

JTB VI: THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

(Joshua leads Israel into the Promised Land - ca. 1405-1397 B.C.)

Preparations to Conquer Canaan (Joshua 1:1 - 6:5)

1:1-9/ Joshua, like all of God's leaders, must be an obedient follower of YHWH to be an effective leader of men. Leaders must follow God's revelation just like everyone else, partly as an example, and are not free to operate on their own whims.

2:1-21/ Two spies reconnoiter Jericho and are protected by Rahab, a woman who chose to align herself with YHWH and His people on the basis of faith in His past workings and His future victories to the salvation of her household

3-4/ Israel entered the "Promised Land" the same way they left bondage - by trusting God as they faithfully passed through water (compare with Exodus 14)

5:1-9/ Prior to possessing the land of Canaan, disobedient Israel's sons had to obey the covenant (compare with Genesis 17:14) in circumcision, just as Moses' sons had to (Exodus 4:24-26)

5:10-12/ Israel entered the Promised land in connection with Passover and the supply of miraculous food (manna) ended when the natural was available.

5:13 - 6:5/ Joshua received the battle plans for Jericho from the captain of YHWH's host

The Conquest of Canaan (Joshua 6:6 - 12:24)

6:6-27/ Conquest of Jericho no plunder because the first-fruits/tithe goes to YHWH (vv. 17-19); the obedient faithful are preserved (vv. 20-25); a curse on anyone trying to re-fortify Jericho (v. 26; compare with 1Kings 16:34)

7 & 8/ Conquest of Ai perhaps it was arrogance and over-confidence that led to sending a small force (7:3?). Either way, the sin of one can affect many (7:13-26) and it must be rooted out before others can progress (7:13-26; cf. Acts 5:1-12). Victory does come after sin is dealt with and there is repentance (8:1-29). Ai was conquered with both strength & cunning.

8:30-35/ Blessing & Curses at Mts. Ebal and Gerizim - all of God's word was read to all of God's people (35)

9:1-29/ The Gibeonites, like Rahab, sought a place in God's plan - they lied, as did Rahab, preferring YHWH to their old status and willingly become YHWH's servants in exchange for life (9:27). An oath in YHWH's name is more binding than Law. The Gibeonites had a place in Israel's genealogy (Nehemiah 3:7; 7:25), as did Rahab and Ruth (Matthew 1:5).

10/ Conquest of Southern Canaan - Whereas skeptics and critics have claimed that the conquest under Joshua never occurred (because of little archaeological evidence of destruction and warfare around 1400 B.C.), the Bible tells us that only three cities were destroyed and burned (Joshua 6:24; 8:28; 11:13) because the Israelites wanted to take over what the Canaanites had already built (Deuteronomy 6:10,11).

11/ Conquest of Northern Canaan - Israel defeated large armies and spent more time on this part of the campaign (vv. 4,18)

Division of Canaan amongst the 12 Tribes (Joshua 13-22)

13/ The unfinished conquest

14-19/ Canaan divided amongst the Tribes

20,21/ The Levitical cities and "Cities of Refuge" - The Levites were given 48 cities, scattered throughout the tribal inheritances, so that they could be a spiritual influence on all of the other tribes. Each city had 1000 cubits of pastureland associated with it, radiating out from it. Six of these cities were "cities of refuge" where those who committed manslaughter (unintentional homicide) were given safety until the death of the current high priest, at which time they could go free.

22/ Misunderstanding over the Memorial altar – it was intended to be a “reminder” of their common bond, not a “rival” altar for actual worship

Joshua's Farewell Challenge to Israel (Joshua 23-24)

23:1-16/ Love YHWH and heed His book

24:1-13/ Israel's history is reviewed. From time to time in Scripture, we find summaries of Israel's history offered because individuals and nations need to know “where they came from” - it is a major factor in establishing and maintaining one's identity. A nation needs history as much as an individual needs memories!

24:14-28/ "Choose who you will serve" (compare with 1Kings 18:21). True religion requires both human sincerity and Divine truth (Joshua 24:14; cf. John 4:23,24). Each of us must choose (24:15) whether or not we will serve God.

24:29-33/ The conquest leaders, Joshua & Eleazar, die

I believe God had a larger purpose/lesson in not allowing Moses or Aaron to enter or lead the people into Canaan. God's people did not enter the Promised Land under the leadership of Moses (keeping the Mosaic Law can't eternally save you) or Aaron (human Priesthoods cannot eternal save you), but Israel followed "*Yehoshua/Iasous*" (Joshua/Jesus) into Canaan as a typological picture of how someday all the redeemed would follow another, greater "*Yehoshua/Iasous*" (Jesus) into another and greater "Promised Land."

Charles E. McCoy

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