

JOSHUA

JOSHUA — THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CANAANITES

INTRODUCTION

At the close of the Pentateuch we left the Israelites at Moab, where, after the death of Moses and the investiture of Joshua as his successor, the people were to cross the Jordan and take possession of Canaan.

But before entering upon the study of Joshua, a few words should be said as to the justification of such a course.

Among men it is not a wrongful thing on the part of a landlord to eject a tenant who has not only failed to pay his rent, being able to do so, but also injured the property for which the rent was due.

This was the situation with the Canaanites, magnified a thousand-fold, in their rebellion and opposition to the true God.

Therefore, the justice and holiness of God, without which the respect of His creatures could not be commanded, made necessary just such a judgment as that which befell this people, and will befall every other people who equally defy Him. His sovereignty requires it, and the well-being of His creatures who serve and trust Him require it.

CANAAN ACCURSED

The accursing of Canaan can be connected with "The Law of the Ban" (~~1278~~ Leviticus 27:28-29), to which attention was called when we were studying Leviticus.

It is imperative to remember that we have before us a true theocracy, not a government by man but of God. It is obvious that if fallible men may be granted power to condemn men to death for the sake of the public good, much more must this right be conceded to the righteous and infallible King of kings, who was the political head of the Israelite nation. Further, if this

right of God be admitted, it is plain that He may delegate its execution to human agents.

The only question now remaining concerns the justice of the exercise of this right in particular cases. It is possible that men might sometimes apply this law without divine authority, a situation we are not required to defend any more than the infliction of capital punishment in America sometimes by lynch law. As to its execution in the case of the Canaanites, however, it is not so difficult to find justification. Indeed, when the facts are known, this destruction cannot be regarded as irreconcilable with the moral perfections attributed to the Supreme Being.

The discoveries of recent years have let in light upon the state of society in Canaan at this date, and warrant us in saying that in the history of our race it would be hard to point to any civilized community which has sunken to such a depth of moral pollution. Leviticus gives many dark hints of these things, such as the worship of Molech, the cult of Ashtoreth, the moral sacrifice required of every female, and other things into which one cannot go. Indeed, if the holy and righteous God had not commanded these depraved communities to be extirpated His omission to do so would have been harder to reconcile with His character.

It must be noted that these corrupt communities were in no obscure corner of the world, but on one of its chief highways. The Phoenicians more than any people of that time were the navigators and travelers of the age, so that from Canaan this moral pestilence was carried hither and thither and, worse than the "black death," to the very extremities of the known world. Have we then so good reason to call in question the righteousness of the law which ordains that no person thus accursed should be ransomed, but be put to death? Rather are we inclined to see here not only a vindication of the righteousness of God but a manifestation of His mercy, not merely to Israel, but to the whole human race of that age who, because of this infection of moral evil, had otherwise sunk to such depravity as to have required a second deluge for the cleansing of the world. Read ~~1972~~ Psalms 62:12 and 136:17-22 where God's mercy is shown in His judgment upon the wicked and their iniquity.

Nor can we leave this matter without noting the solemn suggestion it contains, that there may be in the universe persons who, despite the redemption of grace, are irredeemable and hopelessly obdurate. Persons for whom nothing remains but the "eternal fire which is prepared for the devil

and his angels" (~~4154~~ Matthew 25:41). This, because God's mercy endureth forever.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the nature of the book of Joshua?
2. What made necessary this judgment on the Canaanites?
3. What is a theocracy?
4. What do we know of society in Canaan?
5. What geographical relation did Canaan bear to the world?
6. Have you read the quotations from the Psalms?
7. What bearing has this lesson on future retribution?

JOSHUA 1-2 — JOSHUA IN COMMAND

This book might have for a secondary name, The Book of Conquest and Division, with reference to the events it records. The marginal chronology indicates that it covered a period of about twenty-five years, but we have seen that this chronology is not part of the inspired text, and is not to be taken as absolute authority. It is safer to say that we do not know how long a period may have been covered by these events. According to Martin Anstey's "The Romance of Chronology," seven years elapsed from the entry into Canaan to the division of the land.

The book is a record of a military campaign, and criticisms of it from that point of view have placed Joshua in the first rank of military leaders.

THE CALL OF JOSHUA (1:1-9)

Here note that "the Lord spake unto Joshua" (v. 1), just how we do not know, but as He may have spoken unto Moses out of the cloud of glory, or by Urim and Thummin (~~4072~~ Numbers 27:21).

Note also the renewal of the promise of the land which had been given to Moses and to Abraham (vv. 2-4), and with this a reassurance of the divine support to Joshua as it had been with his predecessor.

Observe the reference to the Hittites. They were the dominant nation of Canaan and rivals of Egypt, and to merely human eyes it seemed

preposterous that Israel could dispossess them, but, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Notwithstanding the greatness of the Hittites secular history has known nothing about them until recently, and archaeological discoveries revealing their record have been one of the triumphs of the past century and one of the strongest evidences to the historicity of the Old Testament.

Only one condition is required of Joshua for the fulfillment of these promises — strength and courage. But this strength and courage is not physical, but the moral quality found in obedience to God. And even this is narrowed to one thing — the observance of the written law, knowledge of and meditation upon which will produce this virtue within him (vv. 6-9). Thus God provides our requirements and rewards us for exercising them!

THE PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE (1:10-18)

The victuals in verse 11 could scarcely have been the manna, which would have spoiled in the keeping, but the corn, cattle, etc., which may have been gotten in the enemies' country through which they had passed.

The reference to the two and a half tribes (vv. 12-16) recalls their wish to Moses and his consent that they might locate east of the Jordan for the sake of their flocks; provided, that leaving their families for the time being, the men of war should cross the river and aid in the conquest of the land (~~4011~~ Numbers 32:1-42).

The point that strikes one here is the relation of faith and works in the execution of God's plans by His people. Why should these tribes be required to cross the Jordan since in one sense they were not necessary? Could not God have conquered Canaan without them? But God does not work miracles unnecessarily, and what man himself can do, consistently with the divine glory, he is obligated to do, a principle which has a wide sphere of application.

THE RECONNOITERING OF JERICHO (CHAP. 2)

We cannot pass by Rahab's falsehood (vv. 1-7), which we must not suppose God endorsed, notwithstanding the commendations she received in ~~3813~~ Hebrews 11:31 and ~~3925~~ James 2:25. It is her faith that is spoken of in those instances, but God was no more pleased with her lie than her

unchastity. Lying is a common vice among the heathen, and Rahab probably had no consciousness of its moral guilt.

Rahab's faith was very simple (vv. 8-14). Like the heathen round about, she believed that each nation had its own god, and that some gods were stronger than others. The god of the Hebrews seemed the strongest of all, for she had heard what He had done for them (v. 10). Her city could not stand before such a God and hence she surrendered at once. The other inhabitants of Jericho from the king down had the same evidence as she, but did not act on it. In other words she had faith and they had not. There was fear mingled with her faith, and ignorance, and superstition, and selfishness, but God overlooked these things.

In the same way we are not expected to have a perfectly intelligent faith in our Lord Jesus Christ before we can be saved, nor must we know the whole Bible, or be able to explain its great mysteries. Do we apprehend our danger, and are we disposed to fly to the refuge He offers, that is all.

Every Christian is impressed with the symbolism of the red cord in the window (vv. 15-22). It forces itself upon us in the light of all the Bible teaches about the blood of Jesus Christ and the token of our salvation from the more awful destruction than that awaiting Jericho. It was Rahab's sign of the covenant the men had made with her. It was her mark of identification as one to be saved in the day of calamity. And it was that which her deliverers required as the condition of the fulfillment of their pledge. The story affords many points of resemblance to that of our redemption through Christ, and will repay a study as a basis for a Bible reading or address.

QUESTIONS

1. Give a secondary name to this book.
2. How has Joshua been estimated?
3. What can you say about the Hittites?
4. What gives moral courage to men?
5. Give an illustration of how God uses second causes.
6. Does God commend men for bad deeds?
7. Describe the nature of Rahab's faith?

JOSHUA 3-5 — JORDAN CROSSED

PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE (3:1-13)

The events in this section are the removal to Shittim and the encampment there (v. 1); directions about the leadership of the priests (vv. 2-4); sanctification of the people (v. 5); encouragement of Joshua (vv. 7-8); encouragement of the people (vv. 9-13).

There is little requiring explanation, but notice in verse 4 the care God took for the people's guidance and the occasion for it. And do not forget the obedience required if the guidance were to prove effectual. All these things have their spiritual lessons and were "written for our ensamples."

Notice in verse 5 the forerunner of divine wonders. When we sanctify ourselves by putting away all known sin, God does wonders among us. Notice the demand for faith, "tomorrow" He will do it.

Notice in verse 7 how God removes all apprehension from Joshua so far as the allegiance of the people is concerned. They will follow him because God will put His honor upon him as upon his predecessor. When God calls a man into His service He equips him for it, and makes it so plain that His people recognize it and submit themselves to his leadership (compare 4:14).

Notice in verses 9-13 that presumably the people had no knowledge how they were to cross the river till just before the event. These words of Joshua, therefore, with the miraculous result, must have greatly confirmed their faith in Jehovah as unlike the idols of the nations round about.

THE DIVISION OF THE WATERS (3:14-17)

What play for the imagination here: "As the feet of the priests were dipped in the brim [brink] of the water"! Not a minute before, but just then "the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap." Read the comment in ~~390~~ Psalm 114.

All the more marvelous because it was the time that Jordan overflowed its banks (v. 15), i.e., about our April or May, the period of the early harvest in that land. The river about Jericho is ordinarily only about 150 to 180 feet across, but at this time it was twice as broad, as well as deep and rapid.

The city of Adam beside Zaretan (v. 16) is about thirty miles north. There the river suddenly stayed and the waters gathered into a heap. From that point downward being no longer supplied from above, they began to fail, and hurrying towards the Dead Sea were swallowed up. The riverbed for miles was dry, it has a pebbly bottom there and the people "passed over right against Jericho."

THE MEMORIAL STONES (4:1-9)

Observe that verse 2 is a repetition of 3:12, indicating that these twelve men had been chosen previously for this service, though only now had they been made acquainted with its nature. That nature is described in the verses following. Verses 19-20 show where the stones were placed.

Observe their purpose (vv. 6-7). A common mode in earlier times of remembering remarkable events. No inscription need have been placed upon them, as tradition would hand down the story from age to age.

Observe that another set of stones was set up elsewhere (v. 9). "Unto this day" means when the record was made in the book, which may have been in Joshua's own time and by him, or at a later time by some other hand.

THE CIRCUMCISION AND THE PASSOVER (5:2-12)

The reason for this circumcision is in verses 2-7, but the moral effect of it is stated in verse 9.

The observance of the Passover at the time fixed by the law (v. 10, see marginal references) was another evidence that the national existence was recommenced, and it was appropriate that the manna should cease at this time and the new chapter of their history begin with a new dietetic regimen.

"The old corn of the land" seems to mean that found in the storehouses of Gilgal and its neighborhood on which they levied. The fact that the manna ceased at this time when they no longer needed it is a further proof of its miraculous provision in the wilderness.

THE LORD OF HOSTS (5:13-15)

This occurrence is another of the theophanies, a subject on which we have commented. "Theophany" means a manifestation of God to men by actual

appearance. It might be called a "Christophany" or manifestation of Christ, for all such appearances in the Old Testament were those of the Second Person of the Trinity.

We are impressed with the intrepidity of Joshua, suggesting a supernatural endowment of courage (v. 13). We are impressed, too, with the warlike appearance and the warlike declaration of his divine visitor. As before stated, men ask in ignorance whether war is ever justifiable? Let them remember that the Lord is a God of war, and that until His enemies are subdued war will never end. In the present instance everything betokens heaven's approval of this war of invasion. Only a weak apprehension of sin, and of the divine character, can argue otherwise.

Observe the evidences of the deity of this Person — His name, His acceptance of worship, His command and the reason for it. He appeared at Gilgal, part of accursed Canaan; yet His presence made it holy (v. 15).

QUESTIONS

1. Name the events in the first section of this lesson.
2. At what period of the year was the Jordan crossed?
3. How far north of the crossing did the flow of the river cease?
4. How many sets of memorial stones were there?
5. What further evidence of the miraculous nature of the manna does this lesson afford?
6. What is the meaning of the word theophany?
7. How is the deity of this Captain proven?

JOSHUA 6-8 — JERICHO AND AL

DIVINE ORDERS (6:1-5)

These verses should not be separated from the foregoing by a chapter division, since it is evident that the orders here received by Joshua were given by the Captain of the Lord's host previously described. Observe another proof of His deity in the words, "I have given into thine hand Jericho."

The mode by which Joshua was to proceed (vv. 3-5) calls for no explanation. What had been his own preparations for the attack on the city? Was he meditating upon them when the "Captain of the Lord's host" met him? Nevertheless he surrenders to the divine will, and implicitly obeys.

But it was not Joshua merely, but the whole nation which was to be taught great lessons about God in this transaction. And are not the same lessons applicable to us? Behold divine omnipotence, and the power of faith and obedience on our part in laying hold of it!

God could have destroyed the walls of Jericho in the twinkling of an eye, and without any such procedure on Israel's part, but the circuits they were to make and the length of time involved had value in arresting attention and deepening the impression upon them and their enemy. What if the latter had repented as did Ninevah at a later time?

HUMAN OBEDIENCE (6:8-16)

The record in these verses is the fulfillment in detail of the foregoing decree. "Passed on before the Lord" (v. 8) refers to the ark of the covenant, the symbol of His presence, which was carried in the procession.

It is supposed that, at least upon the seventh day, only the fighting men engaged in the march, it being almost inconceivable that two millions of people more or less, young and old, could have compassed the city seven times in one day.

But what a trial of faith this was! No battlement raised, no foundation undermined, no sword drawn, no spear pointed, no javelin hurled, no axe swung, no stroke given — they must "walk and not faint," that was all.

PROMISED RESULTS (6:17-27)

The first three verses appear somewhat out of place in the record — a command in the midst of a historic recital, but the subject to which they refer is familiar to those who have studied the previous lessons (see ~~REPE~~ Deuteronomy 7:2; 20:17 and other places).

If we conceive of Joshua as pronouncing this curse we must remember it was done by divine command, while on the reasonableness of the curse itself, we should consider what was said in the introductory lesson. The sin

of Jericho was aggravated by their closing their eyes to the miracle at the crossing of the Jordan. God might have swept them away by famine or pestilence, but mercy was mingled with judgment in employing the sword, for while it was directed against one place, time was afforded for others to repent.

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down" (~~<3813>~~ Hebrews 11:30). Faith did not do the work of a battering ram, but it put Israel in an attitude toward God where He might work for them who required no outward agencies. It is the same kind of faith that saves the sinner and sanctifies and builds up the saint.

Rahab's deliverance (vv. 22-25) speaks for itself. She and all her kindred were left "without the camp," doubtless for fear of its ceremonial defilement. The remark that "she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day" shows that the book must have been written within a reasonable date after the event.

The curse on the rebuilding of the city (v. 26) reads in the Revised Version: "Cursed be the man., with the loss of his firstborn shall he lay the foundation, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates thereof." For the fulfillment of this curse see ~~<1163>~~ 1 Kings 16:34.

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES (CHAP. 7)

The sin is named in verse 1 and the consequences to Israel in verses 2-5 in language which needs no commentary. The effect on Joshua is equally intelligible (vv. 6-9), but one is not more impressed with his humiliation and alarm than his jealousy for the divine honor (v. 9, last clause).

The divine interpretation of the situation (vv. 10-15) is of the deepest interest to every generation of God's people. Israel had sinned, transgressed the covenant concerning Jericho, and dissembled besides by hiding the stolen articles. The whole nation had not done so, but the sin of a part was that of the whole (~~<310>~~ James 2:10).

The curse of Jericho now rested on Israel itself (v. 12), and could only be removed by the punishment of the offender who is soon discovered (vv. 16-18), and confesses his crime (vv. 19-21).

The retribution seems severe (vv. 22-26), but not in light of the offense if we judge it as God did, and who is wise if he sets up another standard?

Observe that it is not said positively that Achan's sons and daughters were stoned, although verse 22:20 witnesses that he did not perish alone. They may have been brought out only as witnesses to his punishment, but if it also fell on them then they must in some way have been partakers of his sin. (Read ^{<6246>}Deuteronomy 24:16.) "The valley of Achor" means "the valley of troubling."

DEFEAT TURNED TO VICTORY (8:1-29)

Why was Joshua to "take all the people of war" with him in this case, say six hundred thousand, when the whole population of Ai was only twelve thousand (v. 25)? Was it as a rebuke for their self-confidence before (7:3)? Was it to inspire courage after the memory of their former repulse? Or was it that the division of the spoil now to be allowed (v. 2) might be shared amongst all as a reward for their former obedience and a stimulus to further exertions (^{<6150>}Deuteronomy 6:10)?

The campaign outlined in verses 3-13 is common in modern warfare, but apparently unsuspected by the Aites. Observe that the people of Bethel were confederate with the Aites.

THE ALTAR ON MATTHEW EBAL (8:30-35)

For the history of this altar compare Deuteronomy 27, a command the Israelites presumably could not obey until this victory, since Ebal was twenty miles beyond and through a hostile country.

QUESTIONS

1. What spiritual lessons are taught us in the fall of Jericho?
2. How was the sin of Jericho aggravated?
3. What expression shows an early origin of this book?
4. In whose reign was Jericho rebuilt?
5. Can you quote ^{<5020>}James 2:10?
6. What does Achor mean?
7. Name three possible reasons why all the men of war were to advance against Ai.
8. With what sacred event is this period of the campaign brought to an end?

JOSHUA 9-10 — CONQUEST OF THE SOUTH

THE COMPACT WITH THE GIBEONITES (CHAP. 9)

Verses 1 and 2 are a general statement telling how the kings of the surrounding nations felt in view of Israel's victories, and what they planned to do about it. The narrative then ends in order to describe the method of the Gibeonites, which differed from the others. We must again refer the student to the map in the back of his Bible for details as to the location of these nations.

Gibeon will be discovered a little to the west, perhaps southwest, of Jericho. It was of the Hivites (v. 7), and seemed to represent a democracy more than a monarchical form of government (v. 11).

"They did work wilyly" and caught Joshua and his associates by guile, verses 4-15. "Wine bottles" is in the RV "wine skins," for bottles were made of the skins of animals, goats for example, and when they were old or much used they were liable to be rent.

Notice in verse 7 that the Israelites were a little on their guard. "Suppose you really dwell here in Canaan," they said, "we are not at liberty to enter into a covenant with you" (compare ^{<123B>}Exodus 23:34; 34:12; ^{<157D>}Deuteronomy 7:2). One would have thought they would have asked counsel of the Lord, but this they disobediently failed to do (v. 14).

Joshua now comes into the colloquy (v. 8), but even he is guilty of the same oversight. And yet, as another suggests, if they had sought divine guidance, perhaps "they would not have been forbidden to connect themselves with any Canaanites who renounced idolatry and worshipped the true God." Rahab is in point. "At least no fault was found with them for making this league with the Gibeonites: while the violation of it later was punished" (^{<120E>}2 Samuel 21).

"Hewers of wood and drawers of water" (v. 21) were the menials who performed the lowest offices in the sanctuary (called Nethinim in ^{<130D>}1 Chronicles 9:2 and ^{<152B>}Ezra 2:43). But notwithstanding the chastisement of the Gibeonites in this respect, their relationship to Israel brought them into the possession of great religious privileges (see ^{<184D>}Psalms 84:10).

THE GREAT BATTLE WITH THE KINGS (CHAP. 10)

The story now seems to return to the opening of chapter 9. The kings are exercised by the compact between Israel and Gibeon, for the latter is a strong power. To be opposed by Israel was serious, but Israel and Gibeon united were a greater menace (vv. 1-5).

Gibeon's extremity is Joshua's opportunity (vv. 6-7), but he receives new encouragement from God for this, the heaviest undertaking in which he has engaged. Everything about this conflict is supernatural, which if we keep in mind will remove the strangeness of the miracle in verses 12-14. For example, observe verses 10 and 11.

"Beth-horon" (v. 10) means the "house of caves." There were two contiguous villages of that name, upper and nether. Upper Beth-horon was nearer Gibeon, about ten miles distant, and approached by a gradual ascent through a long and precipitous ravine. This was the first stage of the flight. The fugitives had crossed the high ridge of upper Beth-horon, and were in flight down the descent to Beth-horon the nether. The road between the two is so rocky that there is a path made by steps cut into the rock.

Down this path Joshua continued his rout. Here the Lord interposed, assisting by means of a storm, which burst with such fury that "they were more which died with hailstones, than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."

The oriental hailstorm is a terrific agent; the hailstones are masses of ice, large as walnuts, and sometimes as two fists; their size, and the violence with which they fall, make them injurious to property, and often fatal to life. The miraculous feature of this tempest, which fell on the Amorite army, was the preservation of the Israelites from its destructive ravages.

SUN AND MOON STAND STILL

In the New Testament we are taught to pray in the Holy Ghost, and that the Holy Ghost prays in us (Jude 20; ~~6136~~Romans 8:26). "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man" of which James speaks (5:16), would seem to be the prayer "energized" in the believer by the Holy Ghost himself, the prayer He prays in the man according to the will of God. May we explain Joshua's prayer in verse 12 this way?

The inspired author here breaks off the thread of his history of this miraculous victory to introduce a quotation from an ancient poem, which is parenthetical, contains a poetical description of the victory miraculously gained by the help of God, and forms an extract from "the book of Jasher," i.e., "the upright" — an anthology, or collection of national songs, in honor of renowned and pious heroes.

The language of a poem is not to be literally interpreted, and therefore, when the sun and moon are personified, and represented as standing still, the explanation is that the light of the sun and moon was supernaturally prolonged by the laws of refraction and reflection that ordinarily cause the sun to appear above the horizon, when it is in reality below it. Gibeon (a hill) was now at the back of the Israelites, and the height would soon have intercepted the rays of the setting sun. The valley of Ajalon (stags) was before them, and so near that it was sometimes called "the valley of Gibeon" (~~2330~~ Isaiah 28:21).

It would seem from verse 14 that the command of Joshua was in reality a prayer to God for this miracle; and that, although the prayers of men like Moses often prevailed with God, never was there so astonishing a display of divine power in behalf of his people as in answer to the prayer of Joshua. Verse 15 is the end of the quotation from Jasher; and it is necessary to notice this, as the fact described in it is recorded in due course, and the same words, by the sacred historian, verse 43.

QUESTIONS

1. What geographical relation did Gibeon bear to Jericho?
2. How does ~~4911~~ Joshua 9:11 indicate that Gibeon may not have been a petty kingdom like the other cities?
3. Are you familiar with the story in ~~1210~~ 2 Samuel 21?
4. Name the supernatural phenomena occurring at the battle of Beth-horon.
5. Can you quote ~~8126~~ Romans 8:26?
6. What do you know about the book of Jasher?

JOSHUA 11-12 — CONQUEST OF THE NORTH

Owing to the length of the last lesson no comment was made on the latter half of the previous chapter. But it will be seen that verses 16-27 gave an account of the final destruction of the five kings in the confederacy against Gibeon.

The map will show Makkedah (v. 16) to the west of Gibeon, near the sea and in what we know as the Philistine country. In a cave the kings hid and were imprisoned by Joshua until the rout of the warriors was complete (vv. 17-21), when they were slain (vv. 22-27).

Then in a rapid survey (vv. 28-42) we get the record of the campaign through the South as far as Goshen, including victories over Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, Debir, Kadish-Barnea and Gaza. "All these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel" (v. 42). It was the conquest of the whole Southern Canaan, leaving Israel free to turn attention to the North, the later Galilee region, whose conquest begins in chapter 11.

THE BATTLE AT LAKE MEROM (CHAP. 11)

As the decisive battle in the south seems to have been at Beth-horon, that in the North seems to have been at Merom (v. 5). Let the student trace the localities on the map if he wishes to have his interest kindled, and the facts fastened on his mind.

Notice that horses and chariots appear for the first time and it was for this reason the battle was attempted to be fought on the shores of Lake Merom, where there could be free play for such a force.

The text emphasizes the great numbers of the enemy in this encounter (v. 4). Josephus in his *Wars of the Jews* gives 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry and 20,000 war chariots. If true, this was a formidable host in every way, and Israel may well have been dispirited at the knowledge of it, but God comes with timely encouragement (v. 6), which He makes good (vv. 7-8).

Inquiry may be raised as to why they should destroy the horses and chariots (v. 9), and not keep them for subsequent use, but ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 20:7-9 is a sufficient answer. What a flood of meaning is thrown on such expressions by an event like this! Then, too, not only was Israel to trust in

the Lord independent of such means, but to be neither a traveling nor trading, but rather an agricultural people, which would not require accessions like these.

The following verses in this chapter give a survey of the completed conquest of the North as in the former case of the South (vv. 10-14), and after recapitulating the Southern campaign, the story reaches a conclusion at verse 23.

RECAPITULATION (CHAP. 12)

We give but little space to this chapter. In verses 1-6 we have an account of the kings overcome and the cities taken by Moses on the east of Jordan, and the distribution of their land to the two and a half tribes (see.

<Q2E3>Numbers 21:31; <H2E6>Deuteronomy 2:36; 3:3-16).

Following this we have a record of the thirty-one kings overcome by Joshua on the west of Jordan in the two campaigns, already dwelt upon.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the decisive battle in the conquest of Southern Canaan?
2. Reply to a similar question about Northern Canaan.
3. Have you located Makkedah and the waters of Merom on the map?
4. Can you quote <H2E7>Psalm 20:7?
5. How many kings were overcome by Joshua in his campaign west of the Jordan?

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS AND TYPES

Having come to a natural division of this book, we pause to consider some of its spiritual teachings and types.

For example, take Joshua himself, who is a type of Christ as the "Captain of our salvation" (<S2D>Hebrews 2:10-11). It is interesting that "Joshua" is a combination of Jehoshua, which means Jehovah-Savior. The more important points in the typical relation of Joshua to Christ are indicated in the Scofield Reference Bible:

- (1) He comes after Moses. (Compare <H2E7>John 1:17; <H2E8>Romans 8:3-4; 10:4-5; <S2E7>Hebrews 7:18-19; <H2E3>Galatians 3:23-25.)

- (2) He leads to victory. (Compare ~~<B37>~~Romans 8:37; ~~<4010>~~2 Corinthians 1:10; 2:14.)
- (3) He is our advocate when we have suffered defeat. (Compare ~~<B05>~~Joshua 7:5-9; ~~<B11>~~1 John 2:1.)
- (4) He allots our portions. (Compare ~~<B11>~~Ephesians 1:11, 14; 4:8-11.)

Though we have already spoken of Rahab as illustrating the history of redemption, we add the following:

She lived in a condemned city, and we live in a condemned world.

Her character was bad, and we all are sinners.

She believed in the power of God for her deliverance, and we are justified by faith.

She received a promise for her faith to rest upon, and God has said that whosoever shall call upon His name shall be saved.

She displayed a token and seal of her faith in the scarlet cord, and we believe with the heart unto righteousness, but "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Her deliverance was sure and complete, and "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

All these can be wrought out into a helpful discourse by a selection of the New Testament passages called for by the different divisions.

The crossing of the Jordan has always seemed an impressive type of the intercessory work of Christ on behalf of His people. The priests standing in the riverbed until every member of the host passed over, brings to mind ~~<B725>~~Hebrews 7:25.

To other teachers the passage of the Jordan is an impressive type of our death with Christ. (Compare ~~<B11>~~Romans 6:1-11; Ephesians 2: 5-6; ~~<B11>~~Colossians 3:1-3.)

The twelve stones taken out of Jordan and erected by Joshua in Gilgal, and the other twelve left in Jordan to be overwhelmed by its waters, are memorials marking the distinction between Christ's death under judgment in the believer's place, and the believer's perfect deliverance from judgment.

For the first named consider ~~<1947>~~ Psalms 42:7; 88:7; and ~~<6121>~~ John 12:31-33. For the second, a large variety of New Testament passages will readily come to mind.

The Rev. E B. Meyer speaks of the significance of the vision of the Captain of the Lord's hosts:

We sometimes feel lonely and discouraged. The hosts with which we are accustomed to cooperate are resting quietly in their tents. No one seems able to enter into our anxieties and plans. Our Jerichos are so formidable — the neglected parish; the empty church; the hardened congregation; the godless household. How can we ever capture these and hand them over to the Lord?

We summon all our wit and energy to solve the problem. We study the methods of others, put forth herculean exertions and questionable methods, borrowed from the world. But still we are disappointed, and have gone forth alone, confessing our helplessness, and then it is that we have seen the Captain of the Lord's host. He will undertake our cause, and marshal His troops and win the day.

But we must be holy. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." We must put off the old man, with his affections and lusts, and cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Cleanness rather than cleverness is the prime condition of successful service. It is only out of such a heart that the faith can spring which is able to wield the forces of the unseen and spiritual and divine.

The author mentioned above uses the story of the Valley of Achor for a chapter on sin, from which the following is taken, which might be easily filed away for future reference as the basis of a Gospel address on the foulness of sin:

We should grieve more for sin than its results. Joshua smarted from the disgrace inflicted upon his people and the consequences which would ensue when the tidings were noised abroad. He was dreading the discovery more than the misdoing. But with God it was not so, and never is so. It is our sin in itself that presses Him down, as a cart groans beneath its load.

We should submit ourselves to the judgment of God. "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" It were as if God said, "Instead of grieving for the effect, grieve for the cause." In searching the cause of

our failures we must be willing to know the worst. And that we may know the worst God traces our sin back through its genealogy, just as He did in this case.

We should hold no parley with discovered sin. God never reveals an evil which He does not require us to remove. When this is done the Valley of Achor becomes "the door of hope" (~~2015~~ Hosea 2:15).

"And the land rested from war" (~~6123~~ Joshua 11:23). In the use of this text Mr. Meyer compares the rest experienced by Israel in Canaan with the rest the believer may share in Christ:

There is the rest of reconciliation. The soul no longer works up towards the cross to obtain justification, but is assured that all needed to be done has been done by Jesus Christ on our behalf.

There is the rest of assured victory. When we realize all that Jesus has done, we see that Satan is a conquered foe, and that his weapon cannot reach a life hidden in God.

There is the rest of a surrendered will. When our wills move off the pivot of self on the pivot of God, our lives become concentric with the life of God, and our feet keep step to the music of His divine purpose.

There is the rest of unbroken fellowship. As Jesus is one with the Father, so we become one with Him, and through Him one with the blessed trinity. Truly "our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

There is the rest of perfect love. When we enter into the life of the ascended Jesus, we find that our hearts become pervaded with the love of God, and there is no longer the yearning and bitterness of unsatisfied desire. We hunger no more, neither thirst any more.

There is the rest of the holy heart. It is not occupied with inbred lust nor tossed to and fro on seething passion. The flesh is crucified, the self-principle quelled, and the empire of the Holy Saviour is supreme.

QUESTIONS

1. Have you compared the New Testament Scriptures with reference to the typical character of Joshua.
2. Can you give from memory the points in which the story of Rahab illustrates that of our redemption?

3. In what two ways may the crossing of the Jordan be used symbolically?
4. What symbolical distinction is there between the two mounds of memorial stones?
5. To what spiritual use might you put the reference to Israel's rest in the land?

JOSHUA 13-19 — DIVISION OF THE LAND

Seven chapters make a long lesson from one point of view but not from another, as the subject matter will not require the same attention as in other cases. It is about the division of the land among the tribes, and we will touch on the principal points by chapters.

CHAPTER 13

Although the warfare of extermination had been carried on for some time, some think seven years, yet it was not entirely completed (v. 1). The Lord therefore stirs Joshua to portion out the territory among the tribes, that each may continue to work in its own neighborhood after he has departed. He died at 110 (24:29), from which it may be gathered that he was now past 100.

There follows an account of the land unappropriated which includes, as a first division, the country of the Philistines on the southwest, and that of the Geshurites bordering on it and further south (compare ~~10278~~ 1 Samuel 27:8). A second division is that of the Canaanites near by the Sidonians, in what we know as Upper Galilee. A third the land of the Giblites on the Mediterranean north of Sidon (vv. 2-6).

This sketch of the unconquered territory finished, the directions for allotment are taken up (v. 7), but not until a record is made of the boundaries of the two and a half tribes on the East of Jordan which Moses allotted them in his lifetime (vv. 8-33).

The distribution was by lot (v. 6), as announced in ~~06354~~ Numbers 33:54, a system which accomplished two purposes: the prevention of partiality on the part of the leaders, and the acknowledgment of God's rights in the disposal of His and not their property. The lot seems to have been used

only in determining the general locality where a tribe should be settled, the actual extent of the settlement being otherwise determined (~~0154~~Numbers 26:54). The control of God in the whole matter is seen in that each tribe received the possession predicted by Jacob and also Moses (compare Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33).

CHAPTER 14

At this point the allotment begins on the west of the Jordan. Nine and a half tribes only are mentioned (v. 2), because the other two and half, Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh, were provided for on the east.

It is to be remembered that the Levites were to have no allotment as the others (v. 3), but only certain cities with their suburbs. To make up the even number of the twelve tribes, Joseph's inheritance had been multiplied by two, and Ephraim and Manasseh, his sons, each represented a separate tribe (v. 4). This covers verses 1-5 of this chapter. From verse 6 to the end we have the story of Caleb's choice and allotment of Hebron. See ~~0121~~Numbers 14:24 and ~~0135~~Deuteronomy 1:36.

CHAPTER 15

This gives the borders of the tribe of Judah, whose possession was large because of its preeminence over the other tribes.

Caleb's possession is within Judah, and in connection with it is the story of his daughter's dowry (vv. 16-19). She married Othniel the brave, the first successor to Joshua in the time of the Judges.

The last verse is interesting because of the subsequent history of the Jebusites and Jerusalem in David's day. If Judah could not drive out the Jebusites it was not for lack of power, but faith. But oh, how fatal to them as to other tribes with a similar history, that they should have neglected the divine command to drive out the idolaters. All the sufferings of Israel for hundreds of years arose from that neglect.

CHAPTER 17

This describing the lot of Manasseh is interesting for two things. The first is the apportionment made to the daughters of Zelophehad (vv. 3-6)

according to the command of God through Moses (~~0201~~ Numbers 27:1-11). And the second, Joshua's rebuke of the unbelief of Ephraim (vv. 14-15). There was the spirit of patriotism in this sarcasm.

CHAPTER 18

The first verse of this is the most important, testifying to the setting up of the tabernacle at Shiloh where the camp had now moved. By the camp is meant the remainder of the tribes after the departure of those receiving their allotments (v. 2). Look up Shiloh and identify its location about twenty-five miles north of Jerusalem.

The importance of this is its bearing on the "higher criticism." The view of the rationalistic critics is that the Pentateuch was written much later than the period commonly supposed. That instead of its contents being revealed by God they were conceived by the priests and palmed off on the people as the work of Moses, to bolster their power. According to this the tabernacle and its worship were of comparatively late origin, a hypothesis shaken by the circumstances recorded here. The tabernacle seems to have remained at Shiloh for a long period, probably more than three hundred years, if we may judge by the reference to the ark in ~~0041~~ 1 Samuel 4:11.

Verse 3 of this chapter is an unhappy revelation of the feeling in Israel at this time. Perhaps the people loved ease, perhaps they preferred a nomadic life, but for some cause they were slow to avail themselves of their opportunities to do the will of God.

If Canaan be a type of Christ and the privileges of the risen life in Him, what a rebuke these words convey to many a Christian heart! How foolish we are, and how ungrateful to God to be satisfied with present attainments when there is so much more and so much better ahead.

And do we say, "O, that our Joshua would stir us up to possess the land"? Is He not doing it? Do we not hear the rebuke of the still small voice?

Let us get back to the Word of God and its great and precious promises. Let us "arise and go through the land and describe it," that a holy passion may be quickened to possess it.

Joshua's directions to the twenty-one land surveyors in verses 4-9 give rise to the question as to where, or how, the latter obtained their knowledge,

for the task was no simple one. Had they been taught geometry in Egypt? What light this throws upon the civilization of the Hebrews at this time.

CHAPTER 19

The feature in this chapter is the allotment to Joshua recorded in the last two verses. Notice when it was done (v. 49), and by whose authority and decree (v. 50). There is no record of this decree, but it probably had a similar history to that in the case of Caleb (14:9).

So they made an end of dividing the country.

QUESTIONS

1. About how long a time was covered by the campaign of conquest in Canaan?
2. Was the conquest entirely completed by Joshua?
3. What advantages were there in the distribution by lot?
4. How was the providence of God shown in the distribution?
5. What was the character of the allotment for the tribe of Levi?
6. Of what sin of neglect were the tribes guilty?
7. What was the root cause of this sin?
8. Where was the tabernacle set up in Joshua's time, and how long presumably did it remain there?
9. What bearing has this circumstance upon the science of Biblical criticism in these days?
10. What important spiritual analogy do we find in chapter 18?

JOSHUA 20-22—SPECIAL CITIES; ALTAR OF WITNESS

THE CITIES OF REFUGE (CHAP. 20)

The decree concerning the cities of refuge was considered in its place. It will be well, however, again to notice that they were not instituted to shield criminals but innocent murderers. Whether innocent or guilty though, the murdered had an asylum until his case could be heard by the authorities (v.

6). If innocent he was permitted to remain in the city, immune from the legal avenger, until the death of the high priest. When this occurred he was free to return to his home town, and the rights of the avenger ceased (v. 6).

Observe the symbolical character of the high priest in this particular. How the man-slayer, desirous of his liberty, must have calculated the probabilities of his death, and wondered whether, after all, it would antedate his own? But what a type it is of the Mediator of the new covenant who by means of death has secured redemption and deliverance for all that believe on Him (~~scrips~~ Hebrews 9:15-17).

THE CITIES OF THE LEVITES (CHAP. 21)

In the distribution of these there is nothing more remarkable than the allotment of the priests (vv. 9-19), in which all the cities falling to them were located within the territories of Judah and Benjamin. Simeon indeed is named (v. 9), but an earlier chapter showed that this tribe had received part of the territory of Judah which had proven too large for them.

Behold, the providence of God! At a later period there is a revolt among the tribes (~~scrips~~ 1 Kings 12), and they separate themselves on the north to form the kingdom of Israel, while two on the south remain loyal to the Davidic and Messianic line, retaining the temple worship and Aaronic priesthood intact, and these two are Judah and Benjamin!

THE ALTAR OF WITNESS (CHAP. 22)

Notice the commendation Joshua is enabled to give the men of war of the two and a half tribes, who for a probable period of seven years, had separated themselves from their families and flocks in fulfillment of their pledge, to assist in the conquest of the land and the settlement of the tribes on the other side of the Jordan (vv. 1-4).

Note the warning and benediction he bestows upon them (vv. 5-6), and the share of the spoil they carry back, and the purpose of it (v. 8).

But soon a misunderstanding arises. Note its cause (v. 10); the commotion it occasioned among the tribes on the west (vv. 11-12); the wise counsels that prevailed (vv. 13-14); the conference with the supposed offenders (vv. 15-20); the explanation (vv. 21-29), and the satisfaction experienced (vv. 30-34).

QUESTIONS

1. In what parts of the Pentateuch are the cities of refuge referred to?
2. What type of Christ, not heretofore mentioned in these lessons, is found in the record concerning them?
3. What providence is seen in the lot of the priests?
4. Can you give the history of the altar of witness?
5. What name was given it, and why?

JOSHUA 23-24 — COVENANT RENEWED, JOSHUA'S END

THE GATHERING AT SHILOH (CHAP. 23)

"A long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel," refers to a period elapsing after the distribution of the land. We do not know how long it was, but Joshua is old and his departure is near (v. 1).

This is a gathering of the leaders presumably at Shiloh, where the central place of worship was (v. 2).

It is an occasion to exhort the people to faithfulness in their obligations to God, the address of Joshua falling into three parts:

- (1) He recalls past blessings (vv. 3-4);
- (2) He rehearses promises yet to be fulfilled (vv. 5-11); and
- (3) He renews the warnings in the event of disobedience (vv. 12-16).

Under the second head, he applies almost the same words to Israel that the Lord spake to him at the beginning (v. 6). Courage is necessary to drive out the enemy, but it consists in doing the will of God. The enemy will vanish if they do this. Moreover the will of God is their separation from the nations which constitute the enemy, and especially the worship of their gods. How aptly this fits in with the obligations of the Christian. The world is our enemy, but "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). That is, as we believe God and obey Him in the Gospel of His Son, He subdues our enemy and the world loses its power over us. "The Lord your God, He it is that fighteth for you" (v. 10).

Under the third head, note verses 12-13, which serve as a text, alas! for the whole story of the book of Judges which follows this.

THE GATHERING AT SHECHEM (CHAP. 24)

Just why this gathering was held at Shechem instead of Shiloh is not revealed, but it may have been because this was the locality between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, where the covenant had been ratified on their entrance into the land (see chap. 8). It may have been desired to give the present occasion the impressiveness of that memory, and of other events which had taken place there (see ^{<0126>}Genesis 12:6-7; 33:18-20; 35:2-4).

God's past blessings are once more rehearsed (vv. 2-13); the covenant solemnly renewed (vv. 14-25); the words written and the witness recorded (vv. 26-28). Verses 2-13 contain a wondrous recital of God's grace towards Israel. And it was grace towards all the world, too, when we consider the purpose of Israel in the redemption of the latter. Let not these verses be passed over hastily.

Grace precedes service on our part, but service follows grace, hence the obligations in verses 14-25. Notice Joshua's example (v. 15), and the all too prompt vow of the people. Joshua seems to doubt them (vv. 19-20), but they reiterate their allegiance (vv. 21-24), and the scene closes.

Note the existence of "the book of the law of God" in Joshua's time and his own addition to it (v. 26), as a historical fact bearing upon the science of Biblical criticism in our time. This testifies to the early origin of the Pentateuch and points to Moses as the author.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CORROBORATION OF JOSHUA

Before concluding our lessons in Joshua it will be stimulating to faith to speak of the new light thrown on Canaan during Joshua's time by the excavation work in southern Palestine under Prof. Sellin.

He tells us that the foundations of the walls built by the Canaanites around their cities can easily be traced. During their occupation by the Israelites these walls were repaired or "pointed," and as the Canaanites used polygonal stones and the Israelites four-sided ones, the archaeologist is enabled to exactly define the portions of the walls of Israelitish origin.

The ruins of the walls of Jericho are well preserved, and the remnants of house walls over six feet high. The houses of the Israelites were small, and the difference between those occupied by the common people and the princes is largely one of the number of rooms.

These discoveries bear on the religious condition of the people and their development. Under the high altars in the groves, vessels, amulets, and idols, made of clay and bronze, were found. The inscriptions point to the offering of newborn children in these vessels as a votive offering to the goddess, Astarte. Professor Sellin says that the exact truthfulness of the Biblical records receives emphatic corroboration from these discoveries.

Speaking of the walls of Jericho again. A well-defined citadel was unearthed upon the northern boundary having two study towers upon its flanks, one of them with an area of 40 x 16 feet. The inner wall was about twenty-six feet high and afforded protection to various apartments and offices for military and domestic uses. In and about the citadel were remains of the older Canaanite time which preceded the siege of Joshua.

It is doubtful whether the towers existed in Joshua's time, although they seemed to have preceded the reign of Ahab, during which Hiel of Bethel rebuilt the city. Referring to this rebuilding, a gap is observed by explorers between the early Canaanite remains and those of the Jewish monarchy, and this may corroborate the fact that Jericho lay in ruins for several centuries between its destruction at the hands of Joshua and its rebuilding under Ahab.

Of course the material of these discoveries needs sifting and collocating, and some conclusions may receive modification, but nevertheless they are of great value and likely to become increasingly so.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the central place of worship in Joshua's time?
2. Can you quote ~~1~~ John 5:4?
3. Name some events that have made Shechem memorable in the history of Israel.
4. What evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch does this book afford?
5. How does archaeological science corroborate the historicity of this book?