Keep an Undivided Heart

The second one says they wouldn't drive out the inhabitants of Sidon. "Sidon" means "to lie in wait." It's the same word for when you're catching fish—you have to sit there and wait a long time to catch fish. Sidon was a descendant or a son of

Canaan. And so basically, we should not allow any remnants of anything that God has said shouldn't be on our land to stay there. I believe that this stands for motivations and intents of the heart.

We cannot allow anything impure because it will bring a spirit of mixture. Because this son, Sidon, was one of the sons of Canaan and this whole Canaanite worship brought a spirit of mixture to the Israelites and so they needed to get rid of

anything that would mix their devotion or cause their devotion, cause their heart to become

We can allow our vision and our desire to do something for God to overrule what the Holy Spirit is speaking.

divided in any way from fulfilling the purpose that God had for them. So we have to get rid of any kind of spirit of mixture. We have to check the motives of our heart, the intents of our heart, and we have to maintain purity and thought, purity in action, purity in deed so that we're able to fulfill God's greater plan.

Trusting in God Brings Strength

The next one, they did not drive out the inhabitants of Ahlab. This means "the richest or choice or most fertile part." It means "to be fat." For me, what came to my heart was that we need to trust God and not have a self-sufficient attitude. We can become fat in thinking that we know what we're doing and we do the same thing the same way because it seems like it's been working okay. Saying, "Well, there's a whole lot of folks who are a lot worse off than we are, so we're doing all right." And we can congratulate ourselves and become self-sufficient and become fat. We can become complacent and comfortable and not push forward for the new thing that God has for us because everything new that God brings, you're going to have to fight for it.

Paul summed up his entire ministry when he told Timothy that the Christian life is a big fight and there is no other Christian life. So fight the good fight of faith. We have to understand that when God speaks to us, when he begins to direct us, when he begins to lead us that we're going to have to fight to dispossess every adversary that's trying to keep us from moving into the fullness of what God has for us. We cannot allow ourselves to get fat and complacent.

Be People of Truth

The next one, he would not drive out the inhabitants of Achzib. That word means "deceitfulness, falsehood, treachery, liar, compromise, vanity." We must be people of truth and we cannot allow any deceitfulness in any of our practices, in the way that we do our business, in the way that we conduct the work

of the ministry. We cannot allow anything to creep in that will look like deceit or become deceitful in our own heart. We must be transparent. The light is on. Jesus said, "You're the light of the world, you're the city on the hill." We need to be very transparent and we need to check to make sure that all of our systems are functioning properly and that there's no ability for compromise and deceitfulness and falsehood or treachery to get into our midst because that will undercut the anointing on our lives and we won't be able to fulfill with strength all that God has for us.

Complacency Blocks God's Revelations

The next one: they would not drive out the inhabitants of Helbah. It's the same word, the same meaning as for Ahlab, which is "the richest or the choice of the fat or the fertile." Helbah has almost the same meaning and actually all the letters are all the same, they're just kind of transposed and it means "fertility" and anything that can block the revelation of God. When you become complacent, when you become self-sufficient, when you become fat, it blocks revelation from coming to you. And we need continually to have further revelation from the Lord in our lives.

There's a story in Genesis—remember when God told Abraham to leave his family, leave his country, to come follow him and he was going to take him to the Promised Land? Well, Abraham took Lot. He wasn't supposed to take Lot. God said to leave all of them, but Lot went with Abraham and in Genesis 13, there was a controversy that came up between Lot's herdsmen and Abraham's herdsmen because they were fighting over grazing territory. That was an indication that Lot wasn't supposed to be there because it caused all kinds of conflict. I think Abraham could have avoided that conflict if he'd left Lot at home.

And then in Genesis 13 we see Abraham realized that and he said, "Okay, Lot, we have to part ways." He said, "If you go left, I'm going right. If you go right, I'm going left. So you can choose whichever one you want." So Lot looked out over the land and he chose the most fertile, the greenest pasture. Abraham said, "Okay, you can have that. I'm going this way. I'll take the dry rugged land," because God had already spoken that he was going to bless Abraham. So it didn't matter what it looked like in the natural, God's blessing was going to be upon him. I think this is instructive for us.

When I looked at it—remember I said when we're fat and we're comfortable—I think there was a certain amount of comfort that Abraham had by having Lot around. He had a relative there. He had somebody that he could relate to and he was going into territory where he didn't know anyone so there was a certain amount of fatness, if you will, a certain amount of comfort and complacency by having Lot along.

But after they separated, Genesis 13:14 says, "The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, 'Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendents forever'" (NASB). Abraham was blocked from having further revelation of his destiny until he got rid of Lot.

If we hold on to people and situations that we shouldn't, it will block us from having further revelation of God's purposes. It wasn't until Lot had separated that God spoke to Abraham again and began to give him further instruction and further revelation about his destiny. So compromise will keep us from getting further revelation because we have to be led by the Spirit. We don't know everything. We plan in part, we know in part, we prophesy in part, we teach in part. Everything we do is in part because God gives us daily what we need. He gives us daily our daily bread. And so we have to make sure that there's no compromise that blocks us from further revelation of God's purposes so that we don't go and do something just because we can do it. But we need to do the God thing and not just the next thing. We need to make sure that we don't have that compromise in allowing that fatness in our lives.

Beware of Selfish Ambition

The next inhabitants the Israelites were to drive out was Aphik. That word means "fortress." It also means "to abstain or to restrain oneself." It also means "to restrain oneself, or to contain your strength." I believe that this represents that we need to be careful of selfish ambition. We can allow our vision and our desire to do something for God to overrule what the Holy Spirit is speaking and so even though we may feel that we're strong enough to do it and we may feel that we have all the right stuff to do it, is it what God has spoken? So we have to constrain ourselves. We have to hold back our strength. Sometimes your strength can be your biggest enemy because the thing that you think that you're good at, you can end up hurting yourself on. So whatever the thing is that we think is our strength, we must be careful that we do not allow that to overshoot what God has for us.

Narrow is the Way that Leads to Life

The last inhabitant mentioned that they wouldn't drive out was Rehob, and that word means "broad way." It means "avenue or area that has been broadened, to broaden your way and to make room for." Remember, narrow is the way that leads to life, broad is the way that leads to destruction. So we need to stay on the narrow way.

Proverbs 4:23 says, "Guard your heart with all diligence for out of your heart will flow the issues of your life." One translation of that verse says, "Guard your heart with all diligence because your life will expand to include what you meditate in your heart." So literally, your life will broaden to handle whatever it is you meditate in your heart. And so it's very important that we guard our heart with all diligence so that our way does not broaden out and we get involved in things that God has not ordained for us.

And so because they would not drive these folks off of the land, they ended up living among the Canaanites and they never really fully possessed their possession.

Be Blessed with Many Spiritual Children

So I think for us, looking back at the Asher Anointing again, in Deuteronomy 33, it says, "Of Asher." As Moses blessed him he said, "More blessed than sons." In other words, he says, "Be blessed with many children." I believe that speaks of the harvest that God's going to bring. He wants us to be fruitful and he wants us to have many sons and daughters.

"May he be favored by his brothers." I believe that favor, the favor of God, is a blessing of the Asher Anointing. "May he dip his foot in oil." That speaks of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. "Your locks will be iron and bronze." I think that speaks of success in spiritual warfare that God wants us to succeed in every battle that we're in and then, of course, as your days are, so shall be your strength.

God wants us to be strong and he wants us to live strong and he wants us to finish strong. And the way that we finish strong is when we labor under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and not under our own thoughts and our own stuff and let our flesh begin to lead the way.

