

Bible Commentary, Joshua

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Author: The Book of Joshua does not explicitly name its author. More than likely Joshua the son of Nun, the successor of Moses as leader over Israel, penned much of this book. The latter part of the book was written by at least one other person after the death of Joshua. It is also possible that several sections were edited / compiled following Joshua's death.

Date of Writing: The Book of Joshua was likely written between 1400 and 1370 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: The Book of Joshua provides an overview of the military campaigns to conquer the land area that God had promised. Following the exodus from Egypt and the subsequent forty years of the wilderness wanderings, the newly-formed nation is now poised to enter the Promised Land, conquer the inhabitants, and occupy the territory.

Brief Summary: The Book of Joshua continues the story of the Israelites after the exodus from Egypt. The book chronicles the approximately 20 years of Joshua's leadership of the people after Moses anointed him at the end of Deuteronomy. The twenty-four chapter divisions of the Book of Joshua can be summarized as follows:
Chapters 1-12: Entering and conquering the Promised Land.
Chapters 13-22: Instructions for distributing the portions of the Promised Land.
Chapters 23-24: Joshua's farewell address

Foreshadowings: The story of Rahab the harlot and her great faith in the God of the Israelites gives her a place with those honored for their faith in Hebrews 11:31. Hers is a story of God's grace to sinners and salvation by faith alone. Most importantly, by God's grace she was in the Messianic line (Ref. Matthew 1:5).

One of the ceremonial rituals of Joshua 5 finds its perfect fulfillment in the New Testament. Verses 1-9 describe God's commandment that those who were born in the wilderness were to be circumcised when they came into the Promised Land. By so doing, God "rolled away the reproach of Egypt" from them, meaning that He cleansed them

from the sins of their former life. Colossians 2:10-12 describes believers as having been circumcised in their hearts by Christ Himself, by whom we have put off the sinful nature of our former lives without Christ and put on the new man who is in Christ. God established cities of refuge so that those who accidentally killed someone could live there without fear of retribution. Christ is our refuge to whom we “have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us” Hebrews 6:18)

The Book of Joshua has an overriding theological theme of rest. The Israelites, after wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, finally entered the rest God had prepared for them in the land of Canaan. The writer of Hebrews uses this incident as a warning to us not to let unbelief keep us from entering into God’s rest in Christ (Hebrews 3:7-12).

Joshua is a prime example of the benefits of a worthy mentor. For years he remained close to Moses. He watched Moses as he followed God in an almost flawless manner. He learned to pray in a personal way from Moses. He learned how to obey through the example of Moses. Joshua apparently also learned from the negative example that cost Moses the joy of actually entering the Promised Land. If you are alive, you are a mentor. Someone, somewhere, is watching you. Some younger person or someone that you are influencing is seeing how you live and how you react. Someone is learning from you; it may only be that little girl or boy that you are trying to raise up in your household. Someone will follow your example. Mentoring is far more than the words that are spoken by the mentor. His or her entire life is on display.

Chapter 1, New Leadership

Joshua 1:1-5: “After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: **2** "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them--the children of Israel. **3** Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. **4** From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. **5** No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.”

Moses is dead and now God commissions Joshua for leadership of His people and tells them to prepare to go into the land I promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Joshua was afraid but God told him that he didn't need to fear, but to trust in the Lord. A lesson for Churches when they lose their leader either through death or sudden departure, is that they should always be moving forward and must never become stagnant or bitter about former leadership and Pastors should not be compared to the previous pastor.

Notice in Verse 4 of how God describes the boundaries of the land that He is giving to the Jews that include all the land of the Hittites; who were the Hittites. Though rather obscure in the scope of world history, the Hittite nation played an important role in the history of the Old Testament, and has since helped verify the accuracy of the Bible. For many years, archaeologists and historians knew nothing of the Hittites, and critics of the Bible treated the Hittites as proof of the “mythology” contained in the Bible. The critics reasoned that, since they had no archaeological evidence of a Hittite civilization, it must be that they never have existed, and the Bible must of course be wrong. However, many archaeological discoveries, beginning in 1876, have since proved that the Hittites were a powerful people in the 15th and 16th centuries B.C.

The Hittites are mentioned more than 50 times in the Bible. They were descended from Heth, the son of Canaan (and great-grandson of Noah, Ref. Genesis 10:15). They ruled the area of Syria and eastern Turkey and battled with Egypt and Babylon for territory. Babylonian and Assyrian records refer to Syria and Palestine as "Hatti-land,"

and Joshua 1:4 includes their territory as a great part of the Promised Land for Israel. Abraham was well acquainted with the Hittites, and he bought the burial cave for Sarah from them in Genesis 23. Esau took wives from among the Hittites, and Uriah the Hittite was one of David's mighty men (2 Samuel 11:3). The Hittites are mentioned throughout the kingdom years and even after the Jews' return from captivity (Ezra 9:1). It is assumed that the Hittites were eventually absorbed into the surrounding cultures and lost their distinctive identity. The religion of the Hittites was a pluralistic worship of nature. They believed in various gods over the elements of earth, sky, weather, etc., and these gods were often listed as witnesses on treaties and oaths. As in most other pagan societies, this nature worship led to despicable practices, which brought the wrath of the true God on them. When God delivered Canaan to the Israelites, one of the given reasons for destroying the inhabitants was to eliminate the pagan practices, which would ensnare God's people (Exodus 23:28-33). God didn't want His people following the idolatry of the Hittites nor any other race in the land of Canaan.

Now let's draw a correlation to the Hittites worshipping nature to religions today that do the same thing in worshipping nature which is considered Pantheism: These believe in the Sun as a god; they include Native Americans who worshipped nature before the Americas and some include Scientology as a Pantheistic religion as well.

Verse 5 said that "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." God is saying to Joshua I will not be an apostate (forsake religious cause), I will not leave you behind I will not neglect you. He says that exact same thing to the believer today. Some people are unhappy because they feel alone in the world; we need to stop telling ourselves that we are alone as Christian believers. It is indeed this unbelief that lead people into alcohol and drug abuse because they feel a sense of loss or purpose. Hebrews 13:5, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." The greatest relationship on this earth is not with your significant other, nor your children but the relationship with the Lord. Yet, many people spend little time cultivating that relationship and this is where true worship lies. Some people particularly unbelievers say "I have a problem establishing a relationship with someone I can't see" that's not the

issue at all. First of all God is very much alive and he is revealed clearly in His word and in nature itself (Ref. Psalm 19:1, 14:1), and if you chose to ignore the Word, you ignore the relationship.

Many people look for reasons to stay as miserable as possible because they want this world so bad that they will not allow God to deliver them. We should never look for excuses for not living the Christian life for by doing so we seek to live in despair, despondency, and in defeat. There are multitudes of people who look and say “well what about those people who are rich and live a happy life?” Well let me ask you this, why do so many of these people who seem to have material wealth become alcoholics, and drug addicts? Marvin Gaye who was one of my favorite singers had everything a worldly man would want; women riches and songs, but was addicted to cocaine; again Sammy Davis who had all the women, wine and song he could wish for yet he died due to alcohol and cocaine addiction. Lastly, Howard Hughes the richest man of his era and was a billionaire died as a lonely and destitute man; and the list goes on. The riches of this world are not the answer to your problems, but pursuit of spiritual wealth will be lasting and lead one to eternity. What I am trying to say is why didn't all their money save them or solve all their problems? Moreover, we talked some time ago about Donald Sterling the former owner of the Los Angeles Clippers who made a 2 billion dollar profit from the sale of that team. Many people said that he won the day in all of the racism that he harbors, but they are missing a very important point. If he doesn't have Jesus in his life, he doesn't have much. Let me say this also, when you are rich in Jesus Christ, you have a joy in your heart that no man can take away; no matter if you are in prison, no matter if you don't have a job, no matter if you don't have a dime in your pocket because through trouble times may come we as Christians know who to call upon even though he may not come when we want Him, He's always right on time. We also learn that in this world we all will go through trials and tribulations because these things refines us and brings us out of the fire appearing as pure gold and it is through this blessed hope that we keep on believing in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Joshua 1:6: “Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.”

Be strong and of good courage are command imperatives and these were not options. God would use Joshua to divide the land he swore to give the patriarchs.

Confidence in Jesus will remove all cowardice brought on by the circumstances of your life, giving you the courage to go and witness for Him; giving you the courage to stand still in the face of disasters; giving you the courage to understand that this world is not our home, for we are weary travelers on our way to our journey's end.

Joshua was not allowed to selective obedience; many Christians only want to obey portions of scriptures just as long as we don't have to give up any of our pet sins, and rebellious attitudes; selective obedience really is no obedience. \$\$

Joshua 1:7-8: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Not only was Joshua commanded to be strong, but he was to be exceeding courageous in the obedience of the Word of God and to keep a watch in his own life to obey the Law given to Moses. He was not to come to a period in his life when he would stop obeying God's Law. Now the word Prosper in vs 7 has absolutely nothing to do with money. It means to act prudently with incite and comprehension and walk circumspectly with God's wisdom. This context does not refer to the church nor has any land been promised to believers; it refers to Joshua, the nation of Israel and the conquering of the Land and nothing more; God's wisdom makes a person prosper in the way of life spiritually. Verse 8 is talking about this great Mosaic Law shall not depart from thy mouth, but instead you shall meditate on it, which meant to consider something at length, or to care about something or to ponder something as in Proverbs 15:28.....Meditation also means to reflect on the scripture, to study with great reason. Psalm 1, Psalm 77:11-12; Psalm 119:14....vs 23: vs 46..Psalm 143:5...We should love this Word and marvel and rejoice in what we read. Joshua was to meditate on the Word of God day and night; daily meditation.

One of the reasons people are in despair and bitterness, confusion and turmoil is because they fail to read the scriptures to understand the meaning of their lives and how to live it. People are to obey and follow the leaders that God has placed in the church and leaders are to lead and the people must follow according to God's Word. If the world, the devil and the flesh control your life, then the worthless fruits will come out in your behaviors as well.

Joshua was not allowed the privilege of selective obedience. God told him to take heed and to do all that was written. Joshua was to obey all of God's commands and not some and only then would he experience the incite, the wisdom in the military campaigns to capture the land of Canaan and experience all the blessings that came along with it. How sad it is today to see not only churches, but many Christians as well who obey some scriptures while disregarding others and this is because they just can't come to terms that God would declare things in the bible that their flesh just can't accept. Let's make an application: Some churches i.e. Ecclesiastical and prysbeterian are now accepting gay ministers and performing marriages in church no matter how God has frowned (mightily) on that fleshly behavior. Other churches such as Methodist now appoint women bishops, pastors and deacons (stewards) in their congregation even though God's Word gave qualifications to men only.

Joshua vs 9: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

As the Lord was with Moses, He would be with Joshua. As long as Joshua continued in the Word of the Lord and to follow diligently what was written, he would prosper. As Long as the Lord Jehovah was with Joshua he had no need to fear man, the circumstances nor the problems he would encounter in taking over the land.

What does that mean for us today? Hebrews 13:6NLT tells us "So we can say with confidence, "The LORD is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" Sure a person may be able to destroy your flesh, but the most important aspect of you that of your spirit, goes home immediately to be with the Lord where blessings abound (Ref. 2 Cor. 5:8)

Joshua 1:10-11: “Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, **11** "Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess.' ”

So Joshua took courage in the Lord and commanded the leaders and the people to prepare food for themselves for in 3 days, preparing them to go into the Land of Promise. There was no time to reminisce about Moses; no time to be fearful because he was dead, it was time to move embracing the leadership, God gave them and to go and take the land. People are to obey God and follow the leadership that He has placed in the church who are to lead. Joshua was not trying to win friends and influence people; he led as the true leader of God’s people.

Leadership doesn’t wait for people to vote on every matter involving the church, God is the Sheppard of the flock; he has ordained an under-shepherd to lead his flock that being the pastor. Example: If a church has a plurality of leaders, and know the mind and will of the Lord and are acting in unison in the plan and God’s will of leadership, then if one of the leaders dies, moves or is remove from that leadership role in the church, it should be able to elect a man to carry the work of the church no matter what. All God’s leader should endeavor to carry out God’s plan as a unified body and all the people in that congregation should be able to move forward. *Obeying God’s plan is key to successful leadership of the church. The church should be able to carry on the plan of God with the leader that God will choose and not the church. Why? Because God has given them the script by which to run the church and teach what thus saith the Lord through the Bible; it is just that simple.

Joshau 1:12-15: “And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying, "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, 'The Lord your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.' **4** Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, **15** until the Lord has given your

brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the Lord's servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise." This is a direct quote from Numbers 32:16-32 when these tribes asked for the land east of the Jordan, but Moses hearkened to them that it was not fair that their brothers go into battle while they stayed on the other side of the Jordan. Therefore, these tribes agreed to fight in the new land, afterwards they would go back and build their tribes on the East side of the Jordan.

Joshua 1:16-17: "And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. 17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.

It was refreshing for Joshua to know that these tribes were with him and to obey the promise they made to the Lord and to Moses. People didn't wince about his leadership or that it wasn't like Moses and that goes on in many places today. Have you experienced in your lifetime in your workplace where you had an outstanding leader and when he or she was replaced you looked upon the new leader with anxiety and trepidation? Any examples? Well let me tell you why people are initially anxious about new leadership. First they don't know in what direction the new leader is going to take them and people are generally apprehensive about change. However, when the new leader comes with assurance and not trying to make wholesale changes to the organization (making them subtly), then people will be less resistant to any changes the new leader may feel is needed.

This is what churches should do to new leadership that God places in their midst. No more reminiscing about the good old days of the former pastor, your previous leadership is gone and its time to choose and support God's leaders in the will of God.

Joshua vs 18: "Whoever rebels against your command and does not heed your words, in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good

courage."

This is another strong imperative from God. These tribes were to agree that if any individual was to show any rebellion, he was to be put to death; God tells Joshua again "be strong and of good courage." Followship if it is biblical will encourage it's leader or leaders to be strong, courageous and to be obedient for then and only then could they properly lead God's people. A good example of this is in a church setting is that a pastor should be complimented on occasion in regards to his sermon for by doing so gives him reassurance from the congregation that he has their support. When any leader has the support of the people that he or she has leadership over, then supervision and leading becomes easy and the leader can concentrate on other matters regarding the organization.

***Joshua chapter 1 is a great chapter on leadership.**

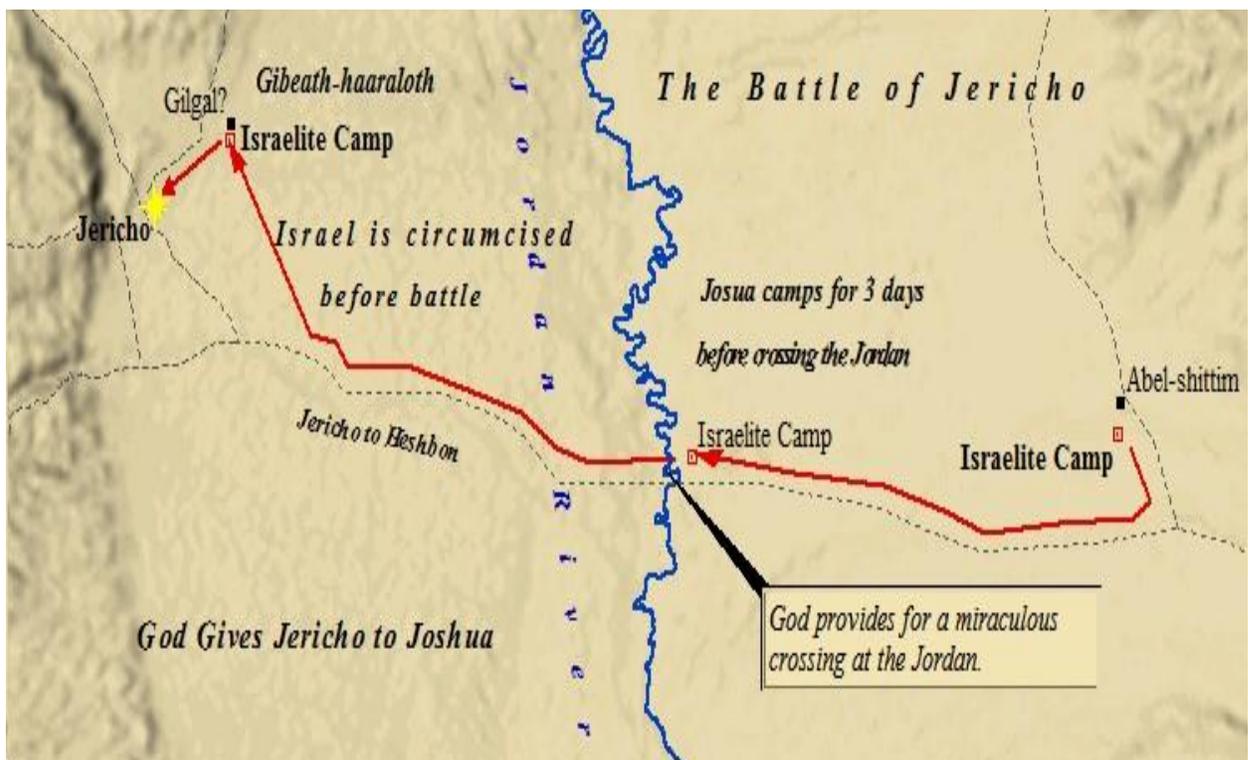


Figure 1-1, Israel's Journey to Jericho

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Chapter 2, Rehab and the Spies

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.

Joshua like Moses sent men out to look over the land. Some scholars have asked the question as to why would Joshua need to spy out the land since God had already promised him that the land would be Israel's? Many times when God blesses us, He also requires us to do something as well. A pretty simplistic example is this: Say a person needs a job and prays day and night for God to give him/her a job. If the person does not actively go out and seek a job, but chooses to say home and wait on the Lord, that's not going to work. There is an old saying: God is waiting on you to do what you are waiting for Him to do. Now, Let's remember that Joshua was a military leader and as such he was looking into the best way to enter into the land. The two spies went into the house of a harlot named Rehab. These men did not have any intention of any immoral acts, God sovereignly brought these men into her home because He knew she would believe in the God of Israel and use her in the lineage of Jesus Christ.

Joshua 2:2: "And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country."

No one knows how the king knew of the spies arrival. Probably some people in the town saw them go into Rehab's house.

Joshua 2:3: "And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country."

The order from the king was that Rehab bring out these spies that entered into her home for someone had seen these two men enter into her house and bought the report to the King. The king was indicating that they were spies. Rehab initially didn't know that

they were spies. The very thought of Israel entering the land was horrifying to the inhabitants due to the miracles that God had done to Sihon and Og and the incident at the Red Sea. Now, what were the incidents at Sihon and Og? We need to go to the book of numbers for the answer:

“**21** Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, **22** "Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into field or vineyard. We will not drink the water of a well. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory." **23** But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. He gathered all his people together and went out against Israel to the wilderness and came to Jahaz and fought against Israel. **24** And Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as to the Ammonites, for the border of the Ammonites was strong. **25** And Israel took all these cities, and Israel settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all its villages.”

King Og Defeated

31 Thus Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. **32** And Moses sent to spy out Jazer, and they captured its villages and dispossessed the Amorites who were there. **33** Then they turned and went up by the way to Bashan. And Og the king of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. **34** But the LORD said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hand, and all his people, and his land. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon." **35** So they defeated him and his sons and all his people, until he had no survivor left. And they possessed his land. Numbers 21:21-25 and 31-35.

As a result of the miracles in Egypt, the Red Sea and the defeat of two kings Sihon and Og, Israel's fame grew mightily throughout the region and we see why not only Jericho trembled with fear, but many other nations as we will see later, also feared Israel because of the Lord. That is what happens when a country or an individual allows God to fight their battles. However, many unbelieving nations and individuals chose to fight on their own seeking their own strength and wisdom to win battle and wars on their own and many times because it is either not God's will or because He is not with them, they lose.

Joshua 2:4-5: Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. **5** And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them."

Rehab said yes these two men came to my home, but where they came from I don't know neither do I know where they went. We should not use this narrative regarding Rehab to justify the sin of lying. Trying to use the scriptures to justify lying reveals the depths of man's depravity trying to bring a Holy God down to wickedness. Why did Rehab lie or did she? To protect the spies. Rehab did not know that these men were spies when they first came into her home. Look at verse 4 again..... Rehab only realized that these men were spies from what the king had said about them being spies. As far as she was concerned, they were just two men looking for a place to stay.

Joshua 2:6-17: (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) 7 Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate. 8 Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, and said to the men: "I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you"

"For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. 12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the Lord, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, 13 and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." 14 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the Lord has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you." 15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. 16 And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." 17 So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us

swear, 18 unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home.

We know that Sihon and Og were the two kings of the Amorites who were exterminated. These people of Jericho had enough information about the power of God yet refused to repent. They were in love with their idolatry and paganism so much so that the thought of any other type of religion would be too much to give up for them.

Rehab repented and was spared the wrath of God. Many people have sufficient information of the power of salvation and wrath of God to come yet they don't turn and accept Him as God and are destined to an even more infinite degree of suffering because of their disbelief in Him as they continue to walk away from this beautiful work of salvation. What is salvation in your opinion? It is deliverance from sin that's why God is called Jehovah-Yawah meaning divine salvation.

The knowledge of the men of Jericho of the power of the God of Israel literally took the breath away from them. They were useless, unrepentant and as a result they were a wayward people and continued to serve many idols. Rehab left her idols, immorality and her nation and believed God. Her renunciation of these idols, her immorality and her nation proved that her faith was real at that time. Rehab declared (vs. 11) that the God of Israel was God and it was her belief in this that actually spared her and her family.

In verse 12, if Rehab was to be faithful in not telling about the coming of the Lord against her nation, then the Lord would be faithful and spare her and her family. Notice that Rehab request kindness in vs 12; the Hebrew word "hessed" meaning God's loving kindness. The two spies told her that God would give her this kind of love when the Lord gives them Jericho.

The Lord also exacts a certain kind of love and kindness to his people today and that love is called "Agape" love. What is Agape love? It is a selfless kind of love; it is a love that gives itself in spite of who or what a person is, looks like or the color of their skin. It is God's kind of love and as his people, we should endeavor to exact that same kind of love to all those we come into contact with.

Rehab let the Israeli spies down by a rope through a window in her house because she lived on the town wall. Rehab tells the spies to get to the hill country before anyone finds them along the way and to hide three days in the hills until the return of the pursuers.

When Israel attacked Jericho, what would be the sign that Rehab was to be spared? A piece of scarlet thread displayed in the window of her house, yet all were to stay in the house and not leave during the battle. If anyone was to come out of the house and gets killed, Israel would be guiltless of the act of shedding of blood and if Rehab told of the plans of Israel to come in and take Jericho, the spies oath to her would be voided. The spies reported that all the people either fainted or melted before them. A similar event happened when Peter preached a gospel message after the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:41-43, 1 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Joshua 2:24: “And they said to Joshua, "Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

So the spies knew that it was the hand of God that these things took place and would truly deliver Jericho into their hands. Notice that the spies saw the fall of Jericho as a completed action because they said the land was already delivered into their hands. The works of God caused the hearts of the people of Jericho to melt because of the greatness of God and His mighty works. God can cause the hearts of the unsaved to melt and reverence the church (ref. Acts 2:41-43) “Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Also ref. Acts 5:5-11.

At the end of the testimonies of the Apostles during the establishment of the early church, the church was feared and revered, but that is not the case today, for the church has become an archaic entity and many laugh at those who believe in Jesus Christ.

However, that laughter will soon turn to sorrow for on the last days as indicated by Luke 13:23, there will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Chapter 3, Crossing the Jordan River

Joshua 3:1-2: “Then Joshua rose early in the morning; and they set out from Acacia Grove and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they crossed over.” 2 So it was, after three days, that the officers went through the camp.”

So the people would rest for 3 days, probably in order to pass instructions regarding the crossing of the Jordan River and to allow for the organization of the people for the crossing as well. If any of you have watch National Geographic that shows wilder beast crossing the Mara River to go to greener pastures, you will note the confusion in the animals when crossing this river and as a result many die in the attempt. We must therefore remember that God is not the author of confusion; He is the author of everything decent and in order. The Jews at this time consist well over 2-million people and crossing the Jordan River definitely required order.

Joshua 3:3-4: “3 and they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. 4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before."

Joshua was a man of action he understood that the work of the Lord needs courage and urgency. It was 7 miles from where the people were camped to the Jordan River. When The people arrived at the Jordan they rested 3 days awaiting instructions in crossing the Jordan River (vs2). The 1st and the 2d generation both sent in spies. The 1st generation after acknowledging the truth about the land refuse to go into the Land because of so-called giants and allowed their fear to rule them instead of trusting in the Lord and

because of this refusal was tantamount to disobedience to God, as a result, God made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years. The 1st generation had two of the 12 spies who believed God and his word that being Joshua and Caleb.

The second generation believed the two spies and were ready to take possession of the land. The second generation born from the unbelieving 1st generation were ready to go into the land. The 1st generation were killed by God as He made them wander in the wilderness until they were all consumed except for Joshua and Caleb because of their disobedience which was what? Failure to go in and take possession of the Promised Land.

This event was about to be one of the most important steps taken by the Jews in biblical history. The Arch where God dwelt was to proceed the Israelites into the land of Canaan. The people were told to keep their distance from the Arch when it went into the Jordan River as not to approach the Lord flippantly for God had told His people how to behave towards Him. The true and living God was never seen as a profess equal by His people. We in the Christian community cannot properly gain a thorough view of God by ignoring the Old Testament; it is just as important as the New. This Arch where God dwelt symbolizes God going before His people.

We cannot ignore the Old Testament for the Lord led His people across the Jordan. Today we need God's guidance ever more just as the Nation of Israel when they crossed the Jordan and Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." If we as Christians need direction, we are going need to get it from God. Proverbs 6:20-23, 20 "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. 23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:" We need to know the whole bible, the voice of God; we as Christians cannot be successful in acting independent of God and His Spirit. We should never say that we believe the bible from cover to cover yet not teach those things in between the covers, nor neglect reading it. Going to public school and universities prepares one for life, but the bible prepares one for both life here on earth and in eternity. How it saddens me to see that Sunday after

Sunday how many professing Christian believers take their bibles to church, open them to the various passages as instructed by the preacher, then go and the bible gets laid on the kitchen counter or on one's dresser never to be opened again until the next Sunday. If you want to put something together you read the instructions; if you want to know how to live your life you should read the bible.

Joshua 3:5: "And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

Joshua commands the people to consecrate themselves to be hallowed and set apart to holiness; Why? The Lord would do wonders, meaning marvelous wonders in their midst. God was and is Holy and He expected His people to be holy.

Joshua 3:6-7: "Then Joshua spoke to the priests, saying, "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over before the people." 7 And the Lord said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you

So they took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. So God told Joshua "I will make you great before the people and cause you to grow before them." God would establish Joshua's credentials thus linking both Joshua's and Moses' ministry and this linking would eliminate any possible competition that may have come across the thinking of the people. But, more than that, it would establish the fact that God was with Joshua as He was with Moses and that the people would need to follow Joshua with the same respect that they followed Moses.

Joshua 3:8: "You shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.'"

Now what was the work of the ministry of Joshua before the people? It was parting the waters; just as the waters were parted before Moses, so it would be with Joshua. This is God linking the ministries together to form an undeniable bond of the two ministries of both Moses and Joshua, which identified the fact that God was working through both these men.

Joshua 3:10-17: “And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: **11** Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. **12** Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. **13** And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap." **14** So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), **16** that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. **17** Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

In verses 10-11 Joshua makes a commanding statement in that by the time we are finished here today, you will indeed know that God is God and just as the Law required, they were to obey his every command especially when conquering the nations before them in the Promised Land.

The 12 men (vs 12) chosen from various tribes would gather stones as a testimony of God parting the Jordan River. Verse 15 showed that the Jordan was overflowing because of the time of harvest. There is no question that this event was a supernatural one, but there have been some who try and scientifically explain away this wonderful miracle of God; Frankly they are foolish men. In the verses to follow we see that as soon as those Priest who carried the Ark touch the Jordan, the river stopped flowing and backup up approximately 15 miles in a heap, creating a large wall of water from where it was stopped. The children of Israel and the Priest stood and crossed on dry ground until every last Jew had crossed the Jordan.

Chapter 4, Israel Crosses the Jordan

Joshua 4:1-7: “And it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan, that the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying: **2** "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from every tribe, **3** and command them, saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from here, out of the midst of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. You shall carry them over with you and leave them in the lodging place where you lodge tonight.' " **4** Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the children of Israel, one man from every tribe; **5** and Joshua said to them: "Cross over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and each one of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, **6** that this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' **7** Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever."

The twelve men (one from every tribe) would take a large stone (nor a rock nor a pebble) and place it wherever they slept for the night; why? As verse 6 indicates, these stones would be for a remembrance of God's miracle of parting the river and would be a memorial to the children of Israel forever including for the generation to come of the fact that the Lord parted the waters.

There is a very important lesson in verse 6 of the need to teach our generation about the Lord and as a nation we have forgotten this; that is why the people no longer care about the Lord and act like He doesn't exist. No society can survive without God, yet this country (America) is attempting to do just that. You can see it in the way we treat

each other; the movies, television and even in the political world. The resulting factor of our country trying to cope without God is: death, madness, financial instability, poverty, and immorality which are all signs of a world attempting to live by the truths it deems relevant instead of by living the way God has told us all to do. All the aforementioned ...are the judgment of God coming against a disobedient nation and if we don't teach our children accountability to God, they maybe doomed to falter. The bible says, train up a child in the way it should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6.)

Joshua 4:8-14: "And the children of Israel did so, just as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones from the midst of the Jordan, as the Lord had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them to the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9 Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there to this day. 10 So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the Lord had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. 11 Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the Lord and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. 12 And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. 13 About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the Lord for battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14 On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had feared Moses, all the days of his life."

Joshua bought up twelve stones himself and set them at the place where the priests stood with the Ark of the covenant for he did this on his own initiative as a reminder to himself.

We see in verse 12-13 that the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before Israel first and 40 thousand other men prepared for war with

Jericho. The other tribe of Manasseh remained on the east side of the Jordan to protect their Land as Moses had promised to them; let's look at that promise:

20 Then Moses said to them: "If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the Lord for the war, **21** and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the Lord until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, **22** and the land is subdued before the Lord, then afterward you may return and be blameless before the Lord and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord. **23** But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord; and be sure your sin will find you out. **24** Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what has proceeded out of your mouth." (Numbers 32:20-24).

Now, in verse 12 of our text we see in the future why the tribe of Manasseh would be called half-tribe of Manasseh, because half of the tribe would live on the east side of the Jordan while the other half would go into the Promised Land along with the rest of Israel.

In verse 14 we see that the Lord made Joshua powerful in the same way He had made Moses powerful and the result of this exultation by God showed that the people of Israel feared, respected and honored Joshua all the days of his life.

Joshua 4:15-18: "Then the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, **16** "Command the priests who bear the ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan."**17** Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." **18** And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord had come from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

So we see here the completion of the miracle of the parting of the waters of the Jordan and was the end of the wilderness wondering. A new day had begun for Israel; there was no going back to Egypt and no going back to the wilderness; it was time to move forward and trust God; now it was time to take the land beginning with Jericho. Also notice another important and similar fact; after everyone was across the river safely and the priests came up out of the waters, the Jordan (just as the Red Sea), went back to its normalcy.



Figure 3-1, The Ark going into the River Jordan

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Joshua 4:19-24: “Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. **20** And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.**21** Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "When your children ask their fathers in time to

come, saying, 'What are these stones?' **22** then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land'; **23** for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, **24** that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."

The place where the Israelites camped after coming up out the Jordan River was called Gilgal; the word Gilgal means a rolling away from the reproach (disapproval) of God; we'll discuss that in more detail in chapter 5. The purpose of the 12 stones that the 12 men bought out of the River Jordan and set up at Gilgal was so that they might know the might and the power of the Lord and to memorialize the event. Again there is a reminder for future generation of "what do these stones represent" they would tell the children of the mighty work of God; that He dried up the Red Sea, He dried up the Jordan River so that your forefathers could go into the land of promise. These Hebrews were about 1 1/4 miles from Jericho now.



Figure 4-1 The 12 stones as they appear today.

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Chapter 5, Joshua Meets Jesus Christ (Incarnate)

Joshua 5:1: “So it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who were on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel until we had crossed over, that their heart melted; and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the children of Israel.

Again bear in mind this is what the Lord said He would do to the other nations that He would put His fear in them and the nations would be in terror and fear of Israel. Let’s go to Joshua 24:11-12 and says, “Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you--also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. **12** 'I sent the hornet before you which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.”

This is amazing how God fought the battles for Israel because they were His own personal people and they believed in Him. He had already started to work on the enemy by causing their spirit to be throted and if anyone who’s ever played sports know that if the opposing team no longer has a spirit or will to compete, the game is won and that’s what God did to these countries in Canaan. He will do the same for us when we are attacked by Satan, the world and the enemies of God; How? By prayer, supplication (petition) and faithful utilization of the sword of the spirit, which is the Bible? Ladies and gentlemen, let’s say someone wrongs you terribly; the first thing you want to do is get even or get back at them in some sort of way because your feelings are bruised. By trying to do that, you are catering to both your ego and your flesh, but when you let God fight your battles, the war is already won. How do you do that? Prayer, fasting and more prayer. Not praying to God to go and hurt those who hurt you but asking God to first heal your emotional trauma and then by actually praying for the individual. When you

give the problem to God and leave it there, you will discover your desire for revenge gone and your emotional wound healed because you know that the Lord is going to take care of the problem in the proper way and the proper time.

Now the land was full of the enemies of God and of Israel and the land was there for the taking and if they trusted God and followed His ways, the land would be theirs.

Joshua 5:2-7: “At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites again." **3** So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath Haaraloth. **4** Now this is why he did so: All those who came out of Egypt--all the men of military age--died in the desert on the way after leaving Egypt. **5** All the people that came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the desert during the journey from Egypt had not. **6** The Israelites had moved about in the desert forty years until all the men who were of military age when they left Egypt had died, since they had not obeyed the LORD. For the LORD had sworn to them that they would not see the land that he had solemnly promised their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. **7** So he raised up their sons in their place, and these were the ones Joshua circumcised. They were still uncircumcised because they had not been circumcised on the way.

The parents of the 1st generation of Israelites who wondered in the wilderness for 40 years did not circumcise their children as God had commanded them to do. When the men and children of Israel crossed over the river Jordan, God commanded Joshua to circumcise the men of war. What was the purpose of circumcision? It was a sign of the badge of a covenant with God and His people. Hygiene was not the purpose; God wanted to circumcise their hearts yet the physical circumcision was the badge signifying this. Jeremiah 4:3-4, “**3** For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. **4** Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.”

That entire 1st generation had circumcised foreskin yet they died

in the wilderness because of their uncircumcised hearts. All the reproach to God was now over because the children of ISRAEL could not go back to Egypt. God provided Manna to the Israelites for over 40 years including during their wilderness wondering. However, when they came across the Jordan and eat the Passover meal, the Manna stopped. There was no need for manna anymore for now they could eat of the fruit of the new land. Christ supplies spiritual nourishment (hidden manna) as we wander through the wilderness of this world.

It is truly amazing how God provided for His children and He does the same thing for us but many times we take for granted what God has given us: For the Christian believer he has given us life, joy in our hearts, food on table and the wisdom to understand what He requires for us to be holy before Him for He is holy. **In your opinion why does the world take God for granted?** Because many are of the attitude of if I can't see it, touch it or feel it, I can't believe in it. Another reason is that most do not want to give up their pet sins; they love these sins too much that they don't want to give them up and worship God not realizing that their time on earth is brief, but their time in the afterlife is eternity. The book of James says, "How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog--it's here a little while, then it's gone" (James 4:14).

Joshua 5:13-15: "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. **Who is this man standing before Joshua?**



Figure 5-1, Angel of the Lord with Sword Drawn

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The word Captain or Host of the Lord means he is the general over the heavenly armies; the creation and Joshua recognized that this man was Christ incarnate; this Man

was the Son of God, the eternal Word. Joshua gave him Divine honors by kneeling before him and giving him one of his sandals: he received them, which a created angel would not have done, and He is called Jehovah-Saboath. Created angels act as servants to God and are never to be worshipped and an angel of God will never ask to be worshipped. All true Christians must fight under Christ's banner, and they will conquer by his presence and assistance. Speculation of the conversation between the Lord and Joshua probably had to do with the conquest of Jericho as to how the city would be conquered. Now, when Jesus Christ comes back the second time He will bring with Him his heavenly armies and the book of Revelation says, "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses." Revelation 19:13-14

Chapter 6, The Fall of Jericho

Joshua 6:1-5: **1** Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.**2** Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. **3** March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. **4** Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. **5** When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in.

God reassures Joshua that He had indeed given them Jericho and that reassurance would be carried over by the people marching around the city as God had instructed. First the Israelites were to march around Jericho for 6 days, why. To be in perpetual fear for that long of a period by the people of Jericho would cause them to become weary and less able to fight. But, on the seventh day, they were to walk around the city 7 times. Then the priest were to blow the seven trumpets and all the people were to shout a victory cry for the Lord had given them the city at the same time and walls would come tumbling down and they did. **Why the number 7?** The number 7 stands for completeness and perfection. The destruction of Jericho was the plan of God and the victory was from the Lord and when the victory is accomplished, the victory is the Lords. Joshua was following God's plan to the letter. The entire city was devoted to destruction and only Rahab and her family were to be spared.

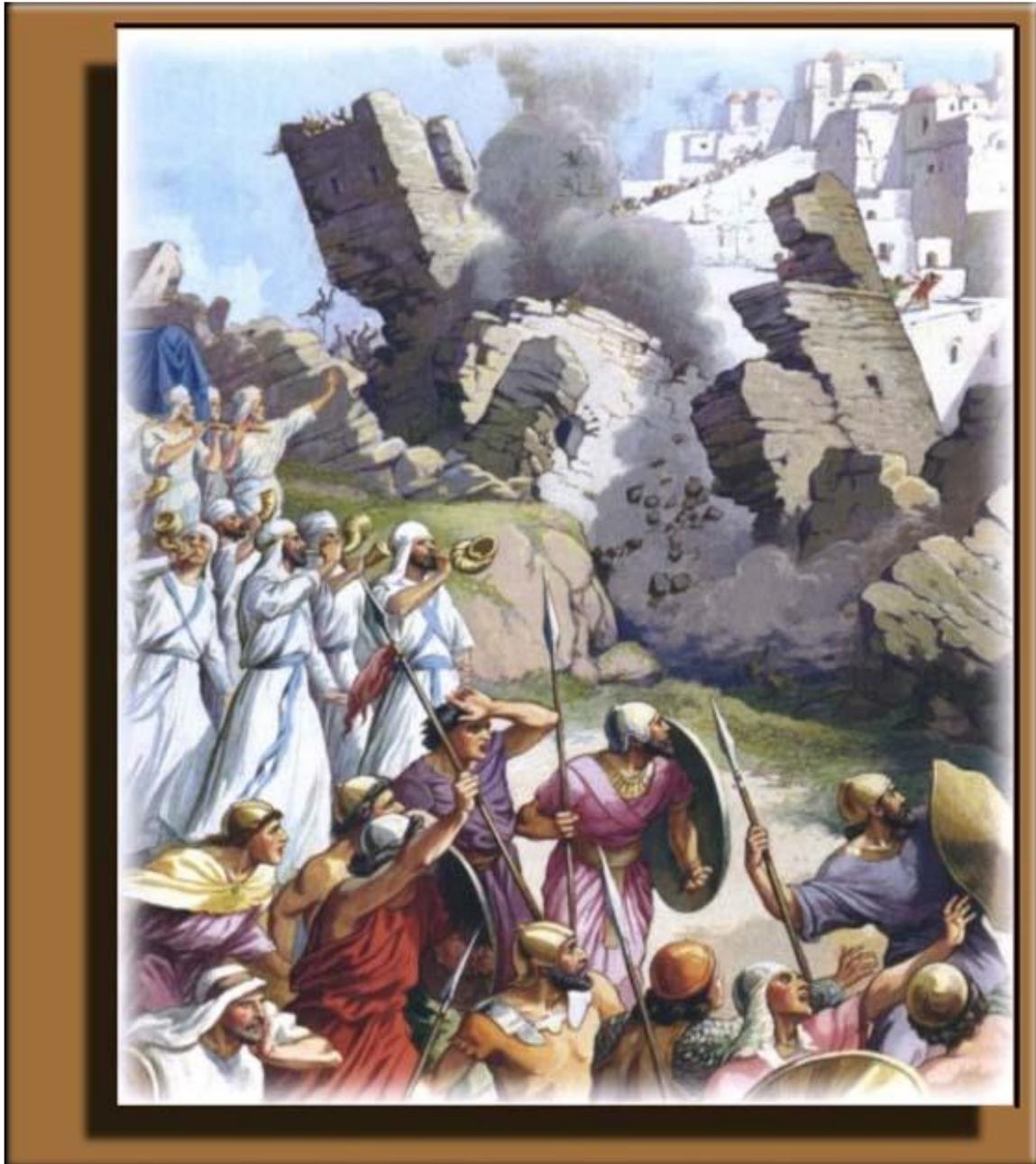


Figure 6-1, Jericho Destroyed

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Joshua 6:18-27: “18 And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel

a curse, and trouble it. **19** But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord." **20** So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. **21** And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword. **22** But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her." **23** And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. **24** But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. **25** And Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. **26** Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates." **27** So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout all the country.

Not one piece of anything was to be taken from that city as a personal possession. It was all devoted to destruction and the silver and gold was to be devoted to the Lord's treasury (Placed in the tabernacle); if a person who took anything under this ban he would be destroyed along with his whole family. One sin of a person taking something under the ban would affect the entire camp of Israel. Unfortunately as a church, we have not learned this lesson today. God said all the silver and gold are the treasury of the Lord it belonged to Him. They exterminated everything human and animal in the city of Jericho. Jericho had over 400 years to accept the Lord so if a prostitute could be saved from the city, anyone could have been saved. Many people ask: well why would God destroy innocent children? God does what he wills with his creation whether we understand it or not. As for the infants, they were at the disposal of their Creator; and it

was a great favour to them to take them away in their infancy, rather than reserve them to those dreadful calamities to which those who survived them were exposed. What dreadful calamity are we talking about? Because these people were idolaters, their place of rest lied in Hell and the children went back to the One who created them.

Why would the Lord not allow Israel to take the spoils of Jericho as he had before with the Amorites before they crossed the Jordan and had destroyed (Ref. Deut 2:24-34; 3:7 and Joshua 8:27). Because Jericho would be the first fruits of Canaan.

The two men who had spied the house of Rehab, brought them out. Rehab is in the Messianic line of Jesus; she is the great grandmother of David. She married a man called Salmon and we can find that in the gospel of Matthew which says, “Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife” (Matthew 1:5-6). And of course Jesus in in the lineage through Mary whose line traces her to David making Jesus the heir to the throne.

God takes the lowliest and the worst of people and he uses them for his glory. Rehab was spared from death because of her faith in God that was seen through her actions and this is true of anyone claiming to be a believer in Christ for their faith is demonstrated by their actions.

The ban included a curse on anyone who attempted to rebuild Jericho. Now, even though Israel destroyed all of Jericho, Joshua pronounced a curse on any man attempting to rebuild the city at the possible loss of not only their first born but their second as well. But, would you believe that in later years an evil King of Israel would attempt to do just that. Let's go to 1st Kings and says, “In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Joshua son of Nun.” (1 Kings 6:34).

Chapter 7, Israel Defeated at Ai

Joshua 7:1-12: "But the children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed things; so the anger of the Lord burned against the children of Israel. **2** Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel, and spoke to them, saying, "Go up and spy out the country." So the men went up and spied out Ai. **3** And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and attack Ai. Do not weary all the people there, for the people of Ai are few." **4** So about three thousand men went up there from the people, but they fled before the men of Ai. **5** And the men of Ai struck down about thirty-six men, for they chased them from before the gate as far as Shebarim, and struck them down on the descent; therefore the hearts of the people melted and became like water. **6** Then Joshua tore his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. **7** And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord God, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all--to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of the Jordan! **8** O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turns its back before its enemies?**9** For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear it, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great name?" **10** So the Lord said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? **11** Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. **12** Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you.

One man's sin can affect the entire congregation of a church; a little leaven (which represents sin in the bible) can affect the entire body of Christ. God held accountable the entire camp of Israel because of the actions of one individual. Achan wanted to take the accursed thing even though he knew better. He was selfish and he knew the Lord would hold the nation accountable for anyone taking something under the ban. He took the item under the ban anyway. Achan thought as many do today that God would blink or become distracted therefore God would not see him take the accursed thing. Many people in our world do that today. They commit the majority of their sins under the cover of darkness. They commit adultery, lie, cheat and steal believing that God will not see their actions. Some embezzle money and supplies from their employers thinking that they will not be seen. But there is an old saying "what you do in the dark will surely come to the light."

Because God is the Light, because He is omniscient meaning that He knows everything we do in life and because God is omnipresent meaning he is everywhere at the same time shows that any sin we might try to hide will indeed be seen by Him. God's anger is kindle when people disobey him and his chastisement will sometimes be swift, but just because God doesn't whip you right then and there when we sin, doesn't mean He's not going to catch up to you. Many wonder why they can't find a job or why they never have any money or why there is so much trouble in their home. Much of it has to do with sin and the absence of God in the home.

We saw that after the destruction of Jericho, Joshua plans to take the next city, which is Ai and so he sends out spies to determine how best to take the city. These spies come back with a report that the men of Ai are not that much of a threat so we should only take several thousand men from the camp verses all of the fighting men of Israel. Joshua agrees and sends only 3,000, but to their amazement the 3,000 are overwhelmed by the men of Ai and they kill 35 of Israel's men as they come back running to the camp in fear.

Joshua performs a Hebrew tradition when one is greatly stressed about an event; he falls down on his knees and heaps dust over his head as a sign of mourning and then questions God about the incident. He even goes so far as to tell God you should have left us on the other side of the river if you were going to allow us to be humiliated and killed by other men? God tells Joshua to get up off his knees, stop wallowing in your disgrace.

God then tells Joshua why the men were defeated at Ai; because Israel disobeyed him and took from Jericho that which was under the ban. Jesus made a statement in the gospel of Mark and said "And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. "Mark 8:15" in other words, a little leaven leavens the whole lump meaning that a little sin (which is represented by leaven) can destroy or wreck havoc in a whole church congregation or organization. Leaven (which is yeast) is representative in the bible as sin.

In Vs, 12 God told Joshua that he would not be with them anymore until the individual responsibility for hiding the accursed thing among their stuff was destroyed along with that accursed thing. Confessing your sins to God glorifies Him. **How does it glorify Him?** Confession of sins means that you acknowledge that you were wrong and that you violated God's commands and that sin is real and not imagined. Confession acknowledges that God is right even though he chastens you to the degree He deems necessary. **Daniel 9:13-14**, "Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. 14 The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

Joshua 7:18-21: "Then he brought his household man by man, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19 Now Joshua said to Achan, "My son, I beg you, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession to Him, and tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." 20 And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and this is what I have done: 21 "When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

Achan took a garment woven with precious metals and stones and he took silver and gold. Achan took these things knowing the consequences to him and others. The irony in

all this was that he had to hide the coat for to wear or use what he stole he could not enjoy something that is hidden. Achan essentially backslide against God. *Backsliding is willful rebellion against the Lord, it is not accidental rebellion. The word backslider is not used in the New Testament. Calling one's self a backslider deserves no sympathy for this label is not a term of endearment; they need to most of all confess their sins and return to Jesus and He will accept them back into fellowship with Him. Now, the one who backslides and never come out of their waywardness, never had their heart in Jesus as their Savior in the first place. They were only fooling those around them and most of all themselves. We must confess our sins and glorify God. **However, Achan confessed his sin so why wasn't he allowed to live?** Because God had warned Israel about the consequences of taking things under the ban; it wasn't like Achan didn't know what was going to happen to him if he took things under the ban anyway and so God's judgment has already been pronounced.

Joshua 7:24-26: **24** Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. **25** And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. **26** Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

Joshua took Achan, his family, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep all the accursed items and all they had and brought them to the valley of Achor. They stoned Achan and his family with stones, then burned them with fire, raised a great heap of stones over them, therefore the place to this day is called the valley of Achor, which means trouble. God had warned the people of what would happen if they took things under the ban and one man chose to disobey Him and paid for it with his and his families life. The people's hindered relationship was now restored.

Now, let's explore new territory. How did those who sinned without the Law in Old Testament times get saved? In other words, before the coming of the Mosaic Law which instituted animal sacrifices for sins as an atonement before God what were there saving grace?

Now, the means for salvation has always been the same: Faith. And, at any given point in the unfolding revelation of the Word of God, salvation came through faith, believing God. Abraham believed God. It was counted him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6). What did he believe? He believed as much as God had revealed. And, God had revealed even by that time that he was sinner and that the only savior was God, and that God would pay the penalty for his sin. Now, he didn't understand all there was to know about Jesus Christ, but he understood enough to know that he was a sinner and needed a savior and God would provide a savior.

Heb 10:1-4 KJV) For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. {2} For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. {3} But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. {4} For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

As we see in these verses that the Law had only a shadow of things to come. The sacrifices which were offered under that system were not of a permanent nature but only of a temporary nature. They were also only representations of what was to come. This is very important to keep in mind when trying to understand the nature of those sacrifices. The sacrificial system was not designed to remove sins from the person bringing the offering. It was a temporary foreshadow of the permanent atonement which would come through the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary on behalf of His Elect and those who choose to come to Christ. We read in verse 4 that it is not possible for the blood of animals to make atonement and remove sins from anyone. Only the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ had the ability to remove sins forever, once and for all, from the people that God would choose for salvation.

(Heb 10:6 KJV) In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

In this verse we are told that God did not delight in those burnt offerings because they did not remove sin from God's people. God the Father takes pleasure in the atonement of His Son, because with that atonement, came the removal of sins from millions of people.

I read a commentary on this chapter by an individual and he could not understand why the whole family of Achan including women and children had to be killed along with him since they had nothing to do with his actions. Sometimes we don't understand God's justice, but He gives life and the life He gives is His to take away (Job 1:21). As I said earlier, the children who die in this world go back to be with the one who gave them life in the first place and live a joyous life with the Lord. Let's go to the gospel of Matthew and says, "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:1-4).



Figure 7-1, Achan and his family stoned

https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=free+domain+picture+achan+stoned

Chapter 8, Ai Destroyed

Joshua 8:1-2: Now the Lord said to Joshua: "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. **2** And you shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king. Only its spoil and its cattle you shall take as booty for yourselves. Lay an ambush for the city behind it."

Now as we have seen before, to the point where Joshua went into Ai, the Lord directed every step; Joshua always sought the will and the council of the Lord before undertaking any major event with the exception of the first campaign against Ai. Remember, Joshua only sent up 3,000 troops originally. His counselors thought they could take the city with only that amount of people. God told Joshua to take all the men of War, not some, but all. Man's ways are usually based on his knowledge self confidence and extrapolation of facts based on what he thinks he knows, but true knowledge however is seen when we humble ourselves and go to God before, during and after the circumstances and finding out what He wants us to do.

In verse two God said to Joshua as it was with Jericho so shall it be with Ai except all of the spoils of war will be yours and along with all who fight with you. The difference in this fight vs Jericho was that the troops would ambush the city of Ai as well. God works in various ways He will not be stereotyped into man's foolish reasoning's and what I mean by stereotype is that Man says in a given situation, a person, a nationality or even God always does this or that in a given situation; Not so my friends. There is a great irony and tragedy to this story that needs to be bought out: If Achan had patiently waited on the Lord; not trying to bless himself and gain immediate pleasures by taking that which was under the ban, he would have enjoyed greater spoils at Ai. Let us as Christians endeavor **not** to be like Achan attempting to grab immediate gratification that crosses our eyes, listening to your flesh and so-called friends for just like Achan, your decision may one day cost you your life.

Joshua 8:3-8: “So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand mighty men of valor and sent them away by night. 4 And he commanded them, saying: "Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready. 5 Then I and all the people who are with me will approach the city; and it will come about, when they come out against us as at the first, that we shall flee before them. 6 For they will come out after us till we have drawn them from the city, for they will say, 'They are fleeing before us as at the first.' Therefore we will flee before them. 7 Then you shall rise from the ambush and seize the city, for the Lord your God will deliver it into your hand. 8 And it will be, when you have taken the city, that you shall set the city on fire. According to the commandment of the Lord you shall do. See, I have commanded you."

Unlike the first battle at Ai where 3,000 were sent, Joshua sends 30,000 men of courage and valor and gives them instructions and provides them with a battle plan of attack. The men of Ai would see Joshua's men approaching and just as before, come out and attack and as before, the men of Israel would turn and run and draw away the fighting men from Ai who think once again that they have them on the run. Now as the troops of Ai were chasing the small number of men of Israel, those who were hiding in Ambush would dispossess the city having already delivered it into their hands.

In verse 8, Joshua tells the men to set the city on fire and this is an important point because we see that the Lord was commanding and leading Joshua. Joshua had no business trying to have confidence in his own abilities alone for he was to seek the Lord's will through prayer in this event and hear the Lord's commands; when they were finished plundering the city, they were to set the city on fire.

Moreover, in regards to Joshua seeking God's guidance, how often do we as Christians or even unbelievers choose to go at alone with our problems or even trying to solve the task before us without the Lord? Many times, it's done unintentionally because we do not have a plan for prayer. A plan regarding prayer always seeks out and ask God for His guidance in every circumstance. Now, one of the requirements in this prayer plan includes faith for without it as part of our plan, will most likely lead to failure in the

endeavor we are either trying to overcome or trying to accomplish. There is something called Situational ethics, or situation ethics, and takes into account the particular context of an act when evaluating it ethically, rather than judging it according to absolute moral standards. In situational ethics, within each content is not defined by a universal law that is to be followed, but the law of love. The Greek word used to describe love in the Bible is "agape". Agape is the type of love that shows concern about others, caring for them as much as you care for yourself. Agape love has no strings attached to it and seeks nothing in return. You love someone completely unconditionally in spite of who they are, their race, sexually orientation etc. Agape love is God's kind of love.

Joshua 8:9-17: **9** Joshua therefore sent them out; and they went to lie in ambush, and stayed between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai; but Joshua lodged that night among the people. **10** Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. **11** And all the people of war who were with him went up and drew near; and they came before the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now a valley lay between them and Ai. **12** So he took about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. **13** And when they had set the people, all the army that was on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley. **14** Now it happened, when the king of Ai saw it, that the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at an appointed place before the plain. But he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. **15** And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. **16** So all the people who were in Ai were called together to pursue them. And they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city. **17** There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. So they left the city open and pursued Israel. **18** Then the Lord said to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the spear that was in his hand toward the city.

So, we see the chess match begin where in chess the king is left alone and the queen, knights and bishops begin the final blow that would destroy Ai (chess terminology). Ai's entire fighting population was drawn away from the city and not a single man remained in the cities of Ai or Bethal. In verse 18 the Lord told Joshua to stretch out the spear that he had in his hand and once he did that, this signal meant two things: God would give them the victory and the ambushers were to go into the city. Just as Moses used his staff of which the Lord blessed, so too did He bless the spear or javelin of Joshua, which in this instance signaled the Lord's destruction of Ai.

Notice in verse 17 the city of Bethal was also mentioned for this city would also be destroyed. Bethal and Ai. were 1 mile apart and were in league with one another in regards to their pagan worship of idols. Just as then where God did not play around with those who worshipped things other than Him and exacted His justice.

Joshua 8:19-27: **19** So those in ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire.**20** And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers. **21** Now when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city ascended, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. **22** Then the others came out of the city against them; so they were caught in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them down, so that they let none of them remain or escape. **23** But the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. **24** And it came to pass when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they pursued them, and when they all had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. **25** So it was that all who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand--all the people of Ai. **26** For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. **27** Only the livestock and the spoil of that city

Israel took as booty for themselves, according to the word of the Lord which He had commanded Joshua

When the men of Ai who went out after the men of Israel who had ran into the wilderness turned back and looked upon the city and saw all this smoke and flames , they realized they could not go back into the city nor could they now escape. We see in verse 21 the ambush was unleashed and struck down the pursuers, but in verse 22 the rest of the men of Ai come out and the Jews fanned out and surround all the men of Ai and slew them all leaving none alive. In verses 23-26 we see the finality of the battle. There was a sizeable number of women and men in Ai. The report by the spies who originally investigated Ai were wrong. The city and all who lived in Ai were exterminated as God said it would happen and had told them to do.

In verse 27 all of the booty or the spoils were taken and divided among the troops. Again, unbelievers reading this section regarding the destruction of all human beings including women and children will question God's wisdom as to why destroy the innocent? These women were idolaters just like the men and their final resting place would have been hell anyway; their journey there was just hastened by God. As I said before regarding the destruction of the children; they now will not grow up in a pagan society worshipping idols and having their souls destined for eternal ruin, but live a wonderful life with God Himself. However, at this juncture I'd like to give the readers something to think about regarding a lost child who died:

The loss of a child generally brings about bitterness in our hearts and the first question that comes to our minds when that happens is why? The Bible says, "9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am. You are not alone; Jesus will bless you in your pain and grief with a deeper understanding and experience of His divine love.

When we lose a child Brothers and Sister, it is at this point that we have to make a decision! Do I turn to the love of God in Jesus Christ in my grief or to the bitterness of a cruel world that has little meaning in life except more pain and loss? If you choose the bitterness of the world, your question of "why" will never be answered, and your grief will always remain in some form or another -- bitterness, anger, depression, you'll remain

lost, and without hope.

If you turn to Jesus and offer him your true cry of pain, you will hear the voice of God's spirit speaking to your spirit, "I had a child too. He too was innocent. There was no sin in him. His name was Jesus and he died a terrible death at the hands of evil men. I even knew about it long before it happened. Yet, I allowed it to happen. Yes, I even caused it to happen because I love you so much, that I would lose my innocent child too, so that I could answer your cries and prayers to make it stop hurting."

He is alive today, and he is calling you to come to Him in your sorrow and grief and He will give you rest for your soul. You will even be blessed by his comfort. Jesus keeps his promises, and he promised, "*blessed are those who mourn for they shall find comfort.*" (*Matthew 5:4*).

You see brothers and sisters, God does answer our question, "why do children have to die?" if we understand the true nature of our cry. He does take away our sorrow and tears and heals our broken heart. He does it because he loves us, and he lost his innocent child too. He knew about it ahead of time and did it anyway, for us and just as Jesus sits in heaven right now, so does that innocent child, so rejoice in the fact that they will not experience any of the heartache, pain, sorrow of this life as we do. Amen

Joshua 8:28-31: 28 So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever, a desolation to this day. 29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until evening. And as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raise over it a great heap of stones that remains to this day. 30 Now Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal, 31 as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: "an altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron tool." And they offered on it burnt offerings to the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings.

Now, We haven't seen this expression in a long time in regards to a man building an altar to God. It began with Noah in Gen 8 where when the ship reached dry ground, Noah disembarked and built an altar unto the Lord and sacrificed a burnt offering; again

in Gen 12 where Abraham built an alter to the Lord; Exodus 17 Moses built an alter unto the Lord, Numbers 32 Aaron built an alter unto the Lord as well. The alter in verse 31 that Joshua had built in the front of Ai was to be built exactly as the Law of Moses had specified being of whole stones and nothing carved by the hands of man. The offerings to the Lord signified dedication; peace offerings were offered to God for thanks for deliverance or a blessing. The meaning of the sacrifice is clear and the application clear as well; these offering spoke of complete dedication to the Lord. For the Christian believer, who obtains salvation through Jesus Christ can worship God in spirit and in truth. The bible says, “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent” (Proverbs 21:27). No need to play a hypocrite among the church assembly and leave and be a wicked and evil person; you are only fooling yourself. We should never give the impression to the world that we are the children of God and live contrary to that as so many do today.

Joshua 8:34-35: 34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. 35 There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.

This is exactly the same thing that was done in Deut. 11: 26-32 and Deut 27:12-26. The people were to pronounce the blessings and the curses of the Lord. Both blessings and curses came from God. People acknowledge that God was right doing either one or the other to them. The idea that God was unfair towards Israel or His judgments were unjustified towards them showed a lack of biblical understanding. God wasn't doing anything more to Israel than what they had agreed too. Let's go to Exodus 19:8 “All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD.” This was after the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, thus beginning the Mosaic covenant with Israel and represented a marriage relationship between God and Israel (Ref. Jeremiah 3:14).

Moreover, the captivity or subjugation the Jews endured over the coming years was a result of their own doing. Again, let's go to Daniel 9 and says, "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. 14 "Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.

How about America today who are disobedient society? Has God said that the Jews I will bring calamity upon because of their disobedience, but not America? I think not, but the calamities that come upon our country will be at a time of God's own choosing. However, we are seeing some of God's wrath in America today in the form of fires raging out of control, water shortages, storms that now cost billions of dollars to clean up after, continued suffering and diseases. However, these things are just a small example of a larger calamity that is yet to come upon not only America, but the world as a whole. What do I mean by this you think? God has shown throughout time that those who are in disobedience to Him will suffer; both man and nation. However, those who are in Christ will be spared the greatest calamity yet to come upon man and that's the Great Tribulation Period as outlined in the gospel of Matthew 24:21. However, the children of God will not have to endure this tribulation period (Ref. 1 Thessalonians 5:9 and Revelation 3:10).

In verse 35 Joshua quoted all the Law that Moses had read to the people and strangers who were in attendance. However, in contrast in today's society, how little emphasis is the reading of the Word to the little children and many adults as well. The emphasis today seems to be on the preacher or the priest and their ability to be a man for all seasons a sounding board for the world instead of being a messenger of God. Children need to know God's Word plainly; just as they learn in the public school system how to be successful in life, they also need to learn how to be successful for God which leads to eternity with him verses being successful for the world leading to a layover in hell with a final destination to the lake of fire. My friends the truth needs to be spoken in regards to God's Word. We can't worry if someone's feelings are hurt by what's said in the bible for the bible says, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-

edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

Many churches bear some responsibility in this regard because they have failed to teach the children the bible through children’s church and Sunday school and families have failed because they either don’t bring their children to Sunday school or children’s church. Families have also failed our children because many of them think they can’t understand bible passages so therefore how are they going to explain biblical principles to a child.

A good anecdote for this is either bring your child to Sunday school, or utilize a good study bible that will help explain scripture passages. Utilizing both will enrich your child’s understanding of the bible. *This concept cannot be overstated because the world has taken God out of the classroom and it is more important than at any time in our history for parents and the church to teach our children what thus saith the Lord.

Joshua 9:1-27: **1** And it came to pass when all the kings who were on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon--the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite--heard about it, **2** that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord. **3** But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, **4** they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, **5** old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy. **6** And they went to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us." **7** Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?" **8** But they said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you, and where do you come from?" **9** So they said to him: "From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt, **10** and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan--to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. **11** Therefore our elders and all

the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us." ' **12** This bread of ours we took hot for our provision from our houses on the day we departed to come to you. But now look, it is dry and moldy. **13** And these wineskins which we filled were new, and see, they are torn; and these our garments and our sandals have become old because of the very long journey." **14** Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the Lord. **15** So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them. **16** And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors who dwelt near them. **17** Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim. **18** But the children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel. And all the congregation complained against the rulers. **19** Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them. **20** This we will do to them: We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them." **21** And the rulers said to them, "Let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for all the congregation, as the rulers had promised them." **22** Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you dwell near us? **23** Now therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves-- woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God." **24** So they answered Joshua and said, "Because your servants were clearly told that the Lord your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. **25** And now, here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us." **26** So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. **27** And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, in the place which He would choose, even to this day.

The Gibeonites devised a plan to fall in league with Israel because they had heard of Israel's fame through God and so they underhandedly tried to assimilate themselves into Israel for protection from both Israel and Israel's enemies. The deception was to appear as some long lost travelers wanting to incorporate themselves with the people. Joshua's failure in questioning the leader of the Gibeonites was in not asking what was the name of the country from whence they came. Just as Joshua made the mistake with Ai in not seeking God's counsel before he acted, now he does the same thing in regards to the Gibeonite leader.

The danger of not seeking the Lord's counsel allows Satan to come in, find his way into a workplace or very quickly through new perspective members who come into the church bringing Satan with them, and wreck havoc in the church. The devil can't get into the church unless you bring him in; the devil can't speak vile speech unless he can use your mouth; if the devil cannot use your legs nor arms, he cannot cause harm to come to others.

So, Joshua made peace with the enemies and made a covenant with them. After 3 days in the camp the Nation of Israel realized that they were deceived by these men of Gibeon; they were not travelers from afar but was from one of the countries nearby. The people did not kill them because they had taken an oath with them. So, the people made the Gibeonites wood cutters and servants to them. Joshua cursed them and made them bond servants. The purpose of the deception by the Gibeonites were that they had heard of the edict by Moses from God to go in and possess the land and destroy all the inhabitants. The Gibeonites feared for their lives therefore they sought deception by lying in order to save themselves from imminent destruction from Israel. The Lord had said: "and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them" (Deut. 7:2).

The lesson we should learn from this is to be very discerning about the kinds of company we keep especially in the ministry because it can cause problems in our attempt to minister to the church and others.

Chapter 10, The Sun Stands Still

Joshua 10:1-12: **1** Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it--as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king--and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, **2** that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty. **3** Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, **4** "Come up to me and help me, that we may attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel." **5** Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and camped before Gibeon and made war against it. **6** And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us." **7** So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. **8** And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you." **9** Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. **10** So the Lord routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at

Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. **11** And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the Lord cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword. **12** Then Joshua spoke to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."

When Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it: The leader of this group, the king of Jerusalem, is an interesting figure. His name, *Adoni-Zedek* means *Lord of Righteousness*, though we see him as really the *opposite* of the Lord of Righteousness. If anything, he represents the Anti-Christ, set against Joshua's representation of Jesus Christ.

If *Adoni-Zedek* (the false *Lord of Righteousness*) represents the Antichrist, we are even more interested to find that he leads many nations against Joshua and the children of Israel.

They feared greatly: The enemies of Israel *feared greatly*, but like our spiritual enemies, they do not retreat when they are afraid, but launch attacks that are even more bold, as a wild animal might fight when it feels attacked.

Though they are afraid, they are still clever. Afraid to attack Israel directly, they attack their vassals the Gibeonites. ***Because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty:*** We are reminded that the Gibeonites did not submit to Israel out of a position of weakness; indeed *all its men were mighty*. Yet it was because of their love and honor of the God of Israel that they submitted to perpetual service in His tabernacle.

Joshua 10:6-9: "And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us. "Joshua and the people of Israel are faithful to their vow to the Gibeonites. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. "And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into

your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you. Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.”

Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us: The Gibeonites rightly looked to the people of Israel as their helpers and protectors. They were not too proud to call for help.

- We saw that in Joshua 9:1-27, Joshua, the leaders of Israel, and all the people of Israel knew they made a bad vow to the Gibeonites, yet they did not turn their backs on that vow.
- But here, we see Joshua and the leaders of Israel going a step further. Allowing these Canaanite kings to wipe out the Gibeonites would have been a convenient way to get out of a vow that should not have been made, but they will have none of it.
- We should have the same sense of honor. Though Joshua was only bound to not kill the Gibeonites himself (Joshua 9:15), he goes on to fulfill what the *spirit* of the vow he made to the Gibeonites.

God’s command and promise to Joshua (10:8). ***Do not fear them:*** This is a *command*. Though Joshua has reason to fear because Israel faces a confederation of *five* kings, God commands Joshua to not fear his enemies.

- ***I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you:*** The command is coupled with a *promise*. We can obey God’s *command* to not fear because we have His *promise* of victory.

Joshua’s response of faith (10:9). ***Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly:*** Having the assurance of God’s promise (Joshua 10:8), Joshua did not sit back to passively watch God work without his participation. He went to great effort to participate with the work and will of God.

- ***Having marched all night from Gilgal:*** This took hard work and initiative on Joshua's part. The march from Gilgal to Gibeon involved a climb of 3,300 feet, and the distance was about twenty miles, taking eight to ten hours of hard marching, all through the night.

Joshua 10:10-15: "So the LORD routed them before Israel, killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. And it happened, as they fled before Israel *and* were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. *There were* more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword. Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies. *Is* this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

- ***So the LORD routed them before Israel:*** God's work, and the partnership of Joshua's work with the LORD, accomplished something great. The enemies of God were ***routed***.
- ***The LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven:*** The ***hailstones*** which killed the retreating armies of the Canaanites were obviously miraculous. The hail itself could have been a phenomenon of nature, but their aim and timing obviously displayed the hand of God.
- We notice that Joshua didn't wait around for the hail to come. He was busy doing what he *could* do in partnership with God, and God did what only *God* could do.

- ***“Sun, stand still over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon.”*** ***So the sun stood still:*** Seeing God’s miraculous hand in action gave Joshua the boldness to ask for an even more stupendous miracle - to keep the day going, to keep the sun from setting, so that Israel had time to accomplish a complete victory before darkness fell.
- ***So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it:*** How was the length of this day extended? It could have been a slowing of the earth’s rotation; it could have been a tilting of the earth’s axis; it could have been a miracle of reflection of light; it could have been simply the presence of God manifested in light.
- ***Till the people had revenge upon their enemies:*** Joshua did not ask God to do the fighting for him, even though God did do some of that. Joshua simply asked that God would miraculously give him the *opportunity* to fight for Him.

Joshua 10:16-27: **13** “**16** But these five kings had fled and hidden themselves in a cave at Makkedah. **17** And it was told Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah." **18** So Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them. **19** And do not stay there yourselves, but pursue your enemies, and attack their rear guard. Do not allow them to enter their cities, for the Lord your God has delivered them into your hand." **20** Then it happened, while Joshua and the children of Israel made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they had finished, that those who escaped entered fortified cities. **21** And all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace. No one moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. **22** Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me from the cave." **23** And they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. **24** So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of

Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. **25** Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight." **26** And afterward Joshua struck them and killed them, and hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until evening. **27** So it was at the time of the going down of the sun that Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees, cast them into the cave where they had been hidden, and laid large stones against the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day.

The five Kings that were shut in the 5 caves were brought out before Joshua and Joshua called for all the men of Israel and they men of war put their feet upon the necks of the Kings and Joshua smote them and slew them and hung them from five trees.

After these men had hung on trees all day, Joshua commanded that they be taken down off the trees; not from any respect to them, but that they might not defile the land, as dead bodies in a ceremonial sense did, (Ref. Deuteronomy 21:23). Joshua was more careful of not deviling the land as they were just entered into the Promised Land, and were taking possession of it. They cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid; so that what had been their hiding place now became their grave; and according to the Samaritan Chronicle, the trees also on which they were hanged were cast in with them: and laid great stones in the cave's mouth: not as a monumental pile, as in the instances of Achan and the king of Ai, (Joshua 7:26); but to prevent their carcasses from either being dragged out, and eaten by wild beasts, as some think; or that they might not be taken out, and buried in a more honorable manner:

*Joshua had grown to accept the Lords strength and promise and he was reminded by the Lord to be strong and to not fear their enemies. Joshua smote all the countries of the hills and left none remaining alive as he did in the previous cities; he is being obedient to the Lord in destroying all the inhabitants of the land. The raids were quick and devastating because the Lord fought for Israel, for the battles were won because the Lord gave the towns into their hands.

Chapter 11, Northern Kings Defeated

Joshua 11:1-5: The defeat of the northern kings. “And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard *these things*, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings who *were* from the north, in the mountains, in the plain south of Chinneroth, in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, to the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite in the mountains, and the Hivite below Hermon in the land of Mizpah. So they went out, they and all their armies with them, *as* many people *as* the sand that *is* on the seashore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots. And when all these kings had met together, they came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel 6 But the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire.”

- **And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard these things:** After hearing of Israel’s total conquest of the south, the northern kings came together to defeat Israel. The huge army assembled together reflects an attitude that they believe they must stop Israel now at all cost.
 1. All this is prompted by what the northern kings **heard** regarding Israel’s successes and victories; walking in victory means that we become targets - when we are reviled, so is the devil. The world hates us when we are victorious because it means a victory for the one they do not believe in (Jesus Christ).

- Two things indicate that Israel is now facing challenges they had never faced before. First, the size of the enemy army: **as many people as the sand that is on the seashore in multitude**. Second, the technological superiority of the Canaanites: **with many horses and chariots against foot soldiers**.
 2. The challenges brought to Israel seem to increase at each step, from Jericho, to Ai, to the battle with the southern kings, now to this battle.
 3. We often find that the challenges facing us in our Christian walk increases with each step. God uses each previous victory as a springboard for what we face in the future; however when we become battle tested we face each trial with the knowledge that One in whom we trust will fight for us.

(Vs. 6) God's encouragement to Joshua. "But the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel. You shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire."

- **Tomorrow about this time I will deliver all of them slain before Israel:** This attack was new, and more severe than previous challenges. Joshua needed a fresh confirmation of God's promise for his life, and the LORD was faithful to bring it.
- **Do not be afraid because of them:** This means that fear was an issue for Joshua and the people of Israel. God has a reason for everything He does, and He would not have assured them *do not be afraid* unless there was a reason for the encouragement.
- The purpose of hamstringing the horses and burning the chariots of the defeated army was so the Israelites would trust in God to fight their battles and not in military hardware.

Joshua 11:7-8: “So Joshua and his whole army came against them suddenly at the Waters of Merom and attacked them, 8 and the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel. They defeated them and pursued them all the way to Greater Sidon, to Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah on the east, until no survivors were left.

Joshua goes to fight this massive army to the north and is successful. Joshua is obedient to the Lord and followed what the Lord told him to do. How obedient are we to the Lord in this day and age when Christianity is accepted by the world as a through-back religion and is unacceptable to them. How obedient when the world looks upon us Christians with disdain and ridicule because we believe in principles outlined in the bible that go against their fleshly and immoral beliefs? Will we go all the way with the Lord as Joshua did or will we allow the world’s influences to cause us to balk in our faith.

Joshua 11:15: “As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.”

Joshua was obedient to the Lord and this verse is to his compliment. Joshua left nothing undone. Whatever the Lord told him to do he did. *Victory in our lives comes when we are obedient to the Lord in doing the things He tells us to do; it is as simple as that. It is the obedience to God and His Word that brings victory to the worshipper of God through faith in Him. Some might say, “well what about the wicked who gain victories in the world like Saddam Husain, Hitler, or those who are rich and use their riches to get away with behaviors that would normally land us in jail or worse? God uses nations, people to work His will of which many times we are unfamiliar with because He hasn’t told them what that will is.

Joshua 11:18-19: “18 Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. 19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon. All the others they took in battle.”

- The Gibeonites were the ones who tricked Joshua into making a treaty with them for fear of the death if they did not make peace with Israel. Every Canaanite city

had the opportunity to repent but chose to fight against Israel, God and paid the price. If a harlot like Rehab could accept God and turn from sin, what keeps many today from turning to God? It is obstinence and the refusal to accept God's grace because they desire to continue in their sin! A person's steadfast refusal to accept God's grace will cause God to harden their hearts and make it so they will not believe. Let's go to the book of Romans in this regard and says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Romans 1:28). Reprobate means morally depraved or wicked in behavior.

***Chapter 12 gives the names of all the countries that Israel defeated in the Promise Land. On to chapter 13.**

Chapter 13, Land Still to be Taken

Joshua 13:7-9: “7 Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.” 8 With the other half tribe the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses had given them, beyond the Jordan eastward, as Moses the servant of the Lord had given them” 9 Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

So the tribe of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had already received their inherited land on the east side of the Jordan river. The Levites received no special land but were given 48 towns consisting of pastor lands for their herds. God provide for the Levites through animal sacrifices and tithes Ref Deuteronomy 10:8-9, 8 “At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. “

Joshua 13:1-4: 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. 2 Their inheritance was by lot, as the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes and the half-tribe. 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.

In regards to the Distribution of the land, Let's go to Numbers 26:52-56 "52 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 53 Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names. 54 To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him. 55 Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. 56 According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few."

Now at the beginning of this chapter we see the remainder of the land being divided amongst the remaining 9 ½ tribes. So the **lot** determined where the tribes would settle. However the casting of lot was not a gamble or chance, the Lord determined how the land would be divided by the use of lot; Proverbs 16:33, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD. Those casting the lot would first pray and ask for God's grace to fall upon the lot—that way God would determine the division of land.

Chapter 14, Division of Land West of the Jordan River

Joshua 14:6-15: “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.' 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. 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." 13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. 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.

What a story concerning this man Caleb. Remember he was one of two spies who told Moses that the Land was there for our taking, but he was overruled by the others who spied and came back with a report that the land could not be taken because the people are giants allowing their fear to blind their faith in God. This fear affected the rest of the nation of Israel leading to a rebellion of the 1st generation who refused to go into the Land; the other spy of course was Joshua himself. Caleb's physical strength at 85 years old was still that of a 40 year old man; Caleb reminded Joshua that Moses had promised that wherever my feet tread there shall my portion of the new land be as an inheritance and I want Hebron (Ref. Deut. 1:26).

Notice that it was Caleb's whole-hearted obedience that was rewarded by God. In verse 14 the expression to describe Caleb was "he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel." This means he completely followed the Lord and was satisfied in doing so. Let's go to Numbers 32:11 and says, "Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they have not wholly followed Me" Caleb and Joshua did so. Judging from this passage, those 20 and older who left Egypt did not live beyond the age of 60 years old because of the 40 years of wilderness wondering. Notice something else regarding Caleb: He and Joshua were set in contrast to millions who disobeyed God and wondered and lost their salvation on the other side of the Jordan even though God had shown them numerous miracles and that He was with them, yet they still refused to be obedient to Him.

Contrasting that in today's society regarding the professing believers who claim to be Christians but their actions tell a different story. Are they and are we wholly following the Lord? Is He the captain of your life or do you choose to steer your own ship, make your own decisions and leave God on the banks of the shore? It can therefore be said that only those who wholly follow the Lord will inherit the Land of Promise and that land is eternity. Many people talk about their religion, but I am here to tell you that salvation is only through a supernatural regenerative life where that old man dies and the new man in Christ comes to the forefront. The life that was once bound to sin, Satan and death has

now been transformed and translated into and under the dominion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I made the mistake many years ago as a young man who heard the preacher say “let the Lord lead and control your life” and when I heard that, I said to myself ignorantly I might add “I am not going to let anyone control my life, I can run my life just fine.” Oh how wrong I was and it was only God’s love, mercy and grace that I am able to stand before you today and declare that He indeed should be the Lord of our lives.

Chapter 15, Allotment of Land to Judah

Joshua 15:13-20: “13 Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). 14 Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak. 15 Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher). 16 And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife." 17 So Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. 18 Now it was so, when she came to him, that she persuaded him to ask her father for a field. So she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" 19 She answered, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water." So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. 20 This was the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families”

Again we see in verse 14 that Caleb destroys the sons of Anak who were one of the giant races of people. Kirjath Sepher in verse 15 was a town in the mountains of Judah to the west of Hebron. Caleb promised that the person who was able to retake the city would marry his daughter Achsah. Joshua had already attacked the city on one of his raids so Othniel captured the city and was given Achsah as his wife.

In verse 18-10 Achsah asked permission of her new husband to go and ask her father for additional land probably a cultivated field and her father gave her more than she asked for by giving her both the upper and lower springs.

***The remainder of this chapter verses 21-62 lists the cities of Judah.**

Joshua 15:63: “63 As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.”

*Judah was the largest tribe of Israel therefore they would receive the largest portion of land. The tribe of Judah failed to exterminate the Jebusites from Jerusalem and other tribes of Israelites also failed to totally exterminate all the people in various portions of the lands gained and this would be to their detriment as we will see later, the failure of Israel to exterminate all the Canaanites would come to eventually regret it.

Chapter 16-17, Allotment for Ephraim and Manasseh

Joshua 16:1-3: “1 The lot fell to the children of Joseph from the Jordan, by Jericho, to the waters of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the mountains to Bethel, 2 then went out from Bethel to Luz, passed along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth, 3 and went down westward to the boundary of the Japhletites, as far as the boundary of Lower Beth Horon to Gezer; and it ended at the sea.

The tribe of Joseph inherited the best of the land in beauty and fertilization. The inheritance was located in central Canaan. Why do you think God would give the best fertile land to the tribe of Joseph? Probably because God chose Joseph (whose heart was good) to be the catalyst in the multiplying of the seed of Jacob in the land of Egypt and it would be the fruit of that seed that would settle in the Promised Land as God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

Joshua 16:9: “9 The separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages. 10 And they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites to this day and have become forced laborers.

God told Israel to kill all the people in the land of Canaan, but as we see, the little compromises that are made here was in disobedience to what God had told them and the consequences for them and us now can be sometimes devastating. Israel without question would regret this inaction. As an example for us, let's go to the New Testament book of Corinthians and says, “But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.” Acts 5:11.

This verse is talking about another Christian believer. It is not talking about people of the world because if that were the case we would all have to leave this world. We know the world is wicked, but to have another Christian brother or sister engage in things contrary to the bible makes them a hypocrite and we don't want to be made seen in the eyes of God as guilty by association.

Joshua 17:3-6: “**3** But Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but only daughters. And these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.**4** And they came near before Eleazar the priest, before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the rulers, saying, "The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brothers." Therefore, according to the commandment of the Lord, he gave them an inheritance among their father's brothers. **5** Ten shares fell to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side of the Jordan, **6** because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

We need to go to Numbers 27:1-7 to better understand what these verses are all about: “**1** Then came the daughters of Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph; and these were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. **2** And they stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the congregation, by the doorway of the tabernacle of meeting, saying: **3** "Our father died in the wilderness; but he was not in the company of those who gathered together against the Lord, in company with Korah, but he died in his own sin; and he had no sons. **4** Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's brothers." **5** So Moses brought their case before the Lord. **6** And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: **7** "The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them.**8** And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter.'" These women had a point in their declaration to

Moses and he agreed with them; therefore if a man dies who owns land and has no sons to pass on his inheritance, then the land will fall upon his daughters accordingly.

Joshua 17:12-13: “12 Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. 13 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.”

We see for the fourth time where the people would not drive out totally and completely through extermination the Canaanites from the land, why? If you read the book of Judges you will see the result of Israel’s failure in not eliminating all the people from the land. But, what the real problem was that the children of Manasseh didn’t think they could drive out the inhabitants? Part of it was due to weakness of the people to carry out what God told them to do; they followed a pattern of other cities by placing the Canaanites under tribute instead of driving them out of the land. *When we as Christians compromise with the enemies of God, we lose and we as a church have been compromising by allowing the world to come in and influence their way of life upon us even to the point of changing church doctrine. **In your opinion what examples have you seen in other churches where the doctrine has been change?.**

Many churches have allowed the Canaanites into their organization changing the doctrine of God, disregarding scripture, promulgating some portions of the bible while totally disregarding other portions all to their detriment and just as God punished Israel for that, he will punish those individuals who joined in league with today’s Canaanites making a mockery of the church. Let me go ahead and give you some examples: allowing gay ministers; allowing gay marriage in the church; allowing women to become deacons, bishops and pastors pushing a prosperity gospel that only looks at how one can prosper in wealth and material gain etc.

Joshua 17:14-18: 14 “The people of Joseph said to Joshua, "Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We are a numerous people and the LORD has blessed us abundantly." 15 "If you are so numerous," Joshua answered, "and if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go up into the

forest and clear land for yourselves there in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites." **16** The people of Joseph replied, "The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel." **17** But Joshua said to the house of Joseph--to Ephraim and Manasseh--"You are numerous and very powerful. You will have not only one allotment **18** but the forested hill country as well. Clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours; though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out."

The tribe of Joseph went to Joshua and complained about the amount of land they were allotted. Joshua told them in essence, that if they wanted more land, drive out certain people of the Canaanites in the forest and then you will have more land. But the tribe of Joseph were not interested in driving them out thus becoming disobedient to what God had told them. The land was not the problem but obedience to what God told them was the problem. Fairness in regards to land distribution is not the issue obedience was the issue for the tribe of Joseph.

The tribe of Joseph was strong, but refused to do what the Lord said about the Canaanites. Joshua was not intimidated by Joseph's prestige, size; Joshua knew the problem and told Joseph exactly what they needed to do. Notice something going on here where the tribe of Joseph complains that the Canaanites have all these iron chariots; they are too strong for us. Doesn't this sound familiar? Isn't that what the 1st generation of the Jews said when the spies report came back to Moses citing the fact that the enemy was too strong to be defeated? Time after time these people witnessed the power of God in defeating the enemies before them yet they cry again that the enemy is too strong. Joshua was putting the tribe of Joseph on notice that they needed to obey the will of God regarding this issue for they would not get one more parcel of land residing in some other district.

Chapter 18, Division of the Rest of the Land

Joshua 18:1:3: “Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there. And the land was subdued before them. **2** But there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes which had not yet received their inheritance. **3** Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: "How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers has given you?"

The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The country was brought under their control. The word Shiloh means “place of rest.” Seven tribes remained of Israel who did not possess the land why? This is amazing that after the land of milk and honey has been established for them, they still did not possess it. In vs 3: Joshua says "How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you? These tribes were stuck in a rut and were satisfied with that. Their laziness, disobedience, preference of a nomadic life, and reluctance to renew the war with the remaining Canaanites seem to have made them indifferent to the possession of a settled inheritance. But, Joshua was too much of a strong leader and devoted to the duty laid on him by the Lord to let matters continue in that state and accordingly, since a general conquest of the land had been made, he resolved to proceed immediately with the lot, believing that when each tribe should receive its inheritance, a new motive would arise to lead them to exert themselves in securing the full possession.

*Some churches can be lazy like that, but God has given us everything we need to live the Christian life. We want our preachers to force us to drive us to make us to do things. We need to take possession of the provisions that God has given us and not get bogged down with our own religiosity, which religious formalism. Churches nowadays, go through the pomp and circumstance of ritualistic formalism and by the time the preacher gets up to preach his message, the members are tired and are now thinking of other things like what’s for dinner, where are we going after church, what is my week

going to be like and believe it or not problems with their job. We need to get on with the church service, which should include worshipping God in prayer and song, then the message; pretty simplistic isn't it?

Joshua 18:4-9: 4 Appoint three men from each tribe. I will send them out to make a survey of the land and to write a description of it, according to the inheritance of each. Then they will return to me. 5 You are to divide the land into seven parts. Judah is to remain in its territory on the south and the house of Joseph in its territory on the north. 6 After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God. 7 The Levites, however, do not get a portion among you, because the priestly service of the LORD is their inheritance. And Gad, Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan. Moses the servant of the LORD gave it to them." 8 As the men started on their way to map out the land, Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land and write a description of it. Then return to me, and I will cast lots for you here at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD." 9 So the men left and went through the land. They wrote its description on a scroll, town by town, in seven parts, and returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh.

So Joshua urged them to action; he told them to get men of their tribes, take measurements and divide by seven parts. In verse 7, Gad and Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh had received their portion of land on the east side of the Jordan river of which Moses gave them. The Levites were given no land but were to dwell in 48 towns and pastures for their herds for their inheritance would come through serving the Lord through the offering and tithes from the people. The other half of Manessah dwelt on the west of Jordan and inhabiting 60 cities.

In verses 8-9, Joshua commissions these 21 men to go and survey the land and to bring back an accurate report so he could divide and they could occupy it.

***The rest of Chapter 18-21 goes on to describe the division of the Promised Land by tribe so we will not get into that.**

Chapter 19, A misunderstanding Reconciled

Joshua 22:1-4: “Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and said to them: “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents *and* to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan.”

To understand these verses we need to go to the book of Numbers:

“Reuben and Gad were two of the twelve tribes of Israel and had much livestock. As Israel prepared to cross over the Jordan River and enter into Canaan to possess it, Reuben and Gad saw that the land of Jazer and Gilead (the Transjordan) was good for livestock. They determined that rather than cross the Jordan and settle in that land, they wanted instead to remain on the eastern side of the Jordan River and settle there (Ref. Numbers 32:1). So they requested to be given the land east of the Jordan as their possession, and not the lands west of the Jordan with the other ten tribes” (Ref. Numbers 32:2-5).

Moses responded that the request, as it stood, was not fair to the ten tribes. There were enemies in the land, and so he asked, "Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here?" (Numbers 32:6). Moses knew that the people could be discouraged if their numbers dwindled significantly (Numbers 32:7). The only reason the lands Reuben and Gad desired were now safe is because of a united effort of all the people. They would be no different than the ten spies of the previous generation who had discouraged Israel by their report and had aroused God's anger. This could turn out to be very destructive to God's people (Numbers 32:8-15)!

Reuben and Gad then offered to send their warriors to help possess the Promised

Land (Numbers 32:16-19). Moses agreed to this solution, but with a stern warning. All will be fine if they do as they had promised. However, if they renege on their promise, Moses said, "But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:20-23).

Ok, now to understand why the half-tribe of Manassah stayed on the eastern side of the Jordan along with Gad and Reuben Let's go to Numbers 32:33 and says, "Then Moses gave to the Gadites, the Reubenites and the half-tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan--the whole land with its cities and the territory around them." No mention is given that the half-tribe went to Moses to request to stay on the Eastern side of the Jordan. Only conjecture can be given is that some type of disagreements were going on within the whole tribe.

Joshua 22:5-6: "But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

- He tells them to **take diligent heed** to the word of God, probably here mostly in the sense of carefully hearing it and knowing it and putting it into practice.
- He tells them to **love** the *LORD*. This is a matter of the heart, but it can still be commanded. In Matthew 22:36-40 one of Jesus disciples asked Him what was the greatest commandment? Can anyone repeat what He said was the greatest commandment?
- He tells them to **obey** God with all they have, to **keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him** in a personal sense, and to **serve Him** with all your heart and soul.
- **So Joshua blessed them and sent them away:** Joshua will not send them away without a blessing; he knows that they cannot do or be what God wants without His blessing in their lives.

- Perhaps he used the blessing from Numbers 6:23-27: *Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."'* So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them." How many times for us and unbelievers also that when people leave our presence do we say "may God bless you." We often times say Good Luck don't we. But the term good luck has its origin in paganism and twin gods called Troop and Numbers. Remphan which were idols were represented by troops and numbers which were twin gods and were connected with good fortune and good luck; therefore maybe you should reconsider when you wish someone good luck because this points back to these twin gods troop and numbers; yet many people don't know that these words "good luck" point back to idolatrous worship. Also Isaiah 65:11-12 says, "But you who forsake the LORD, who forget my holy mountain, who set a table for Fortune and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny, I will destine you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter, because, when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen, but you did what was evil in my eyes and chose what I did not delight in."

Joshua 22:7-9: "Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave a possession among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward. And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them, and spoke to them, saying, "Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren." So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses."

- Return with much riches to your tents: Their obedience to God and faithfulness to their brethren has been rewarded. God has allowed them to gain much plunder

that they can take back home with them. I can't help but harken back to the situation regarding Achan who took the unclean thing and was destroyed because of it. Psalm 37:7-9 says, "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land." Moreover, the Gospel of Luke says, "And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

- **So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh:** We might imagine that this was a somewhat emotional departure of brothers who had known the closeness of fighting side-by-side. These were true veterans of the army of Israel.

Joshua 22:10: "And when they came to the region of the Jordan which *is* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan; a great, impressive altar."

- Before crossing over the Jordan, the soldiers from the two and a half tribes build a **great, impressive altar** near the Jordan River. By doing so, trouble is on the horizon.
- This was significant not only because of its size, but because of the *meaning* of an altar. An altar was a place of sacrifice, and both the Israelites and pagans had altars they used for sacrifice.

Joshua 22:11-12: "Now the children of Israel heard *someone* say, "Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar on the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan; on the children of Israel's side." And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go to war against them."

- **Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar:** When the news comes to the rest of Israel, there is no discussion, there is a simple reaction. They gathered to make war against their own brothers who built this altar.
 1. Notice that Joshua does not need to gather them, they gather of own accord. It was an automatic reaction.
- Why did the other tribes prepare for war with their brothers? Because they feared that this altar was a sign of allegiance to the pagan gods of the region.
- Their readiness to fight this battle shows great courage to confront on behalf of God’s truth and holiness. This was a healthy “body,” able to purge itself of poisons.

Joshua 22:13-15: “Then the children of Israel sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel; and each one *was* the head of the house of his father among the divisions of Israel. Then they came to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying”

- **Phinehas** led the group, because he had the authority. He was High Priest over the whole nation, including the two and one-half tribes on the east side of the Jordan. He not only had the authority, he also had the heart of a wise shepherd. He wanted to correct the erring, to protect the nation, and to drive out the perceived danger.

1. Israel reacts according to God's character. Their assembling for war demonstrated God's holiness, but their personal confrontation demonstrated God's love.

Joshua 22:16-18: "Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD: "What treachery *is* this that you have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that you have built for yourselves an altar, that you might rebel this day against the LORD? *Is* the iniquity of Peor not enough for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, but that you must turn away this day from following the LORD? And it shall be, if you rebel today against the LORD, that tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel."

- **What treachery is this:** Clearly, they thought that the altar at the Jordan represented a *rival* place of sacrifice and worship, to compete with God's tabernacle, presently at Shiloh.
 1. God had clearly commanded that there was one place of sacrifice and burnt offerings for Israel: "*Also you shall say to them: Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be cut off from among his people*" (Leviticus 17:8-9).
 2. We understand from this that we cannot worship God any way we please, or justify a manner of worship just because we like it. First and foremost, our worship must be pleasing to God. We must worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*. (John 4:24). Moreover, according to Leviticus those who worship God differently than what He has stated will be cutoff from the blessings of eternity. Although today we do not worship at a tabernacle, we worship the Lord in spirit and truth through His Word, putting it into practice in our daily lives. **Without calling names do you know some denominations that worship God opposite of what He has instructed?**

- **Is the iniquity of Peor not enough for us:** Phinehas reminds the eastern tribes that Israel has been punished for rebellion against God before, using the rebellion at **Peor** as an example.
 1. At Peor, Israel's men had sex with Moabite women, and they gave themselves over to the worship of the Moabite gods. In judgment, God sent a plague that killed 24,000 people. (Ref. Numbers 25:1-8).
 2. This incident would be especially meaningful to Phinehas, because he was the one who stopped the plague by making a dramatic stand for righteousness in the midst of gross sin. "But Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was checked." (Psalms 106:30).
- **He will be angry with the whole congregation:** Phinehas also knew that the sin of these tribes would reflect on the whole nation. He knew that no one really sins unto himself.

Joshua 22:19: "Nevertheless, if the land of your possession *is* unclean, *then* cross over to the land of the possession of the LORD, where the Lord's tabernacle stands, and take possession among us; but do not rebel against the LORD, nor rebel against us, by building yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God.

- **Take possession among us:** To Phinehas, *anything* was better than seeing these tribes go off in rebellion against God. If there was something **unclean** in their land, he invited them to come and live with the tribes on the western side of the Jordan.
- This was an invitation made at great cost. It would have meant a must smaller area of land for the western tribes. But it didn't matter, because they were willing to *sacrifice* to see their brothers free from this sin.

Joshua 22:23 "Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? And that man did not perish alone in his iniquity. Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the

tribe of Manasseh answered and said to the heads of the divisions of Israel:

“The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, He knows, and let Israel itself know; if *it is* in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day. If we have built ourselves an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer on it burnt offerings or grain offerings, or if to offer peace offerings on it, let the LORD Himself require *an account*.”

- First these tribes who erected this alter are reminded of the trespass against God by Achan and the resulting factor being that he and his family were destroyed implying that now through their abdominal act they threaten once again the wrath of God upon the whole congregation.
- **The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, He knows:** They first appeal to God, because He knows for certain their hearts, and they believe that their brothers in the western tribes have misunderstood them.
- **If it is in rebellion, or if in treachery against the LORD, do not save us this day:** They also recognized the rightness of what the others were doing in coming against them.
 1. The eastern tribes do what we should all do when we are misunderstood: put ourselves in the shoes of the other person and try to see what they see. If we saw what they saw, we might respond in the same way.

Joshua 22:24-29: “But in fact we have done it for fear, for a reason, saying, ‘In time to come your descendants may speak to our descendants, saying, “What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel? For the LORD has made the Jordan a border between you and us, *you* children of Reuben and children of Gad. You have no part in the LORD.” So your descendants would make our descendants cease fearing the LORD.’ Therefore we said, ‘Let us now prepare to build ourselves an altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, but *that it may be* a witness between you and us and our generations after us, that we may perform the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your descendants may not say to our descendants in time to come, “You have no part in the LORD.’ Therefore

we said that it will be, when they say *this* to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say, ‘Here is the replica of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though not for burnt offerings nor for sacrifices; but it *is* a witness between you and us.’ Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn from following the LORD this day, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God which *is* before His tabernacle.”

- **An altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, but that it may be a witness:** The eastern tribes recognized their distance from the center of worship in Israel, and that there was a natural barrier (the Jordan River) between them and the rest of the nation. So they built the altar a memorial to link the two segments of the nation.
- They built it so big and impressive so that it would last. They wanted it to stand as a memorial to future generations that the tribes on both sides of the Jordan worshipped the same God.
- The eastern tribes again *agree with the concern* of the western tribes; but they explain that the western tribes have misunderstood the meaning of the great, impressive altar.

Joshua 22:30-31: “Now when Phinehas the priest and the rulers of the congregation, the heads of the divisions of Israel who *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them. Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh, “This day we perceive that the LORD *is* among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD. Now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.”

- **Now when Phinehas the priest . . . heard the words . . . it pleased them:** Obviously, Phinehas is pleased by this explanation; yet he deserves credit for being willing to believe his brothers. Phinehas puts himself in the shoes of the eastern tribes now, and so the explanation makes sense.
- **This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD:** Phinehas could see that

the **LORD was among us**, because unity had been restored among the people of Israel. This fulfilled the passage from Psalm 133:1: “*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*” This is an awesome testimony for us also. To dwell in unity means regardless of what someone looks like, regardless if they are old; regardless if their skin color is different from our own; regardless of their status in life we walk as one body in unity showing God that we are one people save, sanctified and set apart for him.

- Who are the Brethren today? It is all the members of the Church. When a church is unified there nothing nor no one who can break down its boundaries because this is a church that preaches and teaches sound doctrine and begets a reputation in the community as such and just as word got out among the nations in the Promised Land about the God of Israel, so does the same regarding Jesus Christ who is the shepherd of the Church in our communities.

Joshua 22:32-34: “And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the rulers, returned from the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought back word to them. So the thing pleased the children of Israel, and the children of Israel blessed God; they spoke no more of going against them in battle, to destroy the land where the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. The children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar, *Witness*, “For *it is* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God.”

- **So the thing pleased the children of Israel, and the children of Israel blessed God:** Everyone is glad, and everyone enjoys the blessing of having peace among the people of God.
- **The children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar, Witness:** The altar is given the name **Witness**, because it was a witness to the tribes on both the eastern side and the western side of the Jordan **that the LORD is God.**



Figure 19-1, Division of the Land

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Chapter 20, Joshua's Farwell

Joshua 23:1-3: "Now it came to pass, a long time after the Lord had given rest to Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua was old, advanced in age. 2

And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: 3 And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you."

In verse 1 we see that the wars with other nations in the Promised Land is now over and God has given Israel rest from their enemies that surround them. Joshua old and near death calls all the leaders of the people and gives them his final instructions. In verse 2 we see that every one of these Jews were eye witness to the mighty works of God. Let's cross reference this with Deuteronomy 4:9 which says, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." This is Moses speaking before his death. This is a testimony of God that is saying I am God who was fought wars for you. Let's cross reference another chapter from Deuteronomy 20:4, "For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you." The lesson for us in these verses is to be strong and to do everything that God tells us to do in his written word. We are not to deviate from it or take some scripture and leave others. We are not to deviate from the truth in the scriptures.

The word prayer in the book of Joshua is mentioned only two times. Why? It is not because prayer is unimportant, or because people did not pray, but it was because prayer was not and is not a substitute for action and obedience where God has spoken. When God tells us to take a course of action, there is no need to pray about it but we are to take action and do what he says. When scriptures show us what we are to do in any situations, or problems we don't need to turn around and pray about it.

If we are interested in doing what the Lord says, we should do what the Lord says. We don't pray for the will of the Lord when He clearly gives us in His Word of what we

should be doing. God is not going to change His mind regarding his clear instructions in the bible albeit the World has attempted to encourage the Church to do with some success in various denominations.

Joshua 23:7: “That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them.”

So the people have clear instructions not to make mention of the nations around them nor associate with them lest they be tempted into their pagan idolatry. For us today, God has not lifted his imperative concerning associating with the ungodly. Lets look at 1 Corinthians 15:33-34, “Be not deceived : evil communications corrupt good manners. 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” Let’s look at another New Testament scripture regarding hobnobbing with the heathens and ungodly of this world. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? (Belial was the chief of all devils) or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (those who do not accept Chrsitian beliefs) 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said , I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate , saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

We as pastors, minsters, teachers of God’s word and deacons need to teach people to cleave to the Lord and not to us for we are just messengers. The bible says, “But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ (Matt. 23:8-10). I don’t personally use a pastor’s title outside of a church setting because of the passage of scripture. Pastors and ministers are ministers of the faith and should not be held higher than the brethren of

the church. The wearing of religious titles to elevate one brother above another was soundly condemned by Jesus. The practice is contrary to the spirit of Christianity that "all ye are brethren."

Long ago Job said, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away" (Job 32:21-22).

Joshua 23:8-9: "8 Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chasten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you. 9 " 'I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you."

Only God fighting for them and with them could Israel win their battles against other countries. If we love the Lord we never have to concern our hearts with going astray or any type of idolatry. The results of our obedience to God is that He looks upon us with favor and He blesses us in the process.

Joshua 23:12-13: "12 Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations--these that remain among you--and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, 13 know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the Lord your God has given you.

Again there was to be no clinging to the enemies of God, no joining or marriage with them, nor familiarity made with them. Joshua warned that if they did, God would cause the enemies to become snares, scourging at their sides and perish from the land that the Lord have given them. God was also saying that if they did marry or cling to these other nations, he would treat them like the ungodly.

Joshua 23:15-16: "15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all the good things have come upon you which the Lord your God promised you, so the Lord will bring upon

you all harmful things, until He has destroyed you from this good land which the Lord your God has given you” **16** When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.”

My friends if you study the book of Judges you are going to see firsthand the Lord’s righteous judgment against Israel for their transgressions in regards to the above warning by Joshua.

In verse 16 it is incredible almost unbelievable no matter how good God had been to Israel they forsake him to follow their idolatry consisting of immorality and the violent kind of behavior.

It is amazing that even today men and women question God’s love, question what’s he’s doing as if to say we know better than him. The truth is we don’t have a clue how good God has been to us. God gives people a long time before judgment and chastening. We should never question the goodness of God for we as sinners deserve nothing from Him, but because of his grace which is his unmerited favor, he loves us and keeps us. God is to be feared and revered because of His awesome power, and because of his deliverance of us from a burning hell. Fearing and serving God means doing it with an undividing allegiance.

Joshua **24:2-4**: “**2**And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. **3** Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. **4** 'To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

In verse 2 the message comes from the Lord and the message is a history of God’s deliverance of his rebellious people; it began with the fact that all their forefathers were all pagans that’s what the expression means “dwelt on the other side of the Jordan.”

In verse 3 God did indeed bless Abraham and made his seed as the stars in the sky for not only is he the father of the Jewish nation, but he is also the father of the Arab nations as well. Many ask well, if they are all brothers over there why is Israel so hated by the Islamic nations? It is all because of religion. The nations of Islam believe in Allah and of course the Jews worship the God of the earth of which we believe in also. The Islamic nations acknowledge Abraham as their father and even acknowledge Jesus, but as a prophet only.

In verse 4, God described the division of land He gave to Jacob and Esau. Esau would inhabit the area of Mt. Seir, which was a mountain range in Edom and became the father of the Edomites who eventually became non-existent because of their joy at seeing the Southern Kingdom of Judah carried off to the land of Babylon. The bible says, “Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof” (Psalm 137:7). God cursed them for that and they are no more to this day. We all know the story of Jacob who would find refuge in Egypt after he and his family endured a harsh drought, and his son Joseph saved the family for he had become governor of Egypt and the people settle in the city of Goshen.

Joshua 24:15: “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve ; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell : but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

What a declaration, we should declare this in our age today. Are we going to serve the idols of today’s world or are we going to serve the Lord. So many people professing to believers complain how God is so unfair to them. Ezekiel 20:39, “As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols.” There are many people in today’s world who just can’t seem to make up their minds about serving the Lord. They seem to busy serving their fleshly needs instead of the Lord because to do so would mean giving up too much of their sinful life, like lust, idolatry, adultery and with the young folk fornication. In other words they would rather serve their flesh instead of the Lord.

If serving the Lord is going to hinder one's lifestyle, if serving the Lord is going to hinder one's plans and if serving the Lord is going to be such a burden, don't bother doing it. But oh what a price you'll pay on judgment day. But as Joshua said and Oliver Johnson's house has said, we will serve the Lord because we are His servants and we serve Him willingly and joyfully. Frankly speaking, God is the greatest Master a slave could ever have. **If you are not serving the Lord then you are serving another master; what is that; idolatry, immorality, lust, selfishness etc?** If you are serving Christ, it will be demonstrated in your behavior and mind. If we are in rebellion against God, you cannot serve him for God wants his people holy.

Joshua 24:16-31: "So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; **17** for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; **18** And the Lord drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God." **19** But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. **20** If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good." **21** And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the Lord!" **22** So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses!" **23** "Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord God of Israel." **24** And the people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!" **25** So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. **26** Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. **27** And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord which He spoke to

us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God." **28** So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance. **29** Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being one hundred and ten years old. **30** And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Serah, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash. **31** Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.

In verse 16 all that the people said sounded good, but it wasn't true. They declared without hesitation their allegiance to the Lord, but were not totally following God or else Joshua wouldn't have ever bought it up in the first place. He would bring out the fact that they could not serve the Lord while holding onto their idolatry.

In verse 17-18 the people acknowledge the same truth that Joshua had told them to remember; how could they deny it; they were willing to say that they would serve the Lord, but they were not fooling Joshua and were certainly not fooling the Lord.

Now Joshua told the people that they were not able to serve the Lord for He is a holy God and a jealous God, and he will not forgive your sins; these people could not serve God while in rebellion against him and you and I cannot do it either. Joshua goes on to tell the people in verse 20 that if they forsook Him, He would do them harm. Does that apply to us also? The bible is clear that God will indeed cause His own people to hurt if they turn on Him and you can see that clearly when you read Leviticus chapter 26:24-28 and says, "**14** 'But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments **15** and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant, **16** I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. **17** I will set My face against you, and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you, and you shall flee when no one pursues you. **18** 'And after all this, if you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

Many will say well that was the nation of Israel for we now have Christ as our intercessory or intermediary. OK well let's go to the New Testament book of Colossians and says, "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. **6** Because of these, the wrath of God is coming" (Colossians 3:5-6). Just as God warned the nation of Israel in the Old Testament who were His own personal folk, He warns all His human creation of the wrath to come in disobeying his statutes and commands.

In verses 21-22 the people reaffirm their commitment to God saying all that they have heard and they will obey and Joshua says in essence you have become your own witnesses to what you have said and that these stones are witnesses also. In regards to stones being witnesses, Let's go to the gospel of Matthew where the Pharisees are giving Jesus a hard time: "Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" **40** "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

Friends, what the Jews were saying all sounds great and wonderful but it doesn't mean anything if they were going to continue in holding onto their idolatry.

Finally in the verses to follow, the people served the Lord wholly until Joshua died at 110 years of age and all the elders who outlived him, but there is one little problem: Israel only served Joshua and the elders who were eyewitnesses of the Lord's mighty hand only while they were alive; after that the deterioration occurred rapidly in regards to serving the Lord and Him only to the point where every man did that which was right in his own eyes and God would allow various nations to subjugate the children of Israel. Also, this should teach us the lesson regarding strong leadership. When strong leadership is removed it causes people to wonder, and many take this as a license to run amok in sin. Let's look at Deuteronomy 31:28-30: "Assemble before me all the elders of your tribes and all your officials, so that I can speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to testify against them. **29** For I know that after my death you are sure to become utterly corrupt and to turn from the way I have commanded you. In days to come, disaster will fall upon you because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD and provoke him to anger by what your hands have made."

Moses right before his death had already saw right through Israel's hypocrisy:

This happen even in the New Testament in Acts 20:29 where the Apostle Paul is pinning about his impending death and says, “I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.” This is a strong reality; and you can see it in various denominations where the bible says do certain things in regards to church order and they do something very different; or they allow a type of Canaanite (people practicing perverse sins) to come in among them and ruin the fellowship of other members.

*The Old Testament is very important in the lives of the Christian believer. What did Jesus read from when he read the scrolls in the synagogues? The Old Testament scriptures. He didn't come back and say all of the Old Testament has waxed old and is no longer applicable except where God has said it no longer applies to us. The Old Testament is full of scriptures about Jesus so why wouldn't it no longer apply? Moreover, many preachers especially the prosperity ones will very seldom touch Old Testament writings.

The Old Testament is just as important is the new except that Jesus has fulfilled many of its requirements like the Law, the prophets and the Sabbath.

I sincerely hope you enjoyed reading this bible commentary on the book of Joshua. May God smile on you as you use what He has taught in His Holy Word, both in your walk with Jesus and as you witness to others for Christ. Many Blessings!