

## **Joshua — Chapter One**

Joshua 1:1-2 **"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel."**

"Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel." (ASV)

These verses show the close connection this book has with Deuteronomy. The close of Deuteronomy deals with the death of Moses, and the book of Joshua begins with his death.

Moses and Joshua were both servants of GOD, but in different ways. Moses was GOD'S servant in a special way, for it was he who was chosen to be "the lawgiver" and the one who was to speak **"face to face"** with GOD. This may be the reason Moses is designated here as the **"servant of the Lord,"** and Joshua is designated as **"Moses' minister."**

*"He (Moses, R.K.) was, as it were, the household servant of the Most High, His steward and representative, ruling over the family of GOD in His name, and giving to them the directions of which they stood in need"* (Pulpit Commentary, Deuteronomy Joshua and Judges, p. 1). Cf. Hebrews 3:1-4.

Moses was now gone from the scene, and GOD called upon Joshua to pick up the reigns of leadership, taking the people into Canaan. Joshua's original name was Oshea (Numbers 13:8). He is also called Jehoshua (Numbers 13:16). Joshua is a form of this latter name and means *"Jehovah is deliverance,"* or *"Jehovah is salvation"* (Coffman, p. 2). The Greek form of this name is Jesus, which basically means *"Savior."*

## **The Man Joshua**

*"To know the life of any great man is a pleasure. But to study about the great and pious man Joshua, 'full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him' (Deut. 34:9), who distinguished himself by outstanding bravery and faithfulness as a humble servant of GOD over a period of many years, is to love him. His background, life of service, and leadership stand head and shoulders above most if not all mere mortals who have before and since lived on the earth. Our first notice of him is found soon after the exodus from Egypt when he was highly esteemed in being chosen as one of the tribal representatives sent out by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. Because of his unwavering faith in GOD, his faithful report and encouragement to take the promised land immediately almost resulted in his being stoned to death (Num. 14:6-10). Listed forth in the list as 'Hoshea,' meaning 'a desire of salvation,' he was identified as the son of Nun of the tribe of Ephraim (13:8-16).*

*However, soon we also note a change being made in his name, like those of Abram and Sarai (Gen. 17:5-15). Evidently this was given prophetically by Moses. It symbolized Joshua's future work as an instrument in GOD'S hands to lead Israel in many victories over the forces of their enemies, the Canaanitish nations, as Israel fought her way to the promised land. 'And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua' (Num. 13:16). 'Joshua' signifies 'being Divinely appointed, he shall save, head of salvation, the salvation of Jehovah, and savior.' In his approximately seventy years of public service, he seemed always to live up to his name.*

*There is not a single stain on the name of Joshua! These are designations much like those of Jesus the Christ, the Son of GOD, and the Savior of the obedient world. He is clearly called 'Jesus' by Stephen and by Paul in the New Testament (Acts 7:45; Heb. 4:8, KJV).*

*This one, born in slavery in Egypt and being in the deliverance, at first was known as 'the servant of Moses.' One month after the death of Moses, at about eighty-five years of age, this courageous man was appointed to be successor to Moses in leading Israel (Ex. 17:14). In one six-year period under his leadership, six nations and thirty-one kings were conquered for GOD and Israel! Perhaps the secret of his successful life may be most easily seen in his own statement, 'But as for me, and my house, we will serve Jehovah' (Josh. 24:15). He departed this life at 110 years of age. The fact that he was so close to the magnanimous man Moses, even accompanying him to Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone (Ex. 14:13), further qualified him for the important work and leadership position he would occupy. His valiant leadership of Israel across the Jordan into the promised land can be compared to Christ's leading His people through the valley of the shadow of death into Heaven (John 14:1-6; Psalm 23:4). He was also honored by GOD in exceptional ways as he served faithfully in the leadership of GOD'S people. Few leaders have deserved and received such esteem, honor, and confidence as did the great man Joshua!" (Gary Colley, p. 47-49)*

Notice, GOD again told them that it is He Who gave them the land. It is stated as if Israel had already received the land, even

though they had not crossed Jordan yet. In the mind of GOD, it was a done deal, even though the capture of the land would not be literally accomplished for several years.

**Joshua 1:3-4 "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast."**

"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border." (ASV)

Zerr took a position with regards to these verses which is quite interesting. He believed that since GOD had promised their fathers (and their seed) this land, then all the actions of the Israelites were defensive in nature. Instead of looking at them as purely an invading army, he looked at them from the view point of defending their own land against usurpers.

*"In every action of the army they were not only fighting a war of defense, but are fighting it on their own homeland"* (Zerr, p. 314).

One of the more common views is that verse three simply shows the relative ease by which they would conquer the land. Only unfaithfulness to GOD could place a barrier between them and the goal GOD had assigned them.

**"For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your GOD, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave unto Him; Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations**

and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be. There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your GOD shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as He hath said unto you" (Deuteronomy 11:22-25).

(Notice the difference between the first and second attempts to conquer Ai.) This second view looks at Israel as an invading army.

Verse four again states the boundaries of the nation. The wilderness would be the deserted area south of Jerusalem. Lebanon, a range of mountains in the north-west section of the land. The river Euphrates is mentioned, which is interesting, but which part? Was it the whole river which extended to the Persian gulf, or some part of it which would be to the northeast of the Sea of Galilee? The "Great Sea" is of course the Mediterranean Sea.

Why are the Hittites the only ones mentioned here? The term probably stands for all of the nations involved in Canaan.

*"The Hittites are properly the inhabitants of northern Canaan and Phoenicia, but the name appears to be used here for the Canaanites in general, as in First Kings 10:29"* (Barnes, p. 353).

*"The land of the Hittites' is a designation of Canaan, or Palestine, generally"* (Coffman, p.4).

It could also have something to do with the warlike nature of the Hittites, who were considered the fiercest and most capable fighters in the land. (Remember, David's body-guard was made up of Hittites.)

Joshua 1:5-7 **"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. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them. 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."**

"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. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to 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 have good success whithersoever thou goest." (ASV)

Notice the encouragement GOD gave Joshua.

*"Even the bravest men hesitate when they come face to face with the great challenges of their lives. They may even step aside and shun to perform their duty for a moment. Joshua was a brave man, and GOD'S assuring him of His abiding presence would give him additional courage"* (Winter, p. 33).

Joshua had a great task to perform. He was to:

1. Be firm and strong (Deuteronomy 31:6).
2. Rely upon GOD (Joshua 1:5-7; Deuteronomy 31:7, 23).
3. Divide the land for an inheritance (Joshua 1:6).
4. Carefully observe the law (Joshua 1:7).

GOD promised to always be with him, as long as Joshua maintained faithfulness to Him.

*"GOD never did fail in His support of*

*Joshua. When there seemed to be an exception to this promise the fact was explained by the conduct of the people in which they had broken some commandment of the Lord, but Joshua was always successful in the operation that depended solely upon his own conduct" (Zerr, p. 314).*

There was something Joshua had to do in order for GOD'S blessings to continue with him. He had to **"do according to all the law"** (Emphasis mine, RK). He was instructed not to deviate from the law to one side or the other.

*"Men are not allowed the liberty of becoming so radically conservative they disallow what GOD allows, and they are not allowed the liberty of allowing what GOD disallows" (Deaver, p. 5).*

The only way man can keep from deviating from GOD'S law is to keep himself informed through diligent study of GOD'S requirements — His law. Only honest and good students of GOD'S Word can avoid deviating to the right or left. Joshua was a good student of the law, and we must do the same.

**"Study to shew thyself approved unto GOD, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (2 Timothy 2:15).

One should carefully observe that it takes strength and courage to faithfully serve GOD, to be a leader. The forces of evil often appear to be unbeatable, and the majority are always on the side of Satan. To withstand this onslaught of evil takes courage and strength. If we maintain courage, the Devil will flee from us; victory will be ours.

**"Submit yourselves therefore to GOD. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you"** (James 4:7).

**Joshua 1:8-9 "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou**

**mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy GOD is with thee whithersoever thou goest."**

*"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy GOD is with thee whithersoever thou goest." (ASV)*

GOD'S Word was to be a vital part of Joshua's life. It was to fill his heart in order to guide him in all that he did. All of his speech would thus be flavored with GOD'S Word. Every command he gave would have the authority of GOD behind it. Joshua was promised that he would prosper if he made GOD'S Word a vital part of his life.

*"The sabbatarians say what God commanded is one thing, and what Moses commanded is another. But in these two verses the book of the law is mentioned and in direct connection the Lord says, 'I commanded.' Thus, to all fair minded persons there can be seen no difference between the authority of the book and the tablets" (Zerr, p. 314).*

The question in verse nine *"would also remind Joshua that he had no other alternative. If God had commanded him, he could not shun his responsibility. He was not serving man. He was God's servant"* (Winter, p. 35).

**"Do I now persuade men, or GOD? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ"** (Galatians 1:10).

Consider a lesson for Christians in the

instructions Joshua was given. **Why did GOD tell Joshua to be courageous?** Because he was going to face great responsibilities and obstacles in accomplishing his mission. The same is true of GOD's people today. Like Joshua, Christians are given a mission (Matthew 28:19-20), which entails doing just what GOD says. The enemies of truth are legion, but one must courageously uphold GOD'S truth anyway. Christians are to **"hold forth the word of life"** to a sin-filled world. When one speaks the truth from GOD'S Word, he must be courageous, refusing to be embarrassed about the message or intimidated by the forces of Satan. The young man Titus was told,

**"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee"** (Titus 2:15).

Christians are to be like Timothy, who was told to:

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine"** (2 Timothy 4:2).

*"Men," says Calvin, "never act skillfully, except in so far as they allow themselves to be ruled by the Word of God"* (Pulpit Commentary, p. 11).

**Joshua 1:10 "Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,"**

"Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying," (ASV)

The word **"officers"** in verse ten, is the word shoterim. Their functions seemed to vary depending on the assignment given. They were sometimes thought of, or used, as scribes, et cetera. In his commentary, Winter describes some of their functions as follows:

1. To keep family registers (providing for the levying of men at times of war, et cetera.).
2. To circulate the commands of the

leader.

3. To issue orders to the people.

In the present context, these men had the responsibility to gather the people together and organize them in preparation to cross the Jordan River.

**Joshua 1:11 "Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your GOD giveth you to possess it."**

"Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which Jehovah your GOD giveth you to possess it." (ASV)

These officers were to tell the people to gather **"victuals"** (food) for the march which was ahead. This seems strange at first glance, for the people were still being fed manna from heaven, which would spoil after a day. **But where does the Bible state they only ate manna? What about the sheep, cattle, and other animals, which they possessed?** Plus, there was food in the land which has been gained from their defeated enemies. Further, if their only food was manna, GOD could make it last a month if He so chose. It would seem this order may be preparing the people for the end of the manna, but most likely it deals with their inability to gather food once the march started.

**Joshua 1:12-15 "And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your GOD hath given you rest, and hath given you this land. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed,**

**all the mighty men of valour, and help them; Until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your GOD giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side Jordan toward the sunrising."**

"And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, Remember the word which Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you, saying, Jehovah your GOD giveth you rest, and will give you this land. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall abide in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan; but ye shall pass over before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and shall help them; until Jehovah have given your brethren rest, as He hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which Jehovah your GOD giveth them: then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and possess it, which Moses the servant of Jehovah gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising." (ASV)

The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh were reminded of the promise they made to Moses regarding the land. They had asked Moses for the land east of the Jordan River (Numbers 32). They asked for this land because it suited the needs of their flocks and herds. Moses had agreed on the condition that **all** of their fighting men would help their brethren win the promised land.

They had to leave their wives and little ones behind (east bank), while they went to the other side of Jordan to fight. **Who would protect their families while they were gone?** GOD would! The fighting men of these two and one half tribes numbered about 110,580. But only 40,000 of them crossed over Jordan to help their brethren (Joshua 4:13). The land these two and one half tribes inherited had formerly been the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan.

**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. 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."

"And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou hast commanded us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only Jehovah thy GOD be with thee, as He was with Moses." (ASV)

The important thing here is the renewal of their allegiance to Joshua. They had previously made this agreement with Moses, but he was now dead. It was only logical to renew the agreement with the new leader.

The concluding statement in verse seventeen has been viewed in two different ways:

*"Provided God be with thee, as he was with Moses, we will implicitly obey thee. The words however may mean no more than an earnest prayer for Joshua's prosperity: May God be with thee, as He was with Moses" (Clarke, p. 9)!*

This writer believes they were saying as long as Joshua is faithful to GOD, they would follow him. GOD would only be with Joshua as long as Joshua remained faithful to Him.

**"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ"** (1 Corinthians 11:1).

There is a marked difference between the attitude one sees here and the one their fathers had manifested in the wilderness. When their fathers entered the wilderness, about all one sees is their constant murmuring (complaining and whining). This generation was ready to obey. They had learned the lesson their fathers had failed to learn until it was too late.

**Joshua 1:18** "Whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will

**not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage."**

"Whosoever he be that shall rebel against thy commandment, and shall not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of good courage." (ASV)

Rebellion had cost their forefathers the opportunity of entering the promised land. This new generation clearly understood the need for strict discipline. As Clarke said, this was indeed marshal law. When one looks ahead, he sees someone who violated the words of Joshua; and the people, true to their word, executed him (Achan). Their action on that occasion allowed the congregation of Israel to regain its purity and thus again be victorious.

In their words and actions it is seen that rebellion against GOD'S chosen representative was the same as rebellion against GOD Himself. **Has that lesson been learned today with regard to GOD's word and those who faithfully teach it? Has the lesson been learned with regard to the respect secular rulers are due by Christians — "the minister of GOD?"** One may not like what these "rulers" do, but that is no reason to disrespect the office they hold, and thus violate GOD's word. As long as these rulers do not command one to disobey GOD's laws, their office must be respected!

**"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of GOD to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of GOD, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil"** (Romans 13:3-4).

Today, rebellion against the writings found in the New Testament is rebellion against the

representatives through whom GOD chose to reveal His Divine will. This rebellion is no less a rebellion against GOD than it was in the time of Moses, Joshua, et cetera. And the result of all rebellion is death: physical death in Old Testament times, spiritual death in the New Testament, and eternal death to both who do not repent.

## **Joshua — Chapter Two**

**Joshua 2:1 "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."**

"And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men as spies secretly, saying, Go, view the land, and Jericho. And they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lay there." (ASV)

**Why would Joshua send these spies out secretly?** One point to consider would be the wisdom of sending out spies if everyone knew they were spies. But there is another consideration here which needs to be noted. Most agree the language indicates Joshua may have been the only one who knew these two men's mission. If this be the case, **Why did he send them out so that the Israelites did not know about it — why hide it from them?** It is possibly as simple as — the more people who know about this, the more likely it is that the people of Canaan would hear about it. Or, it could be that Joshua remembered the ten unfaithful spies (Numbers 13). If he were the only one who knew the report, and if these spies were like the spies of old, who brought back a negative report, he could stop it from spreading and possibly causing rebellion to GOD as the negative report had done in the past.

One also sees another important lesson here. GOD always does what He alone can do, but when there is something which needs to be done which man can do, GOD does not do it for him but expects man to fulfill his

responsibility. GOD told them the land was theirs, but He did not draw them a recon-map of the land. They needed information on the lay of the land. They could obtain this information without divine intervention. And, they needed to see the fear these people had for them, thus encouraging them. Another example of what is noticed above (Principle of Divine economy) is found when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44). Jesus commanded them to roll the stone away. He raised Lazarus from the dead (which they could not do) and then told them to loose Lazarus from his grave clothes.

**What kind of city was Jericho?** Cates said, "*Jericho was known as the 'city of fragrance,' from the Hebrew meaning 'to breathe or smell a sweet odor'*" (Cates, p. 23). Jericho was located about seven miles north of the Dead Sea and about ten miles north-west of where the Jordan river empties into the Dead Sea. It was a prosperous city, since it was set on a hill overlooking the plains, from which it controlled the trade routes through Canaan. Jericho was also a well-fortified city and held a strong position of defense.

The spies took refuge at the house of Rahab. This would be a good place for spies to go in a strange land, because detection would be less likely. The possibility exists that a stranger would not be noticed in her house as quickly as they might somewhere else. **Does it seem strange, that they would go directly to someone who was convinced that they were going to take over the land and was willing to help them?** Not to this writer. A third consideration might be the location of her house on the wall, which could afford a good means of escape. In all of this one sees GOD's providence at work.

Regarding Rahab's being a harlot, some modern writers have tried to change her occupation to "*inn-keeper.*" They often do so in an attempt to remove her sordid past from the lineage of Jesus. The word used of Rahab in the LXX is rendered πόρνη (Pulpit Commentary, p. 27). This is the word from which one gets the word pornography. The

same word is used with regard to her in the New Testament. The use of these words "*definitely class her as a common harlot, not as a q'desha (temple or cult-priestess)*" (Cates, p. 23). Further, Zodhiates stated that the Hebrew word used here is Zanah, for which he then gave the following definition.

*"to fornicate, commit fornication, be a harlot, play the harlot, commit adultery; to apostatize, have intercourse with false gods or foreigners; to seduce. The main idea is to commit illicit sexual intercourse, particularly with women"* (Zodhiates, CD).

**Joshua 2:2-7** **"And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country. 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. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate."**

"And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel to search out the land. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, that are entered into thy house; for they are come to search out all the land. And the woman took the two men, and hid them; and she said, Yea, the men came unto me, but I knew not whence they were: and it came to

pass about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I know not: pursue after them quickly; for ye will overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to the Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they that pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate." (ASV)

The king of Jericho heard that these men had come into the city and, apparently, that they had gone to the house of Rahab. He sent a message to Rahab to turn over these spies. Instead, Rahab hid them on the roof of her house. This might seem odd to one who lives in a land where a roof is generally slanted. But in those lands the roofs were often flat. People used them as one would use a porch in the evening today. A place to walk, talk with friends, store provisions, even a place to sleep in hot weather. Rahab told the king's messengers that the men they sought were no longer in her house. She told them that they left just before the city gates were closed for the night, and she told them if they pursued quickly they should be able to catch them. An interesting aspect of this is the King's trust in her, he never questioned her honesty.

In her answer to the king, Rahab told a lie. Some have tried to justify Rahab's lie with all kinds of excuses. For instance, some have tried to excuse her by saying that she did not know any better because she really did not know GOD and His rules yet. This is the old, tired, and frayed argument of one's not being amenable to the laws of GOD until he becomes a child of GOD. If such a concept is true, then Jesus was wrong to tell Christians to take the Gospel into all the world to every creature (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). If one is not amenable to the law of GOD as an alien, then **Why teach him anything?** If they are not amenable to GOD'S laws outside of His family, then leave them alone so that they can go to Heaven. The second that one teaches him, if he refuses to obey, he then

becomes lost. How absurd such reasoning is! Others have tried to say her lie was a lie of convenience, so it really did not count as a sin. If this argument is true, then the murderer who did not know GOD, or who knew if he were convicted he would receive the death penalty, is justified in telling lies. Again, how ridiculous!

Sin is always sin; it does not matter who commits it or when it is committed. Right here, one should consult James 2:24-26.

**"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."**

This passage does not say Rahab was justified because she lied but rather because of her faith, coupled with her works. She received the spies and sent them on their way safely. The Bible is clear in its condemnation of lying, and **nowhere** does it ever say there is any time when a lie is justified. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A LITTLE "WHITE LIE"!

*"Rahab, like the Israelites, is commended in the word of GOD, 'not for her immorality (adultery and falsehood), but for her faith,' and especially for her works in moving to support GOD'S people" (Coffman, p. 19).*

*"Rahab, the harlot, is inscribed in inspiration's hall of fame, not because she lied, but because she believed in the ultimate triumph of GOD'S plan, and ran grave personal risks in supporting it (Joshua 2:1-24; Heb. 11:31)...the historian merely recorded the fact of Rahab's falsehood without evaluating it" (Woods, quoted by Cates, p. 26).*

**Why is it some people cannot understand that GOD is capable of taking care of His**

people without their becoming involved in sin, no matter how bleak the situation may appear? If Rahab had told the truth, (as she should have), would not GOD have taken care of these men and her? Most assuredly He would have! Consider some other examples of where men have not trusted GOD to take care of them or to fulfill His promises. King Saul offered his own sacrifices (1 Sam. 13:8). Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to produce an heir (Gen. 16:1ff).

The record says Rahab hid them with stalks of flax.

FLAX — *"The fibers of the bark, when separated, twisted, bleached, and woven, are linen"* (Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 1137).

*"Flax stalks, which grow to the height of three or four feet in Egypt, and attain the thickness of a reed, and would probably be quite as large in the plain of Jericho"* (Keil and Delitzsch, p. 34).

The mention of the flax also tells one something.

*"the time of the year was about March or April, that being the time when the flax was ready to harvest"* (Sizoo, as quoted by Coffman, p. 19).

**Joshua 2:8-13** **"And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your GOD, He is GOD in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Now**

**therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."**

"And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; and she said unto the men, I know that Jehovah hath given you the land, and that the fear of you is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, unto Sihon and to Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard it, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you: for Jehovah your GOD, He is GOD in heaven above, and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by Jehovah, since I have dealt kindly with you, that ye also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a true token; and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and will deliver our lives from death." (ASV)

Rahab went to the men on the roof and told them how the people felt about the Israelites. She let them know that the things which have been reported to them concerning the deeds done by GOD on Israel's behalf, had caused a stunning terror to fill the hearts of the people.

*"Rahab had only heard of what Israel had experienced. Her faith then was ready. It is noteworthy, too, that the same reports which work faith and conversion in the harlot, cause only terror and astonishment amongst her countrymen"* (Barnes, p. 355).

The same report which led to her salvation, led to her countrymen's destruction. *"The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay."*

One sees the same thing today. There are any number of people who are not willing to

listen to the report of those who witness some action, even though there may be many who see or hear these things. But because they have not heard or seen these things "in person," they will not believe truth. It makes one wonder how some of these people can profess belief in Christ or His miracles — after all, they did not personally see Him, or see Him work His miracles.

Note the following verses, where GOD told Moses how the people of Canaan and the surrounding nations would feel about them when they enter the land.

**"There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your GOD shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you" (Deuteronomy 11:25).**

**"The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established" (Exodus 15:14-17)**

**"I will send My fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee." (Exodus 23:27)**

Rahab wanted to trade her good deed for one from them. She asked that her family be spared when the Israelites captured Jericho. She had hidden them, and she is going to facilitate their escape from the city. She asked for the same for her family. She asked for a true token from them, and what she received was their word. Notice their word was enough for her. She expected them to be men of their word, and so should it always be.

**Joshua 2:14-22 "And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers**

**were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not."**

"And the men said unto her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business; and it shall be, when Jehovah giveth us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the side of the wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers light upon you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be guiltless of this thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt gather unto thee into the house thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we shall be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. But if thou utter this our business, then we shall be guiltless of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not." (ASV)

The spies agreed to help Rahab and promised that if any harm came to her family, their own blood would be required. They also set some conditions which must be met in order for her to have her request for salvation honored..

1. Rahab had to tie the scarlet ribbon in the window of her house. This would be for identification purposes.
2. Her family had to be gathered in her house when the town was taken. There was safety available only in a certain place. The spies would be released from their vow, with regard

to anyone who left her house when the city was taken.

3. If she told anyone about the knowledge she had regarding the spies' business in the city, then they were no longer responsible for her safety.

There are several things one needs to consider here. First, it is observed that Rahab was saved when she obeyed, i.e., when she kept the laws she was given. If **any** of the conditions were not kept, then she and her family would not be saved. The same is true for one today: the law Christ has given **MUST** be obeyed if one expects salvation. If one fails to do so, then his blood is upon his own head. Second, there was only one place where they were safe when the armies of Israel returned — in her home. The same thing is true today: there is only one safe place for men to be when our Lord returns with His mighty angels (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8) — in the church. All who are outside the "house" can only blame themselves for their destruction. It should be noted in passing that the church is not a physical building (Household of GOD, Ephesians 2:19-22; House of GOD, 1 Timothy 3:15). It is not proper to talk about being in the house of GOD when one is gathered in a physical building; for Christians, the people, are the house of GOD.

*"The principle has always been: if one does not abide in God's boundaries, His doctrine, he had judged himself unworthy of God's salvation and grace (Acts 13:46; 2 John 9-11)" (Cates, p. 31).*

**"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of GOD should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."** (Acts 13:46).

**"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not GOD. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him GOD speed: For he that biddeth him GOD speed is partaker of his evil deeds."** (2 John 9-11),

After Rahab let the spies down over the wall, they fled to the mountains, where they waited three days before returning to Joshua. These mountains are to the south of Jericho and are full of caves and caverns where they could have hidden. It is believed by some that this is the general area where the Dead Sea scrolls were found. Rahab would naturally expect the king's men to search toward the Jordan River to the west, since the Israelites were on the other side of Jordan.

*"Within five miles of Jericho lay the remarkable range called Quarantania, or Kuruntul, which is literally honeycombed with caves, so that a man might be concealed for months in the immediate neighborhood of Jericho with a very slight risk of discovery"* (Pulpit Commentary, p. 40).

**Joshua 2:23-24 "So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."**

"Then the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun; and they told him all that had befallen them. And they said unto Joshua, Truly Jehovah hath delivered into our hands all the land; and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us." (ASV)

The spies gave a detailed account of their adventure to Joshua. They particularly noted the reaction of the people in Canaan to the Israelites — TERROR. Their report was far different from the one the spies which had been sent out in Numbers chapter thirteen had given. Through the eye of faith, they could already visualize the victory, just like Joshua and Caleb could when they relayed the message to Moses and the people of a previous era.

### **Joshua — Chapter Three**

**Joshua 3:1-6 "And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host; And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your GOD, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore. And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you. And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people."**

"And Joshua rose up early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to the Jordan, he and all the children of Israel; and they lodged there before they passed over. And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the midst of the camp; and they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of Jehovah your GOD, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand

cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore. And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow Jehovah will do wonders among you. And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people." (ASV)

From Shittim to the Jordan River is a distance of between five and eight miles, depending upon the writer from which one consults. They came to the side of Jordan and prepared to cross over into the promised land. It is speculated that GOD moved them to the side of Jordan and had them stay for three days so the people could view Jordan in its flood stage. This would cause them to realize that only GOD could deliver them to the other side safely. The people were instructed to watch the ark, and when they saw the priests move it, they were to follow.

When the ark was built, rings were built into the sides of it for the purpose of carrying it wherever they went (Exodus 25:12-14). Poles were inserted in these rings, so that those carrying it would not have to touch it. In fact, they were forbidden to touch the ark. Later, Uzzah was smitten at Perezuzzah for touching the ark (2 Samuel 6:6-8). The men of Bethshemesh were punished for looking inside it (1 Samuel 6:19).

Normally, the Kohathites were commissioned to carry the ark, but here the priests are to break the normal pattern and carry the ark themselves. There were other times this pattern was broken, such as the compassing of Jericho (See Coffman for other times as well, page 29).

The people were also instructed to maintain a distance of two thousand cubits (about 3,000 feet) between themselves and the ark. The reason for this distance is so they would know where to go. The ark was to be their guide. If they crowded around the ark, they would not be able to see it, but the ark

with plenty of open space around it could easily be seen. There is another possibility with regard to the distance they were to keep which deals with the sanctity of the ark. As we noticed earlier, those who violated its sanctity were punished severely. The distance they were to keep from the ark may have been to induce respect for holy things.

They were to sanctify themselves for the events about to occur. They were to cleanse themselves because the Lord was going to be among them, and He was going to perform mighty deeds on their behalf. Finally the order was given to take up the ark.

At this point it would be good to notice the Jordan River in more detail. J.W. McGarvey went to Palestine many years ago with measuring instruments. In his book Lands of the Bible, he gave a great deal of information about the Jordan River, part of which follows:

*"From a point of a small bay in the southern end of the Lake of Galilee the Jordan makes its exit, running first a little north or west for about a mile, when it makes a short curve to the south, and fairly starts on its serpentine course toward the Dead Sea. The whole distance from the lake to the sea is only 65 miles, but so crooked is the channel of the river that in traversing this distance it runs 200 miles. It runs, in its countless meanderings, to every point of the compass, but it makes no long bends; and it falls during this part of its course 610 feet, the difference between 682 feet, the depression of the Lake of Galilee below the Mediterranean, and 1292 feet, that of the Dead Sea. The rate of its descent is by no means uniform. According to Condor, this part of the river may be divided in this respect into three sections. From the lake to the Dam'ieh ford, 42 miles, it falls 460 feet, an average of nearly 11 feet to the mile; but in a part of this section it falls forty feet to the mile. The second section is*

*one of 13 miles, with an average fall of only 4 1/2 feet to the mile; and the third is one of 10 miles, with a fall of 9 feet to the mile. With such a fall the river would be a torrent but for its many short bends, and for the many places in which the descent is by a succession of rapids, alternating with pools and level stretches in which the current is slow" (McGarvey, p. 33).*

Later McGarvey quoted a fellow named Bartlett who viewed the Jordan as it was in flood stage. His description follows:

*"The river was very high. We were fortunate enough to see it in the state in which it is described in Joshua, 'overflowing all its banks' -- that is, the whole line of its banks. The turbid stream rushed along like a mill-race; and though it had fallen from its greatest height, the proper banks of the stream were invisible, and indicated only by lines of oleanders and other shrubs and trees" (McGarvey, p. 35).*

**Joshua 3:7-8 "And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan."**

"And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, ye shall stand still in the Jordan." (ASV)

GOD told Joshua that He would cause him to be magnified to the people by the things which would be done this day. GOD wanted the people to know that He was with Joshua in

the same way he was with Moses. At the Red Sea, Moses was magnified in the eyes of the people. Here, a like event will do the same thing for Joshua. Notice, GOD said that this was the **beginning** of his being magnified. The people needed to have confidence in their leader in order to accomplish the great tasks ahead.

The brink of the Jordan is speaking of the edge of the water as it is in its flood stage. The priests were to come to the edge of the water, step in, and then stand still.

**Joshua 3:9-13 "And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your GOD. And Joshua said, Hereby ye 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. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap."**

"And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah your GOD. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living GOD is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Hivite, and the Perizzite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Jebusite. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan. Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, for every tribe a man. And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Jehovah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the

Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap." (ASV)

Joshua told the people that what they were about to see was proof that (1) GOD is with them, and (2) GOD is going to cause the inhabitants of Canaan to be driven out of the land. The reason for the choice of twelve men will be given later.

Joshua told them exactly what was going to happen when the priests, with the ark, stepped into the Jordan. The waters flowing from the north are going to be cut off. They would stop somewhere to the north until they had all crossed the Jordan. **How would they stand up in an heap?** The only way we humans can think of water standing up is as ice, but remember the Red Sea and how GOD caused the water to part.

Coffman believes this could have happened due to some natural event which GOD knew would happen at this exact time. He still believes such would be a miracle. I will let him speak for himself:

*"That mighty rivers sometimes stop flowing for a day, or even flow upstream, cannot be denied. 'The Jordan itself, in the year 1,266, was left dry for ten hours as the result of a landslide; and in 1927, an earthquake near Adam (Adamah), stopped the Jordan's flow for twenty-one hours.' Also, there is the amazing instance right here in America of the New Madrid (Missouri) Earthquake of 1811, 1812 (Three shocks in December, January, and February), that sent the Mississippi River running upstream for 27 hours, when the flow of the river filled Reelfoot Lake formed by the earthquake! The Jordan River, near Adam, moves through an area with high mud cliffs (150' high) on each side; and the instances in which the river has stopped flowing (historically), the strong current had undermined a portion of*

*these cliffs, causing the sudden landfill that stopped the river. This writer finds no difficulty at all in the supposition that such a thing is exactly what GOD brought about here, by miraculous design, timed exactly to fit the crossing of Israel, and made known in advance to Joshua. Those factors of the occurrence make it just as miraculous as any supernatural event could possibly be" (Coffman, p. 32).*

While GOD could have accomplished His purpose here in this way, the text lends itself to GOD's miraculously piling the water up upon itself (v. 16).

**Joshua 3:14-17 "And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."**

"And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over the Jordan, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant being before the people; and when they that bare the ark were come unto the Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (for the Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of harvest,) that the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside

Zarethan; and those that went down toward the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until all the nation were passed clean over the Jordan" (ASV)

The Jordan River normally does not flow in a bed which is very wide (80 to 100 feet), although it does flow quite swiftly all year. At the time of the harvest, it overflows its banks and becomes almost impossible to cross. During the other seasons, there are a number of fording places, but there are none during the harvest time (beginning in April). The Jordan can be crossed during the flood stage by strong swimmers, but only at great risk to themselves. GOD chose this as the time for His people to cross the Jordan. His mighty power would thus be exhibited to comfort Israel and bring even more terror to the inhabitants of the land. They could only cross as a nation – at this time – through a miracle. The places called Adam and Zaretan are no longer known.

The Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground beside Jericho. If the people spread out and crossed the river, it is estimated it could easily be done in several hours. Remember, there are approximately two million people, plus their herds, flocks, and baggage. While the priests stand on the dry riverbed with the ark, the people crossed around them.

Imagine how the people of Canaan must have felt to discover the Israelites on their side of the Jordan. They would probably have thought themselves safe, at least until the flood stage of Jordan was over. Then they woke up and found the Israelites camped at their doorstep. **Can you imagine the terror this would have cause?**

In verse fifteen, the conclusion might be drawn that the priests stopped at the edge of the flooded Jordan, and they may have briefly.

But verse seventeen shows us at some point they moved steadily forward until they stood in the middle of where Jordan had flowed. What confidence this would give the people when they saw the ark of GOD in the middle of the river bed.

## **Joshua — Chapter Four**

**Joshua 4:1-9 "And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night. Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your GOD into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet**

**of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day."**

"And it came to pass, when all the nation were clean passed over the Jordan, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, and command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of the Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the lodging-place, where ye shall lodge this night. Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: and Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of Jehovah your GOD into the midst of the Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel; that this may be a sign among you, that, when your children ask in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? then ye shall say unto them, Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah; when it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, as Jehovah spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel; and they carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day." (ASV)

These nine verses are a good example of the repetition the Hebrew writers often employed. This repetition almost always adds details not seen in the original statement. The point being emphasized in these first nine verses is the gathering of the memorial stones. The twelve men assigned to do this work were probably the twelve spoken of in 3:12; and they represent all the people.

They were commanded to take these stones from the Jordan river, to the other side of their crossing. From verse twenty, one finds

they would be placed at Gilgal as a monument for the children of Israel. Such monuments are always a source of curiosity to human beings. Any time one finds a pile of rocks with evidence that they have been purposely placed there, one cannot seem to help but ask, "Who placed these stones there?" and next, "Why did they place these stones here?" When the Israelites of future generations saw these stones, they would naturally ask questions about them, and then the recounting of GOD'S care of His people would be passed on to a new generation. The setting up of monuments seems to be a universal matter. For instance, there are the Egyptian obelisks, the mysterious Stonehenge in England, the Washington monument, et cetera. Our cemeteries are filled with monuments, even if it is simply a marker in the ground. This emphasizes the human need of objects to jog our memories. Little wonder our Lord left a memorial as a constant reminder of the sacrifice He made for mankind.

Verse nine shows one there is another set of stones to be erected. Joshua set up twelve stones, obviously designating the twelve tribes, where the priests who carried the ark had stood in Jordan. With one set of stones resting where the priests had stood and the other set of stones set up at Gilgal, the Israelites for years would be able to point out to their children the exact place of crossing. With their knowledge of the way the Jordan River floods, they would be forced to recognize the miraculous intervention of GOD in order to help His people.

**Joshua 4:10-13 "For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over. And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the**

presence of the people. And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho."

"For the priests that bare the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan, until everything was finished that Jehovah commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over. And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of Jehovah passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: about forty thousand ready armed for war passed over before Jehovah unto battle, to the plains of Jericho." (ASV)

The priests remained in one spot until all of Israel had passed over Jordan and until everything was done according to the commands which Moses had given to Joshua. Further, it is emphasized that the people made haste to cross the Jordan. One would probably cross quickly too under such circumstances, maybe wondering how quickly the waters might return, or at the least, trying to get across while the sun was up.

It is also revealed that the people of the two and one-half tribes crossed over armed in front of the people. The text also tells how many fighting men from these tribes passed over. This left about seventy thousand fighting men behind with their families.

**Joshua 4:14-18 "On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life. And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying,**

**Come ye up out of Jordan. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before."**

"On that day Jehovah magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life. And Jehovah spake unto Joshua, saying, Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of the Jordan. Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of the Jordan. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah were come up out of the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry ground, that the waters of the Jordan returned unto their place, and went over all its banks, as aforetime." (ASV)

**"On that day,"** the day when the waters of Jordan stood up in a heap. When the people saw that everything that Joshua had said would come to pass had come to pass, then he was magnified in their sight. When they saw the miraculous events unfold just as he predicted, it was obvious to any intelligent mind that a higher power was with him, guiding him and actually doing these things. Otherwise, **How could he have known these things?**

The text states that they feared Joshua as they had feared Moses. This does not speak of fear as one normally thinks of it, but rather to the reverence which they had shown to Moses and now exhibited toward Joshua. One should remind himself of GOD'S promise to Joshua in 1:5; 3:7-8.

Next, the details surrounding the priests' leaving the Jordan with the ark are given. Notice that they stayed there until they were commanded to leave their position. And when they did get out of the area where the flood waters would flow, immediately the flood waters returned to the area just as they had

previously flowed.

**Joshua 4:19-24** "And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the LORD your GOD dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your GOD did to the Red sea, which He dried up from before us, until we were gone over: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the LORD your GOD for ever."

"And the people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, on the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, did Joshua set up in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For Jehovah your GOD dried up the waters of the Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as Jehovah your GOD did to the Red Sea, which He dried up from before us, until we were passed over; that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of Jehovah, that it is mighty; that ye may fear Jehovah your GOD for ever." (ASV)

One is told the exact day that the Israelites came up out of the Jordan River. They left Egypt on the fifteenth day of Abib (Nisan) and crossed into the promised land on the tenth day of Abib, five days short of forty years. Regarding the time of the crossing, notice the following comments from the Pulpit Commentary.

*"Nor can there be any mistake about its*

*being the period of the overflowing of Jordan, for the time of the crossing is mentioned. It was the time of harvest – that is, of the barley harvest. This is confirmed by the fact that the recently cut flax was now lying on the roof of Rahab's house, and by the fact that the barley and flax ripened together, a coincidence which we have already mentioned in the note on chapter ii:6. The time is yet further defined. It was the 'tenth day of the first month.' We learn moreover, from Lev. xxiii. 9-15 and Deut. xvi. 6 that this was the time when the firstfruits were offered, from which seven weeks were reckoned to the beginning of wheat harvest (Exod. xxxiv. 2). Moreover, the passover was kept immediately afterwards (chap. v. 10), on 'the fourteenth day of the first month.' Thus the date of the crossing, which is accurately fixed by a variety of circumstances, is clearly proved to correspond with the time of Jordan's overflow" (Pulpit Commentary, p. 65).*

It is again mentioned that they camped at Gilgal their first night in the promised land, and it is revealed that it was here that Joshua piled the stones which the twelve men had carried out of the Jordan as a memorial. The purpose of the memorial was to remind them that they had crossed the Jordan on dry ground, thus emphasizing the miraculous element. In the same manner, GOD had delivered them out of the land of bondage on dry ground where none had previously existed. This memorial was meant to cause the people to magnify GOD. Furthermore, this was something the people of the land would all know about. It would cause them to recognize the might of GOD; yet, it would not force anyone to obey Him.

## **Joshua — Chapter Five**

**Joshua 5:1** "And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the

**sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel."**

"And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, that were by the sea, heard how that Jehovah had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel." (ASV)

The kings of the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites are mentioned here as two groups. It is thought by most that this is a general division of all of the people in the land. It may be that the Amorites represent all of the people in the land who lived in the mountains or higher elevations, while the Canaanites are those who live in the lower elevations, coastal regions, and the plains around the Dead Sea. Whatever the exact distinction may be, it is obvious that these two groups represent all of the people in the land.

When these people heard what the Lord had done in drying up the Jordan River, it caused a general state of terror to fill their hearts. **Why?** Because they probably thought that the Jordan's being in flood stage gave them more time to prepare their defenses and strategy. This was also important for what was about to happen. In their terror, they did not rise up to fight the invaders as quickly as they might otherwise. It appears that the drying up of the Jordan not only showcased the power of GOD, but it also served to protect the Israelites while they recovered from their surgeries (See verses two through nine below.).

**Joshua 5:2-9 "At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of**

**Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that He would not show them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that He would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children, whom He raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day."**

"At that time Jehovah said unto Joshua, Make thee knives of flint, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him knives of flint, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: all the people that came forth out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came forth out of Egypt. For all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the nation, even the men of war that came forth out of Egypt, were consumed, because they hearkened not unto the voice of Jehovah: unto whom Jehovah sware that He would not let

them see the land which Jehovah swore unto their fathers that He would give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. And their children, whom He raised up in their stead, them did Joshua circumcise: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the nation, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of that place was called Gilgal, unto this day." (ASV)

The Lord commanded Joshua to make knives of flint and to circumcise all of the males. Anyone who has been around flint knows that its edges can be as sharp as a razor. Circumcision was a covenant sign between GOD and His people which was initiated with Abraham in Genesis 17:10-14. This rite, according to the text had not been observed while the people were in the wilderness.

A repetition of the events of the wilderness wanderings is briefly portrayed. They had wandered in the wilderness for forty years while all of the men of war and their generation, with a few exceptions, died off because of their rebellion.

A land flowing with milk and honey is again mentioned to remind them of a land which would have an abundance for their needs. The reproach of Egypt was taken away at Gilgal ("*A rolling away*" or a "*rolling off*"). It is hard to distinguish the exact meaning of this phrase. Some think that it may have to do with the words of the Egyptians in saying that GOD was taking them out to the wilderness, not to save them, but to destroy them. Others believe this has to do with the Jewish belief that anyone who was not circumcised was totally impure, and thus no better than the Egyptians from whose land they had left. The need for circumcision at this point is clearly connected with the fact that they were about to observe the Passover feast for the first time in the land of promise. There is much discussion

as to whether the Israelites observed the three great feasts while they were in the wilderness. The last account one has of their observance of the Passover was in Numbers 9:1-5. It may be they did not observe this feast. However, it may be that they did, and the Scriptures are simply silent on this point.

**Joshua 5:10-11 "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day."**

"And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal; and they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the produce of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes and parched grain, in the selfsame day." (ASV)

The Israelites had crossed the Jordan on the tenth day of Abib, and on the fourteenth day they celebrated the Passover. Through GOD'S planning, they had arrived in the land in time to celebrate the great Passover Feast, a feast which reminded them of GOD'S care in sparing them and freeing them from oppression in order to enjoy a land of plenty.

**"Old corn"** simply refers to produce. In modern-day language, one would probably think this means the grain and supplies which were left over from the year before. But we cannot rely upon this thinking. This very simply may refer to the grains which had just then ripened, as the original word seems to simply refer to produce (See ASV and NKJV). The Hebrew word is *abuwr*, meaning "*produce, yield.*" It could refer to grain left over from the year before. Yet, this latter idea has a problem, because they had not yet captured any of the cities where the grain would have been stored from the previous year. The day when they would have eaten the **"old corn"** would have been the fifteenth day of Abib, during the harvest time.

**Joshua 5:12 "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."**

"And the manna ceased on the morrow, after they had eaten of the produce of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." (ASV)

When they began eating the fruit of the land, it was no longer necessary for GOD to miraculously supply them with manna. Therefore, on the morning after they ate of the fruit of the land, the sixteenth of Abib, the manna ceased to come. This was probably both a sad day and a happy day. Sad, because something that GOD had supplied them with all along, and what they were used to receiving, was finished. Happy, because the ceasing of the manna meant they were in the promised land, enjoying the blessings which GOD said they would receive. GOD'S word had been fulfilled.

**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? 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? 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."**

"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? And he said, Nay; but as prince of the host of Jehovah 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? And the prince of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua, Put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." (ASV)

Apparently, Joshua had gone away from the camp when this meeting took place. One is not told why he left the camp. Possibly he wanted to take a look at Jericho, or to be alone to contemplate the coming battle. Possibly he went to pray to GOD in solitude. One simply does not know why. Nevertheless, he lifted up his eyes and saw a man, not a vision. This man had a drawn sword, which was normally an invitation to combat. Joshua did not back away from him, instead he boldly approached Him. It appears by his question (if this proved to be an enemy), Joshua was ready to engage him in combat.

**"And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us."** (Luke 9:50)

The man answered Joshua's challenge by saying that he was the **"captain of the host of the Lord."** Immediately Joshua fell down before Him and worshiped Him. This shows that this messenger could not have been an angelic being. Only Deity is worthy of worship, and only Deity is allowed to receive worship throughout the Bible. An angelic being would have told Joshua not to worship him. Joshua was not told to get up as was John in Revelation 22:8-9, when he bowed down before a created being (angel). Instead, Joshua's adoration was accepted, thus showing that the man he spoke to was divine. Most believe this was the second person of the GODHEAD, i.e., Jesus the Christ.

*"The Angel of Jehovah is not a created angel but Jehovah himself in the act of self-manifestation"* (J.R. Dummelow, p. 145 — quoted by Coffman, p. 47).

*"There can be no doubt that this was GOD himself seen as human form"* (Hugh J. Blair, p. 218 — quoted by

Coffman, p. 47).

*"This is none other than the Angel of the Lord, the Lord himself (Ex. 23:20-21), the preincarnate Christ in visible form"* (Merrill F. Unger, p. 290 — quoted by Coffman, p. 47).

*"The New Testament teaches us throughout, that the Logos was ever the manifestation, the ἐξήγησις (John 1) of the Father, the eternal medium whereby He communicates Himself beyond Himself"* (Pulpit Commentary, p. 91).

One cannot help but remember the conversation between Jesus and Philip here.

**"Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake"** (John 14:8-11).

Joshua was then told to take his shoes off, because the place where he stood was holy ground. This is much like the instance where Moses was told the same thing (Ex. 3:5). Just as then, it was not the ground itself which made the place holy; it was the presence of GOD. After this exchange, the Lord told Joshua the battle plan for Jericho. (See Genesis 18:17 and ask [Who was speaking?](#))

## **Joshua — Chapter Six**

**Joshua 6:1-5 "Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel:**

**none went out, and none came in. And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."**

"Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. And ye shall compass the city, all the men of war, going about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. And it shall be, that, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall go up every man straight before him." (ASV)

The inhabitants of Jericho were terrified of the Israelites (2:9-11), so it was only natural that they would close the gates of the city in a defensive move. Under normal circumstances, the king's move was a logical one. The gates were closed and guarded in such a way that no one could enter the city and thus, no one could go out to the Israelites. (Verse one is a parenthetical statement.)

The Lord (notice it is **"the Lord"** here and **"captain of the host of the Lord"** in 5:14) gave Joshua the instructions on how this city would be captured. Seven priests were to go

before the ark with seven horns which they would blow while circling Jericho. They were to march around Jericho once each day for six days; and then on the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times. During the first six days, they marched around the city in silence; on the seventh day, they marched in silence until the final lap had been completed. Then the priests blew a long note on the trumpets, and the people were commanded to shout. When they did what the Lord had told them to do, the Lord assured them that the walls would fall down and the people would be able to march straight into the city. Notice the faith this required on the part of the people. No military commander would have ever tried to conquer such a city in this way. But GOD had spoken; and the people believed GOD would deliver the city into their hands, even though from a human standpoint they could not possibly have understood how this could have been accomplished by the instructions He had given them.

Regarding the **"ram's horns,"** Coffman quoted the following source.

*"There is no mention of ram's horns in the original Hebrew. The horns used were the jubilee trumpets, long metal devices that were also used in the Feast of Trumpets. 'The word from which trumpets comes here means loud trumpets or trumpets of Jubilee, and is the same word found in Leviticus 25:9'"* (Coffman, p. 56).

Regarding the walls' coming down, Zerr said —

*"The word 'flat' is from TACHATH and is defined 'the bottom (as depressed); only adverbially, below (often with prepositional prefix underneath), in lieu of, etc.' — Strong. This definition of the word indicates that the walls sank into the ground and that accounts for the statement that every man went 'straight before' him into the city. There would not be even the presence of debris to hinder the attack" (Zerr, p. 320).*

Several of the commentators hold this view. Joseph Free, in his book Archaeology and the Bible, expresses the view that the walls fell flat but differed with others in saying they fell outward to a flat position.

And then of course, there are the skeptics who are always trying to explain away the miracles of the Bible. They try to portray the reason for the walls of Jericho falling as being strictly a natural cause: an earthquake, the undermining of the walls, a sudden assault, et cetera. The reason for such thinking is that if they can get rid of the miracles, they get rid of GOD (take Him out of the picture). But then, **How does the skeptic explain the earthquake's coming at exactly the right time?**

**Joshua 6:6-16 "And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. And seven priests bearing seven trumpets**

**of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rearward came after the ark of the LORD, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city."**

"And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Jehovah. And they said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let the armed men pass on before the ark of Jehovah. And it was so, that, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Jehovah passed on, and blew the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of Jehovah followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew the trumpets, and the rearward went after the ark, the priests blowing the trumpets as they went. And Joshua commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor let your voice be heard, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. So he caused the ark of Jehovah to compass the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of Jehovah. And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Jehovah went on continually, and blew the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; and the rearward came after the ark of Jehovah, the priests blowing the trumpets as they went. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early at the dawning of the day, and compassed the city

after the same manner seven times: only on the day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city." (ASV)

Joshua relayed the information he had been given to the priests and people. One further bit of information is given to us, i.e., the exact marching order of the people. The armed men were to go before the priests with the seven horns, which marched before the ark, which went before the people as a whole. Notice the instructions can be understood and they can be understood alike. There was not one interpretation for one man and another for another man. Notice also that the instructions were precise. They could not march in any order they chose, nor could they decide to march around the city any number of times or days they chose.

The people obeyed the instructions of Joshua. After each day's silent march, the people returned to their camp. **Can one even begin to imagine what must have been going through the minds of the people in Jericho as the Israelites marched SILENTLY around their city?** The curiosity and terror would seem to build in them. This sounds a little bit like psychological warfare.

When the final day came, Joshua gave the order for all the people to shout, and **"the Lord"** gave them the city.

**Joshua 6:17 "And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent."**

"And the city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to Jehovah: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent." (ASV)

The English word **"accursed"** does not carry the idea of the original Hebrew word. It

actually means *"devoted,"* as the ASV shows it. The original word here is Cherem, which means,

*"something devoted unto divine service; a ban, a curse, extermination; a person or thing which has been marked for destruction, a net, an enticement. The essential meaning is "forbidden" or "prohibited." It was an object which was surrendered to God and to His service or something declared for utter destruction"* (Zodhiates, CD).

In other words, the city was to be sacrificed by the Israelites to GOD. All of the people were to be destroyed along with every living thing, both human and animal. All of the possessions of the city were to be burned, except the metals of gold, silver, brass, and iron. These metals were to be placed in the treasury of the Lord (Tabernacle). The only exception to this was Rahab and those with her in the house, and one would assume their possessions.

**Joshua 6:18-19 "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD."**

"But as for you, only keep yourselves from the devoted thing, lest when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so would ye make the camp of Israel accursed, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are holy unto Jehovah: they shall come into the treasury of Jehovah." (ASV)

A warning was issued to the people to make sure that they devoted this city to GOD. **Why was this city and everything in it to be devoted to GOD?** The answer is found in the sacrificial system which GOD instituted for them. When harvest time came, they were to give the first fruits of the land to GOD. In a very real sense, they were now harvesting the

blessings of GOD in conquering the land. GOD had promised them these blessings; now they were receiving them. It was only natural for GOD to receive the first and best of everything.

If anyone violated these commands, it would bring a curse not only upon themselves, but upon the whole congregation of Israel.

**Why should the metals go into the treasury of the Lord?** GOD does not need any physical thing! But the priests needed to be taken care of, and there was also the upkeep of the tabernacle.

**Joshua 6:20-21 "So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword."**

"So the people shouted, and the priests blew the trumpets; and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, both young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." (ASV)

This showed the obedience of the people to Joshua's commands. There is no contradiction here with what one sees in chapter seven regarding Achan. Those who were honestly trying to do the whole will of GOD were the ones being spoken of here as carrying out the will of GOD. They totally destroyed all living creatures within these walls, including all the human beings; (Rahab and her family excluded).

**Joshua 6:22-25 "But Joshua had said unto**

**the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."**

"And Joshua said unto the two men that had spied out the land, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men the spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; all her kindred also they brought out; and they set them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of Jehovah. But Rahab the harlot, and her father's household, and all that she had, did Joshua save alive; and she dwelt in the midst of Israel unto this day, because she hid the messengers, whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." (ASV)

The spies who had visited Rahab were responsible for bringing her and her family safely out of Jericho. When they were brought out of Jericho, they put them in a safe place OUTSIDE the Israelite camp. They would not be allowed to immediately enter the camp. The reason was that there were laws regarding purification.

**"She dwelleth in Israel even unto this day,"** shows that the book of Joshua was written during the lifetime of Rahab and shortly

after all of the events which it records. She and her family were saved because she hid the spies which Joshua had sent to Jericho.

**Joshua 6:26-27 "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it. So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country."**

"And Joshua charged them with an oath at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before Jehovah, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: with the loss of his first-born shall he lay the foundation thereof, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it. So Jehovah was with Joshua; and his fame was in all the land." (ASV)

One finds something very unusual here: a curse placed on this place. It is not so much on the place, as it is on an action which might take place. Joshua placed a curse on the city, or rather on anyone who would try to rebuild the walls in order to make it a fortified city. It should be explained here that not all cities were fortified in those days. In any age, the building of fortifications was an expensive and time-consuming affair. In times of trouble, the citizens of an unfortified city would flee to the fortified one for protection.

The curse was that any man who tried to rebuild the fortifications would lose his first son when the walls were begun and his youngest son when the gate was put up. The significance of the gate being that it was generally the last thing put up in such a fortification as this. About five hundred and fifty years later, a Beth-elite named Hiel rebuilt the fortifications (1 Kings 16:34). Hiel lost his first son (Abiram) when he began and his youngest son (Segub) when he set up the gates. Some commentators believe this meant all of the sons from the oldest to the youngest would be lost, thus ending the

generations of that man.

The Lord chose Joshua to lead His people after the death of Moses. He had just demonstrated to the Israelites that He was with Joshua as He had been with Moses by stopping the Jordan River to let the people pass over; and by causing the city of Jericho to be captured miraculously. Not only was Joshua known by the Israelites, but his fame was noised abroad throughout all of the land, among all the enemies of Israel. His name would strike fear in the hearts of men because of what GOD did through him.

Fear is often the result when GOD causes something to happen which shows His power and knowledge.

**“Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things...And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things”** (Acts 5:5, 11).

## **Joshua — Chapter Seven**

**Joshua 7:1 "But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel."**

"But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the devoted thing; for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the devoted thing; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel." (ASV)

In verse one, one is told the event which caused Israel their problems before the actual details of the event were told. One learns that Achan was the guilty party who brought trouble to Israel through a trespass (crossing beyond a line which GOD had established). One also learns that he was from the tribe of Judah and that his lineage went back to Judah and Tamar.

GOD'S wrath was kindled against the children of Israel, even though it was Achan who actually committed the trespass. Yet, one will notice that the whole nation suffered because of his actions. **Why?**

The Israelites were *"Not merely a number of individuals living together for their own purposes under common institutions, but as a divinely constituted organic whole. Hence the sin of Achan defiled the other members of the community as well as himself, and robbed the people collectively of holiness before GOD and acceptableness with Him"* (Barnes, p. 366).

This can also be true today as the witness of First Corinthians, chapter five, would show.

**"The accursed thing" — "accursed"** (cherem).

*"Something devoted unto divine service; a ban, a curse, extermination; a person or thing which has been marked for destruction, a net, an enticement. The essential meaning is 'forbidden' or 'prohibited.' It was an object which was surrendered to God and to His service or something declared for utter destruction"* (Zodhiates, CD).

Everything in Jericho was to be given to GOD. Therefore, if anyone took what belonged to GOD, that thing became accursed to all of them. Because Achan took what belonged to GOD, he would be executed. The same punishment which fell on the Jericho and those within it would fall upon him and his family. But there was also a price to be paid for all of Israel.

**Joshua 7:2-5 "And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let**

about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water."

"And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and spy out the land. And the men went up and spied out Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; make not all the people to toil thither; for they are but few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men; and they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them at the descent; and the hearts of the people melted, and became as water." (ASV)

Joshua's spies went to Ai and checked the city out and reported that it was a small city which did not have very many people. They advised Joshua to send a small force of two or three thousand to take the city. But the Israelites were not victorious, and the enemy killed thirty-six of them. Failure to win this battle caused the Israelites to shrink in fear. **What happened — why did GOD not give them the victory?** Because there was sin in the camp. GOD was not fighting for them because someone had defied His orders. GOD will never be with His people as long as they live in rebellion to Him.

**Joshua 7:6-9 "And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast Thou at all brought**

**this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to GOD we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?"**

"And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord Jehovah, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over the Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to cause us to perish? would that we had been content and dwelt beyond the Jordan! Oh, Lord, what shall I say, after that Israel hath turned their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and will compass us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt Thou do for Thy great name?" (ASV)

When Joshua heard the news of Israel's defeat, he went into mourning and fell to the earth before the ark of GOD (notice the elders joined him). Joshua knew GOD had departed from them, otherwise their army would have been invincible.

The thing which seemed to bother Joshua the most was that GOD'S name would be brought low in the eyes of the Canaanites. Joshua did not want GOD to be sneered at by these people. Joshua (in effect) asked GOD how He would vindicate His name (v. 9). GOD's people must always remember that the way they act reflects upon Him in the eyes of the world.

**"Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die" (2 Samuel 12:14).**

**“And I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes” (Ezekiel 36:23).**

**Joshua 7:10-15 "And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith the LORD GOD of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man. And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel."**

"And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore art thou thus fallen upon thy face? Israel hath sinned; yea, they have even transgressed My covenant which I commanded them: yea, they have even taken of the devoted

thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also; and they have even put it among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel cannot stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, because they are become accursed: I will not be with you any more, except ye destroy the devoted thing from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow: for thus saith Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, There is a devoted thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the devoted thing from among you. In the morning therefore ye shall be brought near by your tribes: and it shall be, that the tribe which Jehovah taketh shall come near by families; and the family which Jehovah shall take shall come near by households; and the household which Jehovah shall take shall come near man by man. And it shall be, that he that is taken with the devoted thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath; because he hath transgressed the covenant of Jehovah, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel." (ASV)

GOD told Joshua to get up from off his face. This was not a time to be lying on his face (During this time, Joshua was engaged in beseeching or praying to GOD.); rather, it was a time for action. There are times when prayer and devotions to GOD must be suspended in order to please GOD.

**“If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).**

The reason they could not capture Ai had nothing to do with the number of soldiers they sent, nor the tactics they used. GOD said there was sin in the camp, and this was why they could not capture the city of Ai. Further, GOD let Joshua know He would not continue to be with them unless they cleaned up the sin in the camp.

**“Put away from among yourselves that wicked person” (1 Corinthians 5:13).**

There were four areas in which they sinned. One normally zeros in on the sin of theft, but GOD showed four areas in which they sinned:

1. They had broken a solemn vow.
2. They stole what did not belong to them.
3. They had acted deceitfully.
4. They had taken for themselves what belonged to GOD.

And the people are divided into groups.

*"The tribes, families, households, and men formed the four classes into which the people were organized. As the tribes were divided into families, so these again were subdivided into houses, commonly called father's houses, and the father's houses again into men, i.e. fathers of families"* (Keil & Delitzsch, p. 79).

The one found with the devoted thing, was to be burned with fire. The manner used to discover the offender was the "lot."

**"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord"** (Proverbs 16:33).

Regarding "lots," one does not know exactly how this was accomplished. From the above passage, it is known that an object(s) (when thrown) revealed the will of GOD, i.e., an answer from GOD. It was not a matter of chance such as the throwing of dice. Rather, GOD controlled the way this item(s) fell so as to give a true answer. One might also notice the method given to the High Priest to determine different matters. Within the fold, which rested behind his breastplate, were two stones. These were called the Urim and Thummim (Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Ezra 2:63; Nehemiah 7:65). From all one can understand about the matter, a simple question was asked of him, such as, *"Did this person commit murder?"* When the question was asked, the High Priest would reach into this pocket, and the stone he pulled out gave the answer from GOD. One stone represented "Yes" and the other "No." This was GOD'S infallible answer to the question

put before the High Priest.

**Joshua 7:16-21 "So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarahites: and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: And 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. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD GOD of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD GOD of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it."**

"So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel near by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: and he brought near the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zerahites: and he brought near the family of the Zerahites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: and he brought near 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. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Of a truth I have sinned against Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: when I saw among the spoil a goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." (ASV)

Early the next morning, Joshua assembled the people to find out what had been done. No time was wasted in accomplishing the task before them. This is a valuable lesson which is seen in any number of Bible passages. When GOD gives an assignment to man, his duty is to fulfill his obligation as quickly as possible. One is told that the tribe of Judah was taken. From the tribe of Judah, the family of the Zarhites was taken. From the family of the Zarhites, Zabdi was taken. And when that family was brought before Joshua, Achan was taken.

Consider this process carefully in order to determine that chance was not involved. Take, for instance, dice. Let one say the number nine was chosen as the number which, if it came up, indicated the person was guilty of some crime. If one throws the dice twelve times, one time for each tribe, **How many times could the dice be thrown with this number coming up?** (I tried this, throwing the dice twelve times, and the number nine came up three times.) Now imagine doing this the countless times it took to go through the clans, families, et cetera. Yet, the lot came up positive for only one tribe, only one family group, until it stopped with Achan. The laws of chance show one this process was controlled by GOD. Now consider that there were only two possible answers involved; **What are the odds of the yes coming up only once among twelve tribes if this was done only by chance?**

When Achan was identified, Joshua pleaded with him to tell all. Notice the kind of confession Joshua required: one which **revealed all** that Achan had done. In doing this, the glory would be given to GOD. GOD already knew what Achan had done, yet a public confession was to be made in order for GOD to be glorified.

Achan told about his taking the Babylonian garment, some silver and some gold from the spoils. The gold and silver belonged to GOD, and the garment should have been burned with the city. Achan then told Joshua where they could find these items: buried in his tent. He stole from GOD!

*"Dummelow pointed out that Achan's confession is of special interest, because 'Its wording is practically identical with that of the traditional form of confession which was used by those who brought sin and trespass-offerings, as enjoined in Leviticus 5:5, and in Numbers 5:6-7'" (Coffman, p. 71).*

Modern day children of GOD might ask themselves if they steal time, abilities, money from GOD .

**Joshua 7:22-26 "So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day."**

"So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them from the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel; and they laid them down before Jehovah. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the mantle, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them up unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? Jehovah shall trouble thee this

day. And all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire, and stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones, unto this day; and Jehovah turned from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day." (ASV)

After Achan confessed (Notice the specific nature of his confession.), Joshua's messengers found the forbidden items just as Achan said they would.

Then the host of Israel took Achan, his family, and everything he possessed out to the valley of Achor, where they were stoned to death. Some have questioned, "Why were his children and wife stoned?" Since no man was to be punished because of the sins of his father or son (Deuteronomy 24:16), it was obvious they must have known about their father's deed and must have consented to his actions, or possibly did not tell what they knew even though they knew a sin had been committed. The location of the forbidden items would tend to indicate they knew and approved.

Notice the irony of this situation. Everything in Jericho was to be destroyed; it all belonged to GOD. The Israelites were not to keep anything for themselves. All the people (except for Rahab's family), all the animals, all of the physical possessions of this city were to be destroyed (The metals were to go into the treasury.). Nothing which Achan owned could be kept by any of the Israelites; it was all destroyed. In effect, the same punishment which had been decreed on Jericho was decreed on Achan's house.

Then the question of forgiveness comes up. This writer would consider the remarks of Zerr helpful here.

*"If he makes his standing before GOD right, then the blessings he should receive from the Lord will come, even though he must go ahead and pay the penalty of the law. When Achan paid with his life for the thing he had done he was satisfying the penal laws of the*

*government. When he made his full confession of wrong before GOD he made satisfaction for his religious relation to GOD, and whatever spiritual enjoyment he should have been entitled to before GOD would allow regardless of his fate"* (Zerr, p. 323).

One should also remember that David had to be faced with his sin before he admitted it and asked for forgiveness. And when he had received forgiveness, he still had to suffer the consequences of his sin in the physical arena. Achan and his family could be forgiven, but they still had to pay the consequences.

## **Joshua — Chapter Eight**

**Joshua 8:1-2 "And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it."**

"And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai; see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land; And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: set thee an ambush for the city behind " (ASV)

After Achan had been punished for his transgression, GOD then told Joshua to get rid of his fears, take the army, and conquer Ai.

*"Treacherous Israelites are to be dreaded more than malicious Canaanites"* (Matthew Henry, as quoted by The Pulpit Commentary, p. 132).

GOD assured Joshua that he would be able to conquer Ai just as Jericho had been conquered, because the sin had been

removed from the camp. Only this time, the spoils from the city would belong to the people. Further, GOD told Joshua how to conquer the city; laying an ambush against it.

**Joshua 8:3-8 "So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: And I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them, (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your GOD will deliver it into your hand. And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, that ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. See, I have commanded you."**

"So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up to Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand men, the mighty men of valor, and sent them forth by night. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city; go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: and I, and all the people that are with me, will approach unto the city. And it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them; and they will come out after us, till we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: so we will flee before them; and ye shall rise up from the ambush, and take possession of the city: for Jehovah your GOD will deliver it into your hand. And it shall be, when ye have seized upon the city, that ye shall set the city on fire; according to the word of Jehovah shall ye do: see, I have commanded you." (ASV)

Verse three states that thirty thousand

soldiers were sent behind the city for the ambush, while the rest of the army would approach the front of the city with Joshua. Joshua told those who lay in ambush that his section of the army would pretend to run away from the enemy, thus drawing them out of the city. When the enemy left the city and chased Joshua's army, then those lying in ambush were to enter the city and set it on fire.

**Joshua 8:9-13 "Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to lie in ambush, and abode between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people. And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. And all the people, even the people of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between them and Ai. And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley."**

"And Joshua sent them forth; and they went to the ambushment, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people. And Joshua arose up early in the morning, and mustered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. And all the people, even the men of war that were with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and encamped on the north side of Ai: now there was a valley between him and Ai. And he took about five thousand men, and set them in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of the city. So they set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers-in-wait that were on the west of the city; and Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley." (ASV)

GOD's plan was relatively simple. First, a force of thirty thousand was sent to form an ambush west of Ai, between the men of Ai and the people of Bethel. Next, another force of five thousand was sent to form another ambush somewhere to the west of Ai. This would stop any reinforcements from being effective and would also ensure the destruction of Bethel. It was not one ambush which was set but two. One of the things missed by many in this context is the significance of verse seventeen. It was not just the people of Ai who were destroyed in this battle but also the people of Bethel. The main force camped to the north of Ai, where Joshua spent the night.

**Joshua 8:14-29** "And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hastened and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but he wist not that there were liers in ambush against him behind the city. And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness. And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city. And there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city. And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hastened and set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee

**this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he commanded Joshua. And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day. And the king of as he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day."**

"And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw it, that they hastened and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at the time appointed, before the Arabah; but he knew not that there was an ambush against him behind the city. And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the

wilderness. And all the people that were in the city were called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city. And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Stretch out the javelin that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thy hand. And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and entered into the city, and took it; and they hasted and set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. And the others came forth out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they let none of them remain or escape. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they pursued them, and they were all fallen by the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all Israel returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. And all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai. For Joshua drew not back his hand, wherewith he stretched out the javelin, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for prey unto themselves, according unto the word of Jehovah which He commanded Joshua. So Joshua burnt Ai, and made it a heap for ever, even a desolation, unto this day. And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until the eventide: and at the going down of the sun Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree, and cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised thereon a great heap of stones, unto

this day." (ASV)

One is next told the events of the battle. One of the interesting facts found in this account is found in verse twenty-five. Twelve thousand men and women died that day — all the people of Ai and Bethel (v. 17). When the text says that Joshua did not draw his hand back, it indicates that he did not withdraw his order to do battle until the enemy was utterly destroyed. By GOD'S decree, no mercy was to be shown to these people.

The tactic used to capture Ai was a simple one. Attack and then pretend to either be afraid or beaten. Begin fleeing, and hope in the heat of the battle your enemy did not consider the possible danger. When he gave chase, have soldiers stationed in such a way as to surround him once you have deceived him into leaving his fortifications. In this case, the ambushers took away the any possibility of a retreat to safety. Israel also set the city on fire to demoralize the army and then had them trapped between the two Israelite armies. The fire would also alert Joshua that the trap was successful, at which time he would turn and confront the enemy.

One is also told the fate of the king of Ai. He was hanged until sundown and then placed on a stake for all to see. At sundown his body was taken to what had been the city gate and was buried under a pile of rocks. **Why did they bury him at the end of the day?**

**"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of GOD;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee for an inheritance"** (Deuteronomy 21:22-23).

This pile of stones would stand as a memorial of this event to Israel, while serving as a solemn warning to the Canaanites of the futility of standing against Israel.

**Joshua 8:30-31** "Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD GOD of Israel in mount Ebal, As Moses the servant of the LORD 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 hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings."

"Then Joshua built an altar unto Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of unhewn stones, upon which no man had lifted up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto Jehovah, and sacrificed peace-offerings." (ASV).

One is not told the details of the journey the Israelites took from Ai; one is simply told that the Israelites were now in the vicinity of Mount Ebal. Nor is one told of any battles they may have fought to get there. What was about to take place was done in accordance with instructions which came from Moses (Deut. 27). At Ebal, an altar was to be erected from stones which had not been shaped by human instruments (natural stones).

*"the divine commandment for the use of plain, undecorated stones in the building of GOD'S altar, this indicates that the true worship of GOD never needs to be doctored up and decorated by human 'improvements'"* (Coffman, p. 87).

Burnt offerings and peace offerings were to be made on the altar.

**Joshua 8:32-35** "And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against

mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

"And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote, in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, as well the sojourner as the homeborn; half of them in front of mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of Jehovah had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners that were among them." (ASV).

Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal sit next to each other, and the people were divided between the two mountains. Joshua now fulfilled the command of Moses to write a copy of the law in this place (See Deut. 27:4-8). Deuteronomy does not tell one how many stones were to be set up, though most commentators, if they venture a number, guess that there were two.

Notice that Joshua read "all the words of the law" to the people and that it was all the people, even the strangers which were among them. **Who were these "strangers?"** The word "stranger" stands for those who were not Israelites. But, they were supposed to kill all the inhabitants of Canaan, so **Who were the strangers?** One remembers that some of the

Egyptians left Egypt with Israel, plus some of the descendants of Jethro joined them, and one should not forget Rahab and her family. Also, those from afar, i.e., not from the land of Canaan, could be among them. This must have consumed a great deal of time (How many would come together for the purpose of reading the entire New Testament today? How many would come together to hear the Bible read for just two straight hours?). This points out who was subject to the law: man, woman, child and strangers. It should be remembered just here that the law they lived under was both spiritual and secular. All were to be obedient to it, even the stranger. This shows one an important point which is still true today: GOD'S law is for everyone, and there should be no separation of ages for worship.

How could all the people hear the words which were spoken? It is said that this valley and the surrounding hills act as a natural amphitheater. Thus, a person would not have to talk very loudly at all to be heard by such a large throng of people.

*"A single voice could be heard by many thousands, the sound being shut in and conveyed up and down by the enclosing hills. People in such mountainous countries are able, from long practice, to pitch their voices so as to be heard distinctly at distances almost incredible. They talk with persons across enormous wadies, and give the most minute directions, which are perfectly understood. In doing this they seem to speak very little louder than their usual tone of conversation"* (Winter, p. 130).

*"Ebal and Gerizim are only a mile and a half apart, and only 500 yards apart at their base. Gerizim is 2895' above sea level; Ebal is 3077' above sea level; and they rise about 1300' and 1500' respectively above the surrounding valley. The two great bays lying near the base of each mountain provide one of the grandest amphitheaters on earth"* (Coffman, p. 86).

## **Joshua — Chapter Nine**

**Joshua 9:1-2 "And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord."**

"And it came to pass, when all the kings that were beyond the Jordan, in the hill-country, and in the lowland, and on all the shore of the great sea in front of Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof; that they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord." (ASV)

Notice the situation one finds in this text and in which is also found in any generation when GOD's people are advancing. The Canaanites represented error and falsehood and served false gods; they had made themselves GOD'S enemies. When GOD'S people successfully entered the land, and destroyed Jericho, these kings started uniting against the common enemy (Israel). Not only did they rise in opposition but these people, who were formerly antagonistic to each other, united to fight GOD and His people.

It has always been the case that people who do not agree among themselves, even warring against one another, will unite to oppose a common foe. Look at the Pharisees and Sadducees who constantly and bitterly strove among themselves. When truth (in the form of Jesus Christ) came among them, they united to murder Him. Today, Christians have a common enemy: the Devil and his legions of false teachers. Christians need to truly unite behind truth to win this battle against a powerful enemy, because the enemies of truth (behind their leader, Satan) will do everything they can to defeat GOD'S people. Let one remember: United in Christ we stand and gain

heaven; divided, defeat and eternal destruction await one.

**Joshua 9:3-15** "And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country: now therefore make ye a league with us. And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy GOD: for we have heard the fame of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth. Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the

**mouth of the LORD. And Joshua made peace with them, let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them."**

"But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they also did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine-skins, old and rent and bound up, and old and patched shoes upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and was become mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We are come from a far country: now therefore make ye a covenant with us. And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a covenant with you? And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye? And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of Jehovah thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. And our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take provision in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: and now make ye a covenant with us. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and is become mouldy: and these wine-skins, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they are rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. And the men took of their provision, and asked not counsel at the mouth of Jehovah. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them." (ASV)

Now one finds an account of the people of Gibeon (Hivites, v. 7) and what they did in the face of the invading Israelite army. They got a group of men together and dressed them as if they had been traveling for a long time. They took food which was old and moldy and

pretended it was fresh bread when they left home. What they wanted was a peaceful co-existence with Israel, and they wanted to ensure it with a treaty. They wanted to maintain their sovereignty, while having sociable relations with Israel.

Is it possible that the Canaanites not only knew of the deeds of Israel from Egypt until the present but also knew of the restrictions placed on Israel not to intermingle or make treaties with any of the Canaanites?

**“Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against Me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee”** (Exodus 23:32-33).

When one looks at the emphasis the Gibeonites placed on coming from a **“far country,”** it seems they must have known. Plus, why all the deception, unless they knew the Israelites were forbidden to make a treaty with them? Look ahead to verse twenty-four where it is definitely stated that they knew they were to be destroyed.

The phrase, **“the men took of their victuals,”** is interesting. A common act of friendship in the east is the eating of a meal together. Some might think that that is what was being done here, but it is not.

*“This simply means that Joshua and the princes of the congregation accepted the moldy bread, old shoes and tattered garments as proof of the veracity of their discourse without seeking verification from Jehovah who knows the hearts of men (1 John 3:20)”* (Brantley, p. 164).

Upon acceptance of this deceptive visible “evidence,” the Israelites made peace with the Gibeonites. The Israelite leaders made a league (or covenant, treaty) with them to let them live. In those times covenants were usually sealed by eating a meal together. It is very possible that this also took place at this time.

*“How easy it is, even for great men of*

*faith as was Joshua (c.f. Num. 14:6-10), to carelessly allow the shield of faith to momentarily lower only to have our armour pierced by the devil's fiery darts of deception”* (IBID, p. 164)!

What must be emphasized here is that Israel had been forbidden to make a covenant with any nation or group of people in the land (Deuteronomy 7:2-4). They could make covenants with people at a distance, but they could make none with the people within the land they occupied. Why was Israel forbidden to make covenants with the inhabitants of Canaan? Because they would corrupt Israel with their false gods.

**“Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel”**

(Numbers 25:1-3).

The problem was that they did not ask **“counsel at the mouth of the Lord!”** (This could have probably been done through the Urim and Thummim.) They knew they were not to make any covenants with the people of the land; Why take a chance here? They followed their own thinking instead of asking GOD what He thought about the matter. *“The Israelites relied on the evidence of their senses, instead of upon the counsel of God”* (Pulpit Commentary, p. 150). When one fails to consult GOD'S Word and launches out to follow one's own "understanding," one can only expect defeat. It must be understood, that they were deceived because they did not ask GOD'S counsel. Today, one can/will be deceived by Satan also, when one fails to take the counsel found in GOD'S Word. In many cases today, one relies upon his own understanding, or feelings, to formulate a decision. One must learn to consult GOD'S word before making even the simplest of

decisions. The question must be, **What would GOD have one to do?** rather than **What does one think he should do?**

**Joshua 9:16-21 "And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD GOD of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD GOD of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had promised them."**

"And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by Jehovah, the GOD of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by Jehovah, the GOD of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them, and let them live; lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. And the princes said unto them, Let them live: so they became hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation, as the princes had spoken unto them." (ASV)

Three days after Israel made the covenant with the Gibeonites, they found out they had been deceived. Four cities made up this group of people, with Gibeon, apparently, being the chief city.

The people of Israel wanted to correct this situation but were kept from doing anything by their princes. An oath had been taken in the Lord's name that these people could live in peace with Israel.

*"Often Jehovah's name was involved in an oath by prefacing the oath with the phrase, 'As the Lord (Jehovah) liveth... ' (c.f. Judges 8:19; Ruth 3:13; 1 Sam. 14:39)"* (Brantley, p. 166).

It is obvious that GOD recognized this covenant, because when Saul later tried to destroy the Gibeonites, GOD sent a famine on the land as a punishment (2 Samuel 21:1-2).

The Gibeonites had escaped death through fraud, because of the oath made in the Lord's name. But they were reduced to the lowest position in Israel, the gatherers of wood and water for the sacrifices. **Could the Gibeonites have escaped death in some other way?** Certainly they could have (Jonah 3:4, 9-10).

*"One principle that is prevalent within Holy writ is that with every pronouncement of doom upon a given people, there is either a stated or implied avenue of escape predicated upon the people's repentance....It should also be noted that with every pronouncement of blessing, there is either a stated or implied condition of faithfulness or GOD will not bless"* (Brantley, p. 165)!

An example of this is Rahab (a Canaanite) and her house, who were saved upon penitent faith.

From this passage one should consider the importance of keeping one's word. Many would probably assert that the Israelites had every right to break their oath to the Gibeonites, because they had been deceived. But, as noticed above, GOD honored their word and held them accountable if they broke

it. One must be careful when making promises to follow his word. The fault for making a bad treaty was with the Israelites. If one makes a bad deal, one has the obligation to fulfill his part of the agreement — one's word should be his bond!

**“When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But as GOD is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay” (2 Corinthians 1:17-18).**

**Joshua 9:22-27 “And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my GOD. And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy 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 sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now, behold, we are in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, in the place which He should choose.”**

"And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall never fail to be of you bondmen, both hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my GOD. And they

answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that Jehovah thy 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 sore afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now, behold, we are in thy hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of Jehovah, unto this day, in the place which He should choose." (ASV)

Joshua asked the Gibeonites why they had deceived them. **Does this imply there was another way for them to have been saved from destruction? What if they had come to Joshua in true repentance as did the Ninevites (Jonah 3:5-10)?**

Joshua called the Gibeonites unto him and told them their punishment. Their lives would be spared according to the oath, but they would be Israel's servants forever. Verse twenty-three is a clear clarification of verse twenty-one: they would be hewers of wood and drawers of water **"for the house of my GOD."** The sacrifices would require huge amounts of water and wood, and they would provide what was needed.

They offered an excuse, yet the truth, for their deception, and it was simply that they were afraid. They willingly submitted themselves to whatever judgment Joshua made in the matter. They were made perpetual bondmen (slaves), verse twenty-three, from that day forward.

*“They were doomed to perpetual slavery, yet the curse that came upon them was a blessing. 'Blessed are those who dwell in the house of the Lord' (Psalm 84:4). That was the curse that fell on the Gibeonites...to be attached for ever to the congregation and to the altar of GOD in the place (any place) that the Lord should choose. Such is GOD'S grace. It was*

*for the Gibeonites that GOD wrought the mighty miracle of the battle of Beth-horon (10:7-15); and it was among the Gibeonites that GOD later located the tabernacle (II Chron. 1:3); and, in still later days, when the priests and Levites failed, GOD replaced them with the Gibeonites (Ezra 2:43; 8:20)"* (Blair, quoted by Coffman, p. 99).

Notice 8:17, which shows they were to be ministers of GOD'S house, ministers under the authority of the priests and Levites who guided them in their work.

One of the great lessons which needs to be learned from Joshua, is that the enemies of GOD'S people will always be defeated if GOD'S people remain faithful to Him. Faithful means looking to GOD for instructions and then obeying them no matter what may appear from human consideration to be the right course of action. Further, it should be considered that faithful does not mean being perfect. Only one man was ever perfect — the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Joshua — Chapter Ten**

**Joshua 10:1-5** "Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty. Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

**Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it."**

"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 her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty. Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, Come up unto me, and help me, and let us smite Gibeon; for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel. Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped against Gibeon, and made war against it." (ASV)

The king of Jerusalem was Adoni-zedec, which means "*Lord of righteousness.*" When he heard that Gibeon had made an alliance with Israel, he called for the kings of the other Canaanite cities to join him in battle. He quite naturally thought of destroying the Gibeonites to punish them for their alliance. Another possible reason was to make them an example to keep any of the other cities from making an alliance with Israel. Gibeon is called a great city, whose men were all mighty men. This probably referred to Gibeon as being a large fortified city with a strong fighting force. The kings of the Amorites marched against Gibeon and camped around the city. This must mean Gibeon had a great wall around it, for siege tactics were only used against such cities.

**Joshua. 10:6-11** "And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal,

saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.”

“And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the hill-country are gathered together against us. So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thy hands; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly; for he went up from Gilgal all the night. And Jehovah discomfited them before Israel, and He slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Beth-horon, that Jehovah cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.” (ASV)

When the Gibeonites realized what was happening, they sent for their new allies, the Israelites, to rescue them. Joshua immediately arose with all of his men of valor, the whole army, and rushed to Gibeon. You can imagine the surprise of the Amorite kings who must have realized the pitiful position they were in. Strong enemies were on both sides of them, they were trapped in the middle. As the surprise march of Joshua closed in on the enemy, they made initial contact and then Israel's enemies began to flee.

*“The difficulty of Joshua's all-night march should be noted. It was some 25 miles distance, uphill all the way, a climb of 2,000 feet vertical from the camp of Gilgal...Plummer said that much of the distance covered by Joshua in that 25 miles was so steep that steps had been chiseled into the rock to provide footholds” (Coffman. p. 109).*

The slaughter from the initial battle at Gibeon was great, but the Lord took an unusual hand in this battle by sending large hailstones upon the Amorites. More were killed in this battle by the hailstones, than were killed by the Israelites. It is noted that the victory did not belong to Israel, nor to Joshua; the text pointedly states the victory was GOD'S.

**Joshua 10:12-14** **“Then spake Joshua 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 thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for**

## Israel."

"Then spake Joshua to Jehovah in the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel; and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, Until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of a man: for Jehovah fought for Israel." (ASV)

In verse eight, the Lord had told Joshua, **"Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee."**

Joshua saw the complete victory which they were gaining, yet the day was quickly passing away. This would have allowed the rest of the Amorites to escape under cover of darkness. Joshua did the only thing he could; he asked GOD for more time to completely destroy the Amorites.

*"As to the quibble about whether it is the sun or the earth that moves that is foolish dodging of the issue. It is accommodative language. The sun appears to move and hence language is based on appearance. Even our 'scientists' who have learned the truth about the relation of the heavenly bodies will speak of the sunset which would be unscientific were we to hold them to strict fact in the form of their speech" (Zerr, p. 327).*

Further, it should be recognized that these were the words of Joshua, and they were not GOD's revealing something through Joshua.

Why is it so impossible for people to believe that He who created all things could at any time He might choose, disrupt the normal workings of the universe, for any purpose He chooses, without bringing total chaos to the universe? If one cannot (does not) believe this miracle, then he cannot truly believe in GOD at

all! The Bible is the inspired word of GOD; it must therefore be fully believed by man or completely rejected. There is no middle ground upon which man may stand in this matter. GOD gave Joshua and the Israelites almost another whole day of light to complete their task.

Verse fourteen tells one there had not been another day like this one either before or after this day. The evolutionists and theistic-evolutionists would have one to believe that the days of Genesis chapter one were long periods of time. But this passage tells one there never was a day as long as this one before this day nor after it. No wonder theistic evolutionists want to get rid of this miracle.

Coffman pointed out that the earth rotates on an axis, and that for this event to take place, there would have to be a change in this axis.

*"it is of some interest that the scientific facts available today prove that the axis upon which the earth today rotates is not in the same position as always. Seams in rocks are oriented to the magnetic pole of the earth; and these, in certain areas are criss-crossed by seams indicating a change in the position of the magnetic pole of the earth" (Coffman, p. 113).*

**Joshua 10:15-27 "And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal. But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them: And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your GOD hath delivered them into your hand. And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter,**

till they were consumed, that the rest which remained of them entered into fenced cities. And all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave. And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day."

"And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal. And these five kings fled, and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah. And Joshua said, Roll great stones unto the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to keep them: but stay not ye; pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for Jehovah your GOD hath delivered them into your hand. And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till

they were consumed, and the remnant which remained of them had entered into the fortified cities, that all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring forth those five kings unto me out of the cave. And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon. And it came to pass, when they brought forth those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the chiefs of the men of war that went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage: for thus shall Jehovah do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. And afterward Joshua smote them, and put them to death, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had hidden themselves, and laid great stones on the mouth of the cave, unto this very day." (ASV)

During the course of the battle, the five kings of the Amorites fled. They were found hiding in a cave called Makkedah. Joshua gave orders for the cave to be sealed, thus making it their prison, until they could be dealt with at a more convenient time. It may have been the day after this great battle when Joshua opened the cave to deal with these men.

**Why did Joshua tell his captains to put their feet on the necks of these conquered kings?** In ancient times this was a symbol of total victory, and it was a visible symbol to them that GOD had fulfilled His promise (v. 8). Then notice the admonition of verse twenty-five: **"be strong and of good courage."** They would likewise have total victory over all of their enemies.

*"One may see many examples of this type of ceremony in the sculptures and*

*artistic depictions frequently uncovered by the excavations of the archaeologists”* (Coffman, p. 115).

Then, Joshua ordered the five kings to be killed and hung until the sun went down. Their bodies were then buried in the cave of Makkedah. *Why were their bodies removed from the trees at sundown?* The answer is in Deuteronomy 21:22-23.

**Joshua 10:28-43** “And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho. Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah: And the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho. And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it: And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah. Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining. And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it: And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish. And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against

it: And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it: And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king. So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD GOD of Israel commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadeshbarnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon. And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD GOD of Israel fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.”

“And Joshua took Makkedah on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof: he utterly destroyed them and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining; and he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done unto the king of Jericho. And Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah: and Jehovah delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining in it; and he did unto the king thereof as he had done unto the king of Jericho. And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it: and Jehovah delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel; and he took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were

therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah. Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining. And Joshua passed from Lachish, and all Israel with him, unto Eglon; and they encamped against it, and fought against it; and they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword; and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish. And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it: and they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but he utterly destroyed it, and all the souls that were therein. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir, and fought against it: and he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to the king thereof. So Joshua smote all the land, the hill-country, and the South, and the lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but he utterly destroyed all that breathed, as Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal." (ASV)

These passages list the major cities conquered by the Israelites during this campaign. The major significance of this is found in verse forty-two. The Israelites were able to conquer all because **"the Lord GOD of Israel fought for Israel."** And GOD would not fight for Israel if Israel was not faithful to Him (remember Ai).

Coffman, and others whom he cites, mention that the Israelites conquered many

cities without destroying them. But, they did not occupy these cities immediately. Instead they moved on to conquer the next city. This allowed the Canaanites to re-inhabit these cities, only to be conquered again at a later date. A good example of this is Hebron. Hebron was conquered, but here we have Hebron conquered again. Later, we find Caleb (15:11-17), conquering the city permanently.

## Joshua — Chapter Eleven

**Joshua 11:1-5 "And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, And to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west, And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel."**

"And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor heard thereof, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, and to the kings that were on the north, in the hill-country, and in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in the heights of Dor on the west, to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the hill-country, and the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpah. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. And all these kings met together; and they came and encamped together at the waters of Merom, to fight with Israel." (ASV)

Chapter ten gave the highlights of the southern campaign. Chapter eleven deals with the highlights of the northern campaign.

Jabin, the king of Hazor, seems to have been the unifying force of those people who gathered against Israel at this time. The term Jabin is one found elsewhere and seems to be the title of their king — like the terms Pharaoh, Caesar, et cetera. Coffman said Hazor was probably the largest of the cities in this area, covering about 200 acres (Coffman, p. 125).

The writer listed all of the people which joined Jabin for this show-down. Josephus estimated there were about 300,000 foot soldiers in this army, besides horsemen and chariots.

Chinneroth is another name for the Sea of Galilee (v. 2).

**“chariots”** — *“That -chariots were frequently used in war, all the records of antiquity prove; but it is generally supposed that among the Canaanites they were armed with iron scythes fastened to their poles and to the naves of their wheels. Terrible things are spoken of these, and the havoc made by them when furiously driven among the ranks of infantry”* (Clarke, p. 52).  
(NAVE: Hub of a wheel.)

In comparison, Rea lists the weapons of the Israelites.

*“The chief weapon of the Israelites was the short thrusting sword (ten or twelve inches to eighteen inches in length) protruding from a hilt fashioned like a lion's mouth (whence the metaphor, ‘the mouth of the sword’)...They also used scimitars (Joshua 8:18), bows and arrows (24:12), slings with stone balls (Judges 20:16), thrusting spears or lances (Numbers 25:7-8), and hurling javelins (1 Sam. 18:10-11)”* (John Rea, p. 220).

(SCIMITAR: A short, curved sword with an edge on the convex side.)

**Joshua 11:6-9** **“And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hock their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephothmaim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining. And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he hocked their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.”**

“And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them; for to-morrow at this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hock their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly, and fell upon them. And Jehovah delivered them into the hand of Israel, and they smote them, and chased them unto great Sidon, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining. And Joshua did unto them as Jehovah bade him: he hocked their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.” (ASV)

There must have been a large number of the enemy gathered together under Jabin's banner. GOD encouraged Joshua and told him the enemy would be delivered to Israel on the next day. Joshua was further told to **“hough”** the horses.

*“To hough a horse was to break the tendons in its lower legs so that it could not run fast. It would still be capable of pulling plows and doing all kinds of domestic work. In this way the horses were spared, but were made unfit for military action”* (Winter, p. 164).

While Winter believes the houghing of the horses left them useful for domestic purposes, others believe it not only disabled the horses

but also caused them to die. It is reasoned that the same blow of the sword which severed the tendon would sever the artery as well. Deuteronomy 17:16 is also used to show GOD'S command for His people not to multiply horses to themselves. Whether the horses died or not, they would never be used for war again. Joshua was also told to burn the chariots, thus preventing their ever being used again.

**Joshua 11:10-14 "And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms. And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded. But as for the cities that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn. And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe."**

"And Joshua turned back at that time, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms. And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them; there was none left that breathed: and he burnt Hazor with fire. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and he smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed them; as Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded. But as for the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn. And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto

themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any that breathed." (ASV)

The town of Hazor was utterly destroyed. Since it had been the rallying point for the opposition it was totally destroyed. This would serve as a warning that all opposition to Israel was hopeless. Further, its utter destruction symbolized the total destruction of the Canaanites. Many of the other cities were not destroyed. These provided cities in which the Israelites would live.

**"And it shall be, when the LORD thy GOD shall have brought thee into the land which He swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not"** (Deuteronomy 6:10).

**Joshua 11:15-20 "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. So Joshua took all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; Even from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that He might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses."**

"As Jehovah commanded Moses his servant,

so did Moses command Joshua: and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that Jehovah commanded Moses. So Joshua took all that land, the hill-country, and all the South, and all the land of Goshen, and the lowland, and the Arabah, and the hill-country of Israel, and the lowland of the same; from mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and put them to death. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: they took all in battle. For it was of Jehovah to harden their hearts, to come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, that they might have no favor, but that He might destroy them, as Jehovah commanded Moses.” (ASV)

**Why did no nation ask for peace among the Canaanites?** It was because their hearts were hardened.

*"Looking at the situation from the perspective of modern historians, we can agree that it was the Lord's will that these people should be annihilated. They had sinned exceedingly. They were completely reprobate. The freedom of their will was not destroyed, (This is seen in Rahab — RK) but God had brought them to the place where they had to make a decision for or against Him. They had been given repeated opportunities to make such decisions, and each time they chose to turn their backs on God. This repeated confrontation contributed to the hardening of their hearts"* (Winter, p. 167-168).

*"They had sinned against all the light they had received, and God left them justly to the hardness, obstinacy, and pride of their own hearts; for as they chose to retain their idolatry, God was determined that they should be cut off"*

(Clarke, p. 55).

*"It appears that a course of wickedness willingly pursued by a sinner will result, even in these present times, in God's disabling, darkening, or hardening, his mind (the Biblical heart), so that, having already chosen evil, the hardened soul is incapable of intelligent decisions involving morality, and even including many practical considerations"* (Coffman, p. 130).

The text says Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. This has reference to the entire conquest of Canaan, not just the battles with those under Jabin's command. **How long did it take to conquer the land?** There are differing views on the time frame, which vary from five to fourteen or seven to fifteen years. The reference at Joshua 14:7-10 seem to indicate they lasted seven years. At the end of this time frame, it needs to be remembered, not every city had been captured. After the land was divided, the tribes were left to individually capture the remaining cities within their borders.

**Joshua 11:21-23** *“And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities. There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained. So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.”*

*"And Joshua came at that time, and cut off the Anakim from the hill-country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill-country of Judah, and from all the hill-country of Israel: Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. There was none of the Anakim left in the land*

of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, did some remain. So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah spake unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land had rest from war.” (ASV)

Special mention is made of the Anakims and their destruction. It is said they were all destroyed, apparently in a systematic manner, except for those in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. It is probably one of these descendants which faced David some years later. **This author wonders if their destruction, and special mention, has anything to do with the spies being sent into the land the first time?** They came back with an account of giants in the land — the Anakim. It would seem appropriate for their destruction to be mentioned.

It is stated Joshua **“took the whole land.”** This does not mean every city had been defeated. It is speaking in general terms. The major battles had been fought, and the land was (generally speaking) in the control of the Israelites. There was no major opposition left, and this left them in a general state of peace.

### **SOME LESSONS FROM CHAPTER ELEVEN**

1. It is foolish to fight against GOD.
  - a. But often, sin blinds men to what is going on around them. So they rush headlong into destruction.
2. Righteousness will triumph.
  - a. Joshua wielded the sword of GOD; he was therefore invincible. Such is the ultimate triumph of truth.
  - b. Jesus said the gates of hades could not prevail against His church (Matt. 16:18-20).
3. No enemy is strong enough to overcome GOD’S people, as long as they remain faithful to Him!

### **Joshua — Chapter Twelve**

**Joshua 12:1-24 "Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel**

**smote, and possessed their land on the other side Jordan toward the rising of the sun, from the river Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east: Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon; And from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, even the salt sea on the east, the way to Bethjeshimoth; and from the south, under Ashdothpishgah: And the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of the remnant of the giants, that dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, And reigned in mount Hermon, and in Salcah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon. Them did Moses the servant of the LORD and the children of Israel smite: and Moses the servant of the LORD gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote on this side Jordan on the west, from Baalgad in the valley of Lebanon even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; which Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions; In the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; The king of Debir, one; the king of**

**Geder, one; The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; The king of Shimronmeron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one; The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one; The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one."**

"Now these are the kings of the land, whom the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising, from the valley of the Arnon unto mount Hermon, and all the Arabah eastward: Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and half Gilead, even unto the river Jabbok, the border of the children of Ammon; and the Arabah unto the sea of Chinneroth, eastward, and unto the sea of the Arabah, even the Salt Sea, eastward, the way to Beth-jeshimoth; and on the south, under the slopes of Pisgah: and the border of Og king of Bashan, of the remnant of the Rephaim, who dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, and ruled in mount Hermon, and in Salecah, and in all Bashan, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon. Moses the servant of Jehovah and the children of Israel smote them: and Moses the servant of Jehovah gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. And these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the children of Israel smote beyond the Jordan westward, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon even unto mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir; and Joshua gave it unto the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions; in the hill-country, and in the lowland, slopes, and in the wilderness, and in the South; the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; the king of

Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; the king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; the king of Dor in the height of Dor, one; the king of Goim in Gilgal, one; the king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one." (ASV)

The twelfth chapter is simply a listing of the territories and kings which were conquered by Israel. The first part of the chapter dealt with a summary of the conquest of the east side of Jordan under Moses' leadership (vv. 1-6). The rest of the chapter (vv. 7-24) dealt with the conquest of the west side of Jordan under the leadership of Joshua.

### **Joshua — Chapter Thirteen**

**Joshua 13:1-7 "Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed. This is the land that yet remaineth: all the borders of the Philistines, and all Geshuri, From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites: From the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that is beside the Sidonians unto Aphek, to the borders of the Amorites: And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the entering into Hamath. All the inhabitants**

**of the hill country from Lebanon unto Misrephothmaim, and all the Sidonians, them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee. Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh,"**

"Now Joshua was old and well stricken in years; and Jehovah said unto him, Thou art old and well stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed. This is the land that yet remaineth: all the regions of the Philistines, and all the Geshurites; from the Shihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the border of Ekron northward, which is reckoned to the Canaanites; the five lords of the Philistines; the Gazites, and the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avvim, on the south; all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongeth to the Sidonians, unto Aphek, to the border of the Amorites; and the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entrance of Hamath; all the inhabitants of the hill-country from Lebanon unto Misrephoth-maim, even all the Sidonians; them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only allot thou it unto Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee. Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half-tribe of Manasseh." (ASV)

The text speaks of the old age of Joshua, who died when he was one hundred and ten years old. It is estimated that he may have been about ninety years old at this time. Thus, there was a certain urgency to accomplish the task set before him. One will see that the land was divided among the tribes before it was entirely conquered. These first seven verses tell of the parts of the land which had not as yet been conquered.

**Joshua 13:8-13 "With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses**

**the servant of the LORD gave them; From Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon; And all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon; And Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salcah; All the kingdom of Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for these did Moses smite, and cast them out. Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day."**

"With him the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of Jehovah gave them: from Aroer, that is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon; and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon; and Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Salecah; all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (the same was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); for these did Moses smite, and drove them out. Nevertheless the children of Israel drove not out the Geshurites, nor the Maacathites: but Geshur and Maacath dwell in the midst of Israel unto this day." (ASV)

The land east of Jordan is described as that which was to be given to the two and one-half tribes (Reuben, Gad, and one half of the tribe of Manasseh). The text also states that there were some people who were not driven out of the land. The land was to be totally conquered by the Israelites, and all the people were to be forced out or killed. But this conquest was to be accomplished in two stages. The basic conquest of the land was

accomplished by all the Israelites, at which time the land was divided among the tribes. Second, each tribe had the responsibility of finishing the conquest of those Canaanites who were left within the borders of its own tribe.

**Joshua 13:14 "Only unto the tribe of Levi He gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the LORD GOD of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as He said unto them."**

"Only unto the tribe of Levi He gave no inheritance; the offerings of Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, made by fire are his inheritance, as He spake unto him." (ASV)

Verse fourteen basically stands alone and is the beginning of the details of each tribes land inheritance. The Levites were not given an inheritance, i.e., they are not given a portion of the land like the other tribes. Yet, GOD's arrangements took care of them.

The Levites were to teach the law of GOD to the Israelites. Since they were to devote their time to these endeavors, GOD gave them cities throughout Israel in which to live. These are sometimes called the "priestly cities." Being scattered throughout the nation as they were, all the Israelites had access to them, and thus to an understanding of GOD'S laws. The teachers would always be nearby. Thus the priests were to live off of the sacrifices and tithes of the people (See Lev. 18:20-32).

**Joshua 13:15-23 "And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families. And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba; Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamothbaal, and Bethbaalmeon, And Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zarethshahar in the mount of the valley, And Bethpeor, and Ashdothpishgah, and Bethjeshimoth, And**

**all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country. Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them. And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof."**

"And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben according to their families. And their border was from Aroer, that is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain by Medeba; Heshbon, and all its cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon, and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereh-shahar in the mount of the valley, and Beth-peor, and the slopes of Pishgah, and Beth-jeshimoth, and all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the chiefs of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, the princes of Sihon, that dwelt in the land. Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among the rest of their slain. And the border of the children of Reuben was the Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their families, the cities and the villages thereof." (ASV)

The land inheritance of Reuben is named, but due to the uncertainty of these places today, one only has a general idea of Reuben's borders. This is true to a greater or lesser extent with regard to the other tribes as well.

*"In the reigns of the wicked Omri and Ahab, the power of Israel declined; and, following the battle of Ramoth-Gilead and the defeat and death of Ahab, the Moabites succeeded in shaking off the Israelitish*

*yoke and even recovering a portion of Sihon's former kingdom"* (Plummer, p. 212).

*"The Reubenites became much intermixed afterwards with the Moabites, who, in fact, later acquired much of their land, and several, if not all of the cities mentioned in this passage"* (Cook, p. 382).

As one views the later history of Reuben, one sees that they were the first tribe to be carried into captivity. Since Balaam is mentioned in this passage, it is concluded that their captivity was the result of following the false gods of the land. In fact, Woudstra believes Balaam is mentioned here as a warning to the Israelites not to serve these gods.

Baal *"was the god of gardens, fertility, and procreation. His worship was an excuse for lewdness, lustfulness, and persistent, morbid and excessive sexual excitement"* (Webster's International Unabridged Dictionary, p. 1042).

**Joshua 13:24-28** "And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families. And their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah; And from Heshbon unto Ramathmizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir; And in the valley, Betharam, and Bethnimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and his border, even unto the edge of the sea of Chinnereth on the other side Jordan eastward. This is the inheritance of the children of Gad after their families, the cities, and their villages."

"And Moses gave unto the tribe of Gad, unto the children of Gad, according to their families. And their border was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer that is before Rabbah; and

from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from Mahanaim unto the border of Debir; and in the valley, Beth-haram, and Beth-nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, the Jordan and the border thereof, unto the uttermost part of the sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan eastward. This is the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their families, the cities and the villages thereof." (ASV)

The territory of Gad is proclaimed, which was on the east side of Jordan, north of Reuben's territory. This area is sometimes called Gilead.

**Joshua 13:29-33** "And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families. And their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities: And half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even to the one half of the children of Machir by their families. These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan, by Jericho, eastward. But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the LORD GOD of Israel was their inheritance, as He said unto them."

"And Moses gave inheritance unto the half-tribe of Manasseh: and it was for the half-tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their families. And their border was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities: and half Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were for the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, even for the half of the children of Machir according to their families. These are the inheritances which Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan at

Jericho, eastward. But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance: Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, is their inheritance, as He spake unto them." (ASV)

Here is the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh, which was located on the east side of Jordan, just north of the territory of Gad.

It is again emphasized that Levi did not receive a land inheritance; their inheritance was the Lord GOD of Israel and what He provided through laws of sacrifice.

## **Joshua — Chapter Fourteen**

**Joshua 14:1-5 "And these are the countries which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them. By lot was their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half tribe. For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them. For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell in, with their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance. As the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land."**

"And these are the inheritances which the children of Israel took in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed unto them, by the lot of their inheritance, as Jehovah commanded by Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half-tribe. For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe beyond the Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: and they gave no portion unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for their

cattle and for their substance. As Jehovah commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land." (ASV)

In verse one, one is given a list of leaders who gathered to divide the land west of Jordan. All of the tribes were represented (at least the 9 ½). In verse two, one finds out the method by which each tribe knew which part of the land was to belong to them. The land was to be divided by lots.

This casting of lots was not a matter of chance!

**"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD"** (Proverbs 16:33).

When the lots were cast, the outcome could be counted on as being the will of GOD. Here one should remember that GOD did things in past ages that He does not now do, and which therefore seem strange to some today.

**"GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds"** (Hebrews 1:1-2).

*"Lot. 1. (Heb. gōrāl, a pebble; hebel, measuring line, portion; Gr. lanchanō, to cast lots, Luke 1:9; klēros, pebble, bit of wood to cast lots with (Acts 1:26). The custom of deciding doubtful questions by lot is one of great extent and high antiquity, recommending itself as a sort of appeal to the Almighty, secure from all influence of passion or bias, and is a sort of divination employed even by the gods themselves (Hom., Il., xxii, 209; Cic., De Div., i, 34; ii, 41). Among the Jews also the use of lots, with a religious intention, direct or indirect, prevailed extensively. The religious estimate of them may be gathered from Prov. 16:33. The*

following historical or ritual instances are: (1) Choice of men for an invading force (Judg. 1:1-3; 20:9); (2) Partition of the soil of Palestine among the tribes (Num. 26:55; Josh. 18:10; Acts 13:19), of Jerusalem, i.e., probably its spoil or captives among captors (Obad. 11), of the land itself in a similar way (I Macc. 3:36); apportionment of possessions, or spoil, or of prisoners, to foreigners or captors (Joel 3:3; Nah. 3:10; Matt. 27:35); (3) Settlement of doubtful questions (Prov. 16:33; 18:18), a mode of divination among heathen by means of arrows, two inscribed and one without mark (Hos. 4:12; Ezek. 21:21), detection of a criminal (Josh. 7:14, 18), appointment of persons to offices or duties, as the priests (Luke 1:9); also successor to Judas (Acts 1:26); selection of the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:8, 10). See *Urim and Thummim*" (Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 667).

"LOTS (Lahts) Objects of unknown shape and material used to determine the divine will. Often in the Ancient Near East people, especially priests, made difficult and significant decisions by casting lots on the ground or drawing them from a receptacle. Several times Scripture mentions the practice. We do not know exactly what the lots looked like. Nor do we know how they were interpreted. We do know that people of the Old and New Testaments believed God (or gods in the case of non-Israelites or non-Christians) influenced the fall or outcome of the lots (Prov. 16:33). Thus, casting lots was a way of determining God's will.

One of the best examples of this use

of lots is in Acts. Matthias was chosen to be Judas' successor by lot (Acts 1:26). The apostles' prayer immediately before shows the belief that God would express His will through this method. In the Old Testament Saul was chosen as Israel's first king through the use of lots (1 Sam. 10:20-24).

In a similar fashion God communicated knowledge unknown to human beings through lots. Saul called for the casting of lots to determine who sinned during his day-long battle with the Philistines. Specifically, he called for the use of the Urim and Thummim (1 Sam. 14:41-42; See Urim and Thummim). When Joshua brought people near to the Lord to find the guilty party after the defeat at Ai, he may have used lots although the word is not found in the text (Josh. 7:10-15).

Lots helped God's people make a fair decision in complicated situations. God commanded that the Promised Land be divided by lot (Num. 26:52-56). Later, lots established the Temple priests' order of service (1 Chron. 24:5-19). This practice continued into Jesus' day. Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, was burning incense in the holy place when the angel spoke to him. Zechariah was there because the lot fell to him (Luke 1:9). The awful picture of soldiers casting lots for Jesus' garments was this kind of "fair play" use of lots (Matt. 27:35). Proverbs teaches that the use of lots is one way to put an end to a dispute when decisions are difficult (Prov. 18:18).

Lots are memorialized in the Jewish Feast of Purim. Purim, the Akkadian word for lots, celebrates the frustration of Haman's plan to destroy the Jews in Persia. Haman had used lots to find the best day for the destruction (Esther 3:7).

Finally, the word lot came to refer to

*one's portion or circumstance of life. The righteous could confess that God was their lot (Ps. 16:5). The lot of those who violated the people of God was terror and annihilation (Isa. 17:14). See Oracles; Urim and Thummim” (Albert Bean, Holman's Dictionary, Computer version).*

In verse four, one sees the explanation of how there were still twelve tribes which received an inheritance, even though Levi was excluded from a land inheritance. Joseph (through his sons) received the double portion of inheritance. Thus, each of his sons became the head of a tribe (See Genesis 48).

**Joshua 14:6-15 "Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of GOD concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my GOD. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my GOD. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as He said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for**

**thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD GOD of Israel. And the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war."**

"Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of GOD concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed Jehovah my GOD. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Jehovah my GOD. And now, behold, Jehovah hath kept me alive, as He spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Jehovah spake this word unto Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in. Now therefore give me this hill-country, whereof Jehovah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake. And Joshua blessed him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite unto this day; because that he wholly followed Jehovah, the GOD of Israel. Now the name of Hebron beforetime was Kiriath-arba; which Arba was the greatest man among the

Anakim. And the land had rest from war.”  
(ASV)

Now one sees Caleb's request for his inheritance. But someone might object, saying, **Why does Caleb get to choose his inheritance?** In Numbers 13:4-15, twelve men were chosen, one from each tribe, to spy out the land of Canaan. Two of those men were Joshua and Caleb. The other ten spies came back with a negative report, saying they could not conquer the land. GOD had told the people the land was theirs to conquer, and Joshua and Caleb stood behind GOD'S promise. **What were the results of their faithfulness to GOD?**

**"Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it: But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it"** (Numbers 14:23-24).

Also see Deuteronomy 1:36-38 and Numbers 14:30.

It is obvious from the text that Joshua and Caleb must have been given their choice of the land to occupy. **Why was Caleb given first choice of the land?** The land was about to be divided among all of the tribes. Being from the tribe of Judah, Caleb's land needed to be among that tribe. Since GOD had decreed that Caleb could have his choice of the land, he must choose, and then the lot for Judah would be cast. In this way, they would not be separated.

Careful notice should be given as to which part of the land Caleb chose. He did not choose a part of the land which had already been conquered. He chose Hebron, a city still occupied by enemy forces. Neither was it just any city; it was occupied by the Anakims. In Joshua 11:22, one learned that the only Anakims left were in the cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. Some time has passed from that chapter to this one. Remember also that it

appears Hebron had been conquered in chapter eleven. Now it is once again a strong, fortified city. This indicates some of the Anakims re-occupied this city, and thus the city needed to be conquered again. These were the very people who had caused the children of Israel to shrink in terror when the ten spies brought back their negative report (Numbers 13:22-33). Caleb wanted those who had caused the Israelites to be destroyed to be driven out and destroyed. They would trouble Israel no more. There was still work to be done, and Caleb was going to be an example of one getting it done. Caleb was not afraid of the Anakims in the wilderness, and he was not afraid of them now at the age of eighty-five.

Interesting information is gained from verses seven and ten. Caleb was eighty-five years old at the time he requested Hebron for his inheritance. This is interesting, not so much from the standpoint of his age, but in order to give one an idea as to how long the initial conquest of the land took. If Caleb was forty years old when he spied out the land, and the people wandered for forty years while the unbelievers died in the wilderness, then that leaves seven years for the initial control of the land to take place. [Remember, at the time the spies were sent out, they had already been in the wilderness for approximately two years (this time was counted as part of the forty years). Since Caleb was forty when he went as a spy, it would be thirty-eight years later that they crossed Jordan, making Caleb seventy-eight years old at the crossing. The first phase of the conquest had now ended when he was eighty-five. Thus, the first phase of the conquest took about seven years.

## **Joshua — Chapter Fifteen**

**Joshua 15:1-12 "This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast. And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh**

southward: And it went out to the south side to Maalehacrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadeshbarnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa: From thence it passed toward Azmon, and went out unto the river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea: this shall be your south coast. And the east border was the salt sea, even unto the end of Jordan. And their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan: And the border went up to Bethhogla, and passed along by the north of Betharabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben: And the border went up toward Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that is before the going up to Adummim, which is on the south side of the river: and the border passed toward the waters of Enshemesh, and the goings out thereof were at Enrogel: And the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the Jebusite; the same is Jerusalem: and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of the giants northward: And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjathjearim: And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, on the north side, and went down to Bethshemesh, and passed on to Timnah: And the border went out unto the side of Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at

the sea. And the west border was to the great sea, and the coast thereof. This is the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families."

"And the lot for the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families was unto the border of Edom, even to the wilderness of Zin southward, at the uttermost part of the south. And their south border was from the uttermost part of the Salt Sea, from the bay that looketh southward; and it went out southward of the ascent of Akrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and went up by the south of Kadesh-barnea, and passed along by Hezron, and went up to Addar, and turned about to Karka; and it passed along to Azmon, and went out at the brook of Egypt; and the goings out of the border were at the sea: this shall be your south border. And the east border was the Salt Sea, even unto the end of the Jordan. And the border of the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the end of the Jordan; and the border went up to Beth-hoglah, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben; and the border went up to Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that is over against the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the river; and the border passed along to the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at En-rogel; and the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the side of the Jebusite southward (the same is Jerusalem); and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Rephaim northward; and the border extended from the top of the mountain unto the fountain of the waters of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border extended to Baalah (the same is Kiriath-jearim); and the border turned about from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim on the north (the same is Chesalon), and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed along by Timnah; and the border went out unto the side of Ekron northward; and the border extended to Shikkeron, and passed along to mount Baalah, and went out at Jabneel; and the goings out of the border were at the sea. And the west border was to the great sea, and the border thereof. This is the border of the children of Judah round about according to their families." (ASV)

The tribal land of Judah is given. Also, another name for Jerusalem is given — Jebusite (v. 8).

The **"river of Egypt"** does not refer to the Nile River, in Egypt. It refers to a small river which runs northwesterly into the Mediterranean Sea, a few miles south of Gaza.

**Joshua 15:13-19 "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjathsepher. And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? Who answered, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs."**

"And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of Jehovah to Joshua, even Kiriath-arba, which Arba was the father of Anak (the same is Hebron). And Caleb drove out thence the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. And he went up thence against the inhabitants of Debir: now the name of Debir beforetime was Kiriath-sepher. And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kiriath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, when she came unto him, that she moved him to ask

of her father a field: and she alighted from off her ass; and Caleb said, What wouldest thou? And she said, Give me a blessing; for that thou hast set me in the land of the South, give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs." (ASV)

Now the text goes back to the inheritance of Caleb, which is also found in the first chapter of Judges. The city of Kirjath-sepher was "a book city." It is believed this was a city where books were stored. Thus, it would be important as a record-keeping center. This city fell among the part of Caleb's possession, and he offered it as a prize to whoever could conquer it. The man who conquered this city would also receive Caleb's daughter as a wife. Othniel, who became the first judge of Israel, stepped forward and conquered the city and claimed his bride. Othniel was Caleb's brother. One might need to explain the way the Hebrews used the word brother. It is much like the way they used the word "father." Both of these terms simply referred to a male relative, not necessarily a physical father or brother by blood.

**Joshua 15:20-62 "This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families. And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom southward were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur, And Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, And Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan, Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth, And Hazor, Hadattah, and Kerioth, and Hezron, which is Hazor, Amam, and Shema, and Moladah, And Hazargaddah, and Heshmon, and Bethpalet, And Hazarshual, and Beersheba, and Bizjothjah, Baalah, and lim, and Azem, And Eltolad, and Chesil, and Hormah, And Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah, And Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages: And in the valley, Eshtaol, and Zoreah, and Ashnah, And Zanoah, and**

**Engannim, Tappuah, and Enam, Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah, And Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages: Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdalgad, And Dilean, and Mizpeh, and Joktheel, Lachish, and Bozkath, and Eglon, And Cabbon, and Lahmam, and Kithlish, And Gederoth, Bethdagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages: Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan, And Jiphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib, And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages: Ekron, with her towns and her villages: From Ekron even unto the sea, all that lay near Ashdod, with their villages: Ashdod with her towns and her villages, Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto the river of Egypt, and the great sea, and the border thereof: And in the mountains, Shamir, and and Kirjathsannah, which is Debir, And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim, And Goshen, and Holon, and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages: Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean, And Janum, and Bethtappuah, and Aphekah, And Humtah, and Kirjatharba, which is Hebron, and Zior; nine cities with their villages: Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah, And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah, Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah; ten cities with their villages: Halhul, Bethzur, and Gedor, And Maarath, and Bethanoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages: Kirjathbaal, which is Kirjathjearim, and Rabbah; two cities with their villages: In the wilderness, Betharabah, Middin, and Secacah, And Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and Engedi; six cities with their villages.”**

"This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families. And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the border of Edom in the South were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur, and Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan, Ziph, and

Telem, and Bealoth, and Hazor-hadattah, and Kerioth-hezron (the same is Hazor), Amam, and Shema, and Moladah, and Hazar-gaddah, and Heshmon, and Beth-pelet, and Hazar-shual, and Beer-sheba, and Biziothiah, Baalah, and lim, and Ezem, and Eltolad, and Chesil, and Hormah, and Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah, and Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon: all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages. In the lowland, Eshtaol, and Zorah, and Ashnah, and Zanoah, and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam, Jarmuth, and Adullam, Socoh, and Azekah, and Shaaraim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages. Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdal-gad, and Dilean, and Mizpeh, and Joktheel, Lachish, and Bozkath, and Eglon, and Cabbon, and Lahmam, and Chitlish, and Gederoth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages. Libnah, and Ether, and Ashan, and Iphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib, and Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages. Ekron, with its towns and its villages; from Ekron even unto the sea, all that were by the side of Ashdod, with their villages. Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; unto the brook of Egypt, and the great sea, and the border thereof. And in the hill-country, Shamir, and Jattir, and Socoh, and Dannah, and and Giloh; eleven cities with their villages. Arab, and Dumah, and Eshan, and Janim and Beth- tappuah, and Aphekah, and Humtah, and Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), and Zior; nine cities with their villages. Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Jutah, and Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah, Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah; ten cities with their villages. Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor, and Maarath, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages. Kiriath-baal (the same is Kiriath-jearim), and Rabbah; two cities with their villages. In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah, and Nibshan, and the City of Salt, and En-gedi; six cities with their villages.” (ASV)

These verses simply list the cities which were given by lots to Judah.

**Joshua 15:63 "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 unto this day."**

"And 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 unto this day." (ASV)

Now one finds something which leaves a question mark in his mind. The Jebusites, which lived in Jerusalem, were not conquered. I am inclined to believe, when I look at men like Caleb, that it was not because Israel refused to conquer it or that they could not at this time because of sin. GOD told them He would not give them the whole land at once so that it would not become desolate. Jerusalem would not be captured until the time of David (2 Samuel 5:6-10). But in between this time and the time of David, surely Jerusalem should have been conquered.

## **Joshua — Chapter Sixteen**

**Joshua 16:1-4 "And the lot of the children of Joseph fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Bethel. And goeth out from Bethel to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to Ataroth, And goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, unto the coast of Bethhoron the nether, and to Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at the sea. So the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance."**

"And the lot came out for the children of Joseph from the Jordan at Jericho, at the waters of Jericho on the east, even the wilderness, going up from Jericho through the hill-country to Beth-el; and it went out from Beth-el to Luz, and passed along unto the border of the Archites to Ataroth; and it went down westward to the border of the Japhletites, unto the border of Beth-horon the nether, even unto Gezer; and the goings out thereof were at the sea. And the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance." (ASV)

The general borders of Joseph's sons are given — Ephraim and Manasseh.

*"the territory of the two tribes, described in vv. 1-4, comprised the central and most fertile part of Palestine"* (Dummelow, p. 151).

**Joshua 16:5-9 "And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was thus: even the border of their inheritance on the east side was Atarothaddar, unto Bethhoron the upper; And the border went out toward the sea to Michmethah on the north side; and the border went about eastward unto Taanathshiloh, and passed by it on the east to Janohah; And it went down from Janohah to Ataroth, and to Naarath, and came to Jericho, and went out at Jordan. The border went out from Tappuah westward unto the river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families. And the separate cities for the children of Ephraim were among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages."**

"And the border of the children of Ephraim according to their families was thus: the border of their inheritance eastward was Ataroth-addar, unto Beth-horon the upper; and the border went out westward at Michmethath on the north; and the border turned about eastward unto Taanath-shiloh, and passed along it on the east of Janoah; and it went down from Janoah to Ataroth, and to Naarah, and reached unto Jericho, and went out at the Jordan. From Tappuah the border went along westward to the brook of Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their families; together with the cities which were set apart for the children of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages." (ASV)

In verses 1-4, the general borders of both

Ephraim and Manasseh are set out. Now one sees a brief description of the borders of Ephraim set forth.

**Joshua 16:10** “And they drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.”

“And they drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell in the midst of Ephraim unto this day, and are become servants to do taskwork.” (ASV)

One is again informed that the Canaanites were not driven out of the land; Gezer is specifically mentioned here. It was these people, and others, who eventually became a thorn in the side of the Israelites and caused their downfall.

**"And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break My covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed My voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you."** (Judges 2:1-3)

This came about because Israel disobeyed GOD. But note this did not come about until after the time of Joshua and Caleb.

**"And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that He had done for Israel."** (Joshua 24:31)

## **Joshua — Chapter Seventeen**

**Joshua 17:1-2** “There was also a lot for the

**tribe of Manasseh; for he was the firstborn of Joseph; to wit, for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan. There was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hephher, and for the children of Shemida: these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.”**

“And this was the lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he was the first-born of Joseph. As for Machir the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan. So the lot was for the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their families: for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hephher, and for the children of Shemida: these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.” (ASV)

The boundaries of the half-tribe of Manasseh which settled on the east side of Jordan are briefly given.

**Joshua 17:3-6** “But Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father. And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan; Because the daughters of

**Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.”**

“But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Mileah, and Tirzah. And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, Jehovah commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren: therefore according to the commandment of Jehovah he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father. And there fell ten parts to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is beyond the Jordan; because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons. And the land of Gilead belonged unto the rest of the sons of Manasseh.” (ASV)

**Who was Zelophehad?** Numbers chapter thirty-six gives one the details of this man and his daughters. Zelophehad was a descendant of Manasseh who had no sons to inherit his portion of the land. The Lord commanded Moses to give this son-less man's daughters his inheritance, but only if they married within the tribe of Manasseh. If they married outside the tribe, they lost their claim of inheritance in Manasseh.

*“Such a provision prevents the woman's inheriting land in her tribe and her husbands inheriting land in another tribe. At the same time, it gave recognition to the woman as an heiress”* (Winter, p. 228-229).

**Joshua 17:7-13 “And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lieth before Shechem; and the border went along on the right hand unto the inhabitants of Entappuah. Now Manasseh had the land of Tappuah: but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim; And the coast descended unto the river Kanah, southward of the river: these cities of Ephraim are among the cities of Manasseh:**

**the coast of Manasseh also was on the north side of the river, and the outgoings of it were at the sea: Southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea is his border; and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east. And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Bethshean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Endor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries. Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. 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.”**

“And the border of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethath, which is before Shechem; and the border went along to the right hand, unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah. The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh; but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim. And the border went down unto the brook of Kanah, southward of the brook: these cities belonged to Ephraim among the cities of Manasseh: and the border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook, and the goings out thereof were at the sea: southward it was Ephraim's, and northward it was Manasseh's, and the sea was his border; and they reached to Asher on the north, and to Issachar on the east. And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Beth-shean and its towns, and Ibleam and its towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns, even the three heights. Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. And it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxed strong, that they put the Canaanites to taskwork, and did not utterly drive them out.” (ASV)

The boundaries of the half-tribe of Manasseh which settled on the west side of Jordan are discussed.

An interesting discovery is found here. Manasseh on the west bank controlled six cities in the tribes of Issachar and Asher (v. 11). To this writer's knowledge, there is no Scriptural answer given as to why this was the case. Further, one is told Manasseh could not drive the Canaanites from these cities. For some reason, they did not drive them out as GOD had commanded them. Notice it says they were **"waxen strong."** This was not speaking of the Canaanites, but rather the Israelites. When Israel was strong they did not drive the Canaanites out; instead, they placed them under tribute. Placing one under tribute implies one has power to destroy the one under tribute, else the tribute payer would not pay the tribute. When they became powerful, in control of the land, Israel began to drift away from the Lord. The first token of their drifting is found just here.

*"Indolence, a love of ease; perhaps a mistaken humanity, arising from a disregard or forgetfulness of the Divine command, a decreasing principle of faith and zeal in the service of God were the causes of their failure"* (Robert Jamieson, JFB, Joshua, p. 154).

**Joshua 17:14-18 "And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto? And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are of Bethshean and her towns, and they who are of the**

**valley of Jezreel. And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: But the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong."**

"And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me but one lot and one part for an inheritance, seeing I am a great people, forasmuch as hitherto Jehovah hath blessed me? And Joshua said unto them, If thou be a great people, get thee up to the forest, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the Rephaim; since the hill-country of Ephraim is too narrow for thee. And the children of Joseph said, The hill-country is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are in Beth-shean and its towns, and they who are in the valley of Jezreel. And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, even to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou art a great people, and hast great power; thou shalt not have one lot only: but the hill-country shall be thine; for though it is a forest, thou shalt cut it down, and the goings out thereof shall be thine; for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong." (ASV)

Ephraim must have led in this request. They were saying that since the descendants of Manasseh received two portions through the lots — one east of the Jordan and one west of the Jordan — they, too, should receive an equal amount of territory. Manasseh (west) may have joined in the request, since the complaint is attributed to the children of Joseph.

In effect, Joshua told them to make full use of what they had been given. They claimed to be a great people. Joshua agreed that they were a great people and then challenged them to prove it by conquering the Canaanites.

These two tribes had been given all the land they needed. All they had to do was clear the forests and drive the Canaanites out. **Is it**

possible these tribes thought they were better than they really were?

**“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith”** (Romans 12:3).

Rea stated that the hill country was vacant at this time (John Rea, WBC, Joshua, p. 224). Is it possible they were simply too lazy to do the hard work necessary to obtain their inheritance?

As for their objection to the iron chariots of the Canaanites, how quickly they had forgotten the promises and actions of GOD with regard to the overthrow of these people. Or, was this simply an excuse not to do their part? How many objections are offered today in refusing to do what GOD has said, which are nothing more than an excuse for laziness?

The only reason the Josephites did not drive out the Canaanites and thus possess their inheritance:

*“was that they did not trust in God, but preferred an unworthy compromise with neighbors who, however rich in warlike material, were sunk in sensuality and sloth”* (Plummer, p. 294).

## Joshua — Chapter Eighteen

**Joshua 18:1** “And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.”

“And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there: and the land was subdued before them.” (ASV)

The place for the tabernacle to be set up was Shiloh. Coffman believed this city did not exist until this time. It was in the territory controlled by the tribe of Ephraim. Because it was central to all the tribes of Israel it was the perfect place for all to come to worship. The

tabernacle remained in Shiloh until the time of Eli, when the ark was captured by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:1-11). The tabernacle stayed in Shiloh for about three hundred years.

**Joshua 18:2-9** “And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD GOD of your fathers hath given you? Give out from among you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come again to me. And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north. Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the description hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our GOD. But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them. And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.”

“And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet divided their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go in to possess the land, which Jehovah, the GOD of your fathers, hath given you? Appoint for you three men of each tribe: and I will send

them, and they shall arise, and walk through the land, and describe it according to their inheritance; and they shall come unto me. And they shall divide it into seven portions: Judah shall abide in his border on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their border on the north. And ye shall describe the land into seven portions, and bring the description hither to me; and I will cast lots for you here before Jehovah our GOD. For the Levites have no portion among you; for the priesthood of Jehovah is their inheritance: and Gad and Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of Jehovah gave them. And the men arose, and went: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me; and I will cast lots for you here before Jehovah in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven portions in a book; and they came to Joshua unto the camp at Shiloh.” (ASV)

The text reminds one that there were still seven tribes who had not received their inheritance. Gad, Reuben and one-half of Manasseh received land, by their request, on the east bank of Jordan. The other half-tribe of Manasseh and Ephraim had received territory on the west bank of Jordan in the northern end of the territory, while Judah received its allotment in the southern end of the territory. This left seven tribes which still had not received their inheritance. But notice that Joshua rebuked them because they were not initiating action to possess the land. They seemed reluctant to obey the command to possess the land.

Of these remaining tribes, three men from each of their tribes were chosen to survey the rest of the land, so that it could be divided among them. They were to report back to Joshua. Winter believed they were not to make accurate measurements of borders, but they were to determine the cities left in the land. When one notices the emphasis placed on naming the cities of each tribe, it seems the

cities may have determined the borders of each tribe. If this was so, then probably the lots were cast for each city, until all were assigned to a tribe. One should carefully notice verse nine with regard to this.

Note the words of Winter regarding the inheritance of the Levites.

*“It was understood that ‘the priesthood of the Lord’ was the inheritance of Levi. They had no time nor need for land in which to plant grains, vines, and trees. They were to give themselves completely to the service of God, teaching the law, protecting the rights of the oppressed, and in general, fulfilling their mission as the Lord’s peculiar possession. In return for these services, they were to receive forty-eight cities in which to dwell; and their livelihood was to be provided by the other tribes who gave a tithe of all their income to the Lord for the support of the Levites”* (Winter, p. 237).

Joshua 18:10 “And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.”

“And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before Jehovah: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.” (ASV)

The surveyors did their work and returned to Shiloh, where Joshua, by casting lots, determined the tribal lands of each.

**Joshua 18:11-28 “And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the coast of their lot came forth between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. And their border on the north side was from Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness**

of Bethaven. And the border went over from thence toward Luz, to the side of Luz, which is Bethel, southward; and the border descended to Atarothadar, near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Bethoron. And the border was drawn thence, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that lieth before Bethoron southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kirjathbaal, which is Kirjathjearim, a city of the children of Judah: this was the west quarter. And the south quarter was from the end of Kirjathjearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of Nephtoah: And the border came down to the end of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in the valley of the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south, and descended to Enrogel, And was drawn from the north, and went forth to Enshemesh, and went forth toward Gellioth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah: And the border passed along to the side of Bethhoglah northward: and the outgoings of the border were at the north bay of the salt sea at the south end of Jordan: this was the south coast. And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families. Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Bethhoglah, and the valley of Keziz. And Betharabah, and Zemaraim, and Bethel, And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah, And Chepharhaammonai, and Ophni, and Gaba; twelve cities with their villages: Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth,

**And Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah, And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah, And Zelah, Eleph, and Jebusi, which is Jerusalem, Gibeath, and Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is Benjamin according to their families.”**

“And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families: and the border of their lot went out between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. And their border on the north quarter was from the Jordan; and the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went up through the hill-country westward; and the goings out thereof were at the wilderness of Beth-aven. And the border passed along from thence to Luz, to the side of Luz (the same is Beth-el), southward; and the border went down to Ataroth-addar, by the mountain that lieth on the south of Beth-horon the nether. And the border extended thence, and turned about on the west quarter southward, from the mountain that lieth before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at Kiriath-baal (the same is Kiriath-jearim), a city of the children of Judah: this was the west quarter. And the south quarter was from the uttermost part of Kiriath-jearim; and the border went out westward, and went out to the fountain of the waters of Nephtoah; and the border went down to the uttermost part of the mountain that lieth before the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is in the vale of Rephaim northward; and it went down to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of the Jebusite southward, and went down to En-rogel; and it extended northward, and went out at En-shemesh, and went out to Gellioth, which is over against the ascent of Adummim; and it went down to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben; and it passed along to the side over against the Arabah northward, and went down unto the Arabah; and the border passed along to the side of Beth-hoglah northward; and the goings out of the border were at the north bay of the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan: this was the south border. And the Jordan was the border of it on the east quarter. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the borders thereof round about, according to their families. Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, and Beth-hoglah, and Emek-keziz, and Beth-arabah, and Zemaraim, and Beth-el, and Avvim, and

Parah, and Ophrah, and Chephar-ammoni, and Ophni, and Geba; twelve cities with their villages: Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth, and Mizpeh, and Chephirah, and Mozah, and Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah, and Zelah, Eleph, and the Jebusite (the same is Jerusalem), Gibeath, and Kiriath; fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin.” (ASV)

The inheritance of Benjamin is described. It is observed, that some of the best-known cities, as portrayed in the Bible, are found in the tribal land of Benjamin.

## **Joshua — Chapter Nineteen**

**Joshua 19:1-9 “And the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah. And they had in their inheritance Beersheba, and Sheba, and Moladah, And Hazarshual, and Balah, and Azem, And Etlolad, and Bethul, and Hormah, And Ziklag, and Bethmarcaboth, and Hazarsusah, And Bethlebaoth, and Sharuhem; thirteen cities and their villages: Ain, Remmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities and their villages: And all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalathbeer, Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.”**

“And the second lot came out for Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the children of Judah. And they had for their inheritance Beer-sheba, or Sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-shual, and Balah, and Ezem, and Etlolad, and Bethul, and Hormah,

and Ziklag, and Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susah, and Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem; thirteen cities with their villages: Ain, Rimmon, and Ether, and Ashan; four cities with their villages: and all the villages that were round about these cities to Baalath-beer, Ramah of the South. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families. Out of the part of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon; for the portion of the children of Judah was too much for them: therefore the children of Simeon had inheritance in the midst of their inheritance.” (ASV)

The interesting thing to notice about the inheritance of Simeon is that it was within the inheritance of the children of Judah, i.e., inside the borders of Judah.

When Jacob gave blessings to his sons, he said of Simeon and Levi, **“I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel”** (Genesis 49:5-7). It has already been noted that Levi was scattered throughout the tribes. Simeon was not allowed to have a distinct inheritance in the land either. They were basically absorbed into the tribe of Judah, eventually losing their separate identity.

*“At the first numbering, made before Israel left Sinai (Numbers one), there were 59,300 men in Simeon. This tribe decreased in number until there were only 22,200 when the children of Israel were numbered again in the plains of Moab (Numbers 26)”* (Winter, p. 247).

**Joshua 19:10-16 “And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid: And their border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river that is before Jokneam; And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrising unto the border of Chislothabor, and then goeth out to Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia. And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittahhepher, to Ittahkazin, and goeth**

**out to Remmonmethoar to Neah; And the border compasseth it on the north side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthahel: And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.”**

“And the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their families; and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid; and their border went up westward, even to Maralah, and reached to Dabbesheth; and it reached to the brook that is before Jokneam; and it turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrising unto the border of Chisloth-tabor; and it went out to Daberath, and went up to Japhia; and from thence it passed along eastward to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin; and it went out at Rimmon which stretcheth unto Neah; and the border turned about it on the north to Hannathon; and the goings out thereof were at the valley of Iphtah-el; and Kattath, and Nahalal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their families, these cities with their villages.” (ASV)

Zebulun’s inheritance is described.

**Joshua 19:17-23 “And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their families. And their border was toward Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and Shunem, And Haphraim, and Shihon, and Anaharath, And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez, And Remeth, and Engannim, and Enhaddah, and Bethpazzez; And the coast reacheth to Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Bethshemesh; and the outgoings of their border were at Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities and their villages.”**

“The fourth lot came out for Issachar, even for the children of Issachar according to their families. And their border was unto Jezreel,

and Chesulloth, and Shunem, and Hapharaim, and Shion, and Anaharath, and Rabbith, and Kishion, and Ebez, and Remeth, and Engannim, and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez, and the border reached to Tabor, and Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh; and the goings out of their border were at the Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their families, the cities with their villages.” (ASV)

Issachar’s inheritance is described.

**Joshua 19:24-31 “And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph, And Alammelech, and Amad, and Misheal; and reacheth to Carmel westward, and to Shihorlibnath; And turneth toward the sunrising to Bethdagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the valley of Jiphthahel toward the north side of Bethemek, and Neiel, and goeth out to Cabul on the left hand, And Hebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, even unto great Zidon; And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre; and the coast turneth to Hosah; and the outgoings thereof are at the sea from the coast to Achzib: Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.”**

“And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families. And their border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achshaph, and Allammelech, and Amad, and Mishal; and it reached to Carmel westward, and to Shihor-libnath; and it turned toward the sunrising to Beth-dagon, and reached to Zebulun, and to the valley of Iphtah-el northward to Beth-emek and Neiel; and it went out to Cabul on the left hand, and Ebron, and Rehob, and Hammon, and Kanah, even unto great Sidon; and the border turned to Ramah, and to the fortified city of Tyre; and

the border turned to Hosah; and the goings out thereof were at the sea by the region of Achzib; Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their families, these cities with their villages.” (ASV)

Asher’s inheritance is described.

**Joshua 19:32-39** “The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families. And their coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaananim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan: And then the coast turneth westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sunrising. And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth, And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor, And Kedesh, and Edrei, and Enhazor, And Iron, and Migdalel, Horem, and Bethanath, and Bethshemesh; nineteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities and their villages.”

“The sixth lot came out for the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families. And their border was from Heleph, from the oak in Zaananim, and Adaminekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakkum; and the goings out thereof were at the Jordan; and the border turned westward to Aznoth-tabor, and went out from thence to Hukkok; and it reached to Zebulun on the south, and reached to Asher on the west, and to Judah at the Jordan toward the sunrising. And the fortified cities were Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth, and Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor, and Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor, And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their

villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their families, the cities with their villages.” (ASV)

Naphtali’s inheritance is described.

**Joshua 19:40-48** “And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. And the coast of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Irshemesh, And Shaalabbin, and Ajalon, and Jethlah, And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron, And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath, And Jehud, and Beneberak, and Gathrimmon, And Mejarkon, and Rakkon, with the border before Japho. And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.”

“The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families. And the border of their inheritance was Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh, and Shaalabbin, and Aijalon, and Ithlah, and Elon, and Timnah, and Ekron, and Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalath, and Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon, and Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border over against Joppa. And the border of the children of Dan went out beyond them; for the children of Dan went up and fought against Leshem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it, and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families, these cities with their villages.” (ASV)

Dan was the last tribe to receive an inheritance. The children of Dan were not pleased with their inheritance, so they went to Leshem and conquered the city and its territory. They renamed Leshem with the

name of their tribal father — Dan. (See Judges 1:34; 18:1-31 for a fuller account of this.) They claimed the land was not big enough for them, but in reality, Dan simply preferred to live somewhere else.

**Joshua 19:49-51** “When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them: According to the word of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnathserah in mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein. These are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, divided for an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. So they made an end of dividing the country.”

“So they made an end of distributing the land for inheritance by the borders thereof; and the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun in the midst of them: according to the commandment of Jehovah they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in the hill-country of Ephraim; and he built the city, and dwelt therein. These are the inheritances, which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance by lot in Shiloh before Jehovah, at the door of the tent of meeting. So they made an end of dividing the land.” (ASV)

After all the tribes received their inheritance, Joshua received his inheritance. He chose Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim.

*“Captain Warren Candor said that there is no place in all Palestine so striking as that of Joshua’s home. It was surrounded with deep valleys and rugged hills”* (Winter, p. 257).

One also notices in verse fifty-one that Eleazar and the heads of the tribes helped Joshua in the task of dividing the land. The

special mention of Eleazar (the son of Aaron) leads one to believe the Urim and Thummin were the instruments used as lots.

## **Joshua — Chapter Twenty**

**Joshua 20:1-6** “The LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses: That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.”

“And Jehovah spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Assign you the cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by Moses, that the manslayer that killeth any person unwittingly and unawares may flee thither: and they shall be unto you for a refuge from the avenger of blood. And he shall flee unto one of those cities, and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; and they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver up the manslayer into his hand; because he smote his neighbor unawares, and hated him not beforetime. And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the high priest that shall be in

those days: then shall the manslayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.” (ASV)

With regard to murder, the avenger of blood, and the cities of refuge, the following passages should also be studied: Numbers 35:9-32; Deuteronomy 4:41-43; Deuteronomy 19.

**Who was the avenger of blood?**

*“From time immemorial in the east, if a man was slain the duty of avenging him was laid as a sacred obligation upon his nearest relative”* (I.S.B.E., p. 2546).

This was usually a brother, but if one did not have a brother, it would fall upon some other relative. The avenger of blood could kill the one who killed his relative - without a court trial - whether the man murdered him or killed him.

**“And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man”** (Genesis 9:5).

**What is the difference between “murdered him” or “killed him?”** Notice the text says the city of refuge was for anyone who killed someone “unawares and unwittingly.” The Scriptures have always made a difference between killing someone and murdering him. Whichever takes place, the person is still dead; but the difference is that one has been killed intentionally or because of previous malice (murdered), whereas the death of the other was accidental (killed).

When someone killed another human being, he could flee to a city of refuge to escape the avenger of blood. All of the roads leading to these various cities were well-marked and kept in constant repair so nothing would hinder anyone's fleeing from the avenger of blood. The way to these cities was made as easy as possible. **But suppose the man fleeing had actually intended to kill his victim? Would he then be safe from the avenger of blood?** All who fled to a city of

refuge were to be granted initial asylum, but that does not mean it was permanently granted to them. There would be a trial in which guilt or innocence would be determined. If it was determined that the killer had intentionally killed or killed one after having previously exhibited bad blood toward him, then the killer would be turned over to the avenger of blood, who would be allowed to execute him immediately.

**“Thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot”** (Deuteronomy 19:21).

GOD has always required blood for blood with regard to murderers (Gen. 9:5; Num. 35:16-19).

**“And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him, he shall slay him”** (Numbers 35:16-19).

On the other hand, if a man was found to have accidentally killed another, the avenger of blood could not execute him once the man reached a city of refuge. There is an exception to this rule. The one who was ruled innocent was not allowed to return to his home. He was taken back to the city of refuge, where he would have to remain until the death of the High Priest, at which time he was allowed to return in safety to his home without further fear of the avenger of blood. But if the innocent man left the safety of the refuge city boundaries, for any reason, before

the death of the High Priest, the avenger of blood could kill him without penalty to himself (Numbers 35:26-28). Probably would have provided a good “cooling off” period in such cases. This allowed the hot-head to realize justice had been served. These laws also stopped blood feuds from developing.

These regulations were meant to protect the innocent, but they did not protect the guilty. The guilty would receive his just reward for murder. In the Middle Ages, cities of refuge were developed where all who entered received refuge whether they were guilty or innocent. These towns quickly became cesspools of crime and places from which the criminal would go forth into the land to commit more crimes and then return for safety. The regulations GOD set forth for His people did not permit such a gross violation of just sanctity.

It should also be noted that the cities of refuge were part of the forty-eight cities given to the Levites. One should also observe that the establishment of these cities of refuge was proof that GOD fulfilled His promise to give the descendants of Abraham all the land promised to them.

**“When the LORD thy GOD hath cut off the nations, whose land the LORD thy GOD giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses; Thou shalt separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee to possess it. Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither....And if the LORD thy GOD enlarge thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which He promised to give unto thy fathers; If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this**

**day, to love the LORD thy GOD, and to walk ever in His ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three”** (Deuteronomy 19:1-3, 8-9).

**Joshua 20:7-9 “And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjatharba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah. And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.”**

“And they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill-country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron) in the hill-country of Judah. And beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness in the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. These were the appointed cities for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person unwittingly might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.” (ASV)

The cities of refuge were appointed. Kedesh, Shechem and Hebron were selected on the west bank of Jordan, while Bezer, Ramoth and Golan were selected on the east bank of Jordan. When one refers to a Biblical map, one can see these cities were spread out over the land in such a way as to make them accessible to all the people.

Notice from verse nine that these regulations applied not only to the citizens of

Israel but also to anyone who was in their land.

*"The establishment of the cities of refuge is an admiral emblem of the Church. The Church is a city set upon an hill whose gates stand open day and night to those whom the law condemns. Only those to whom the church is open are not exclusively those who have transgressed unwittingly, as was the case then. All who have broken the law of God, even with open eyes, may find shelter there, on the one condition that they enter by the door, of which Jesus said, 'I am the door; and no man cometh unto the Father but by me' (John 10:7)" (E. de Pressense, PC, Joshua; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950, p. 299).*

Do the passages one has studied above, especially those in Numbers, cause a conflict with this author's belief that the East side of Jordan never was part of the promised land? No, they simply show the predictive nature of Scripture, i.e., GOD's ability to look ahead and know what His people were going to do. One should never forget that Moses was not allowed to set one foot in the promised land, yet, his feet trod the east bank, and it was from there he made his plea for GOD to allow him to go into the promised land. But GOD did not grant his request, but He did allow him to see the land from the heights of Pisgah.

## **Joshua — Chapter Twenty-one**

**Joshua 21:1-3 "Then came near the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel; And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle. And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the**

## **commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs."**

"Then came near the heads of fathers' houses of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of fathers' houses of the tribes of the children of Israel; and they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, Jehovah commanded Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle. And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, according to the commandment of Jehovah, these cities with their suburbs." (ASV)

In Numbers 35:1-8, one finds the command of Moses regarding the cities of the Levites. The suburbs of these cities were mentioned in verses five and six, with an apparent problem. Verse five speaks of one thousand cubits, while verse six speaks of two thousand cubits.

This author guesses that the two thousand cubits was a standard claim for the suburbs around any city and that the first one thousand cubits was the portion of the Levites. Something which also needs to be understood is that even though these cities were designated for the Levites, that does not mean only Levites lived in them. The best example of this is probably Hebron, which was Caleb's possession (with the cities around it). Yet, Hebron was also a Levitical city. The Levites were to be given space within these cities for living quarters, and land was designated for their use.

Moses designated that there would be forty-eight Levitical cities, which included the six cities of refuge.

**Joshua 21:4-42 "And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, which were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities. And the rest of the children of Kohath had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.**

And the children of Gershon had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities. The children of Merari by their families had out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities. And the children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses. And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are here mentioned by name, Which the children of Aaron, being of the families of the Kohathites, who were of the children of Levi, had: for theirs was the first lot. And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it. But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession. Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Libnah with her suburbs, And Jattir with her suburbs, and Eshtemoa with her suburbs, And Holon with her suburbs, and Debir with her suburbs, And Ain with her suburbs, and Juttah with her suburbs, and Bethshemesh with her suburbs; nine cities out of tribes. And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with her suburbs, Geba with her suburbs, Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; four cities. All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, were thirteen cities with their suburbs. And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim. For they gave them Shechem with her suburbs in mount Ephraim, to be a city of refuge for the

slayer; and Gezer with her suburbs, And Kibzaim with her suburbs, and Bethhoron with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs, Aijalon with her suburbs, Gathrimmon with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the half tribe of Manasseh, Tanach with her suburbs, and Gathrimmon with her suburbs; two cities. All the cities were ten with their suburbs for the families of the children of Kohath that remained. And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the other half tribe of Manasseh they gave Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Beeshterah with her suburbs; two cities. And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs, Dabareh with her suburbs, Jarmuth with her suburbs, Engannim with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Hammothdor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her suburbs; three cities. All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their suburbs. And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs, Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with her suburbs, and Jahazah with her suburbs, Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Mahanaim with her suburbs, Heshbon with her suburbs, Jazer with her suburbs; four cities in all. So all the cities for the

**children of Merari by their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were by their lot twelve cities. All the cities of the Levites within the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs. These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them: thus were all these cities."**

"And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and the children of Aaron the priest, who were of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of the Simeonites, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities. And the rest of the children of Kohath had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, ten cities. And the children of Gershon had by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities. The children of Merari according to their families had out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities. And the children of Israel gave by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, as Jehovah commanded by Moses. And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, these cities which are here mentioned by name: and they were for the children of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites, who were of the children of Levi; for theirs was the first lot. And they gave them Kiriath-arba, which Arba was the father of Anak (the same is Hebron), in the hill-country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it. But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for his possession. And unto the children of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its suburbs, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and Libnah with its suburbs, and Jattir with its suburbs, and Eshtemoa with its suburbs; and Holon with its suburbs, and Debir with its suburbs, and Ain with its suburbs, and Juttah with its suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with its suburbs; nine cities out of its suburbs, and Almon with its suburbs; four cities. All the cities of the children of Aaron, the thirteen cities with their suburbs. And the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites, even the rest of the children of Kohath, they

had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim. And they gave them Shechem with its suburbs in the hill-country of Ephraim, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and Gezer with its suburbs, and Kibzaim with its suburbs, and Beth-horon with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Dan, Elteke with its suburbs, Gibbethon with its suburbs, Aijalon with its suburbs, Gath-rimmon with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Taanach with its suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with its suburbs; two cities. All the cities of the families of the rest of the children of Kohath were ten with their suburbs. And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the half-tribe of Manasseh they gave Golan in Bashan with its suburbs, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and priests, were Be-eshterah with its suburbs; two cities. And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its suburbs, Daberath with its suburbs, Jarmuth with its suburbs, En-gannim with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its suburbs, Abdon with its suburbs, Helkath with its suburbs, and Rehob with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in cities. All the cities of the Gershonites according to their families were thirteen cities with their suburbs. And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its suburbs, and Kartah with its suburbs, Dimnah with its suburbs, Nahalal with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its suburbs, and Jahaz with its suburbs, Kedemoth with its suburbs, and Mephaath with its suburbs; four cities. And out of the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its suburbs, the city of refuge for the manslayer, and Mahanaim with its suburbs, Heshbon with its suburbs, Jazer with its suburbs; four cities in all. All these were the cities of the children of Merari according to their families, even the rest of the families of the Levites; and their lot was twelve cities. All the cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs. These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them: thus it was with all these cities." (ASV)

These verses list the cities wherein the Levites had their dwelling places. As one reads through them, he will probably notice a

number of prominent cities.

Levi had three sons: Kohath, Gershon and Merari. The forty-eight cities would be divided among their descendants. But among the Kohathites there were two divisions. Kohath had four sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. This is important because from Amram came Aaron the first High Priest. The priests of Israel only came from this family unit. Aaron's descendants received thirteen cities in Judah, Simeon and Benjamin. Notice how GOD worked in this matter. The cities were determined by lot as to possession. **Where would the Temple be located?** In Jerusalem, in the tribe of Judah. Thus, those who served in the Temple were close to their labor. The rest of the sons of Kohath received ten cities in Ephraim, Dan, and half Manasseh. The descendants of Gershon received thirteen cities in Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, half Manasseh in Bashan. And the descendants of Merari received twelve cities in Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

Joshua 21:43-45 **“And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.”**

"So Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And Jehovah gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; Jehovah delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." (ASV)

What does the word **"all"** mean? If a chicken farmer told one he could have all of

**the chickens, would he misunderstand that language?** All of the land GOD had promised the Israelite's fathers was now in their possession, regardless of the premillennialists claims that they have not yet received all of the land promised to Abraham. The land was in their control; the Canaanites in the land could not prevail against them - IF they remained faithful to GOD.

*"It should also be remembered, that GOD never promised to give them the land, or to maintain them in it, but on condition of obedience" (Clarke, p. 85). "The Lord had given Israel the whole land which He had sworn to the fathers (Gen. 12:7; 15:18, compared with Joshua 1:3-4); and they had now taken possession of it to dwell therein" (Keil and Delitzsch, p. 215).*

**"There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (v. 45).**

## **Joshua — Chapter Twenty-two**

Joshua 22:1-6 **"Then Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, And said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you: Ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your GOD. And now the LORD your GOD hath given rest unto your brethren, as He promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan. But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your GOD, and to**

**walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto 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 unto their tents."**

"Then Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and said unto them, Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you, and have hearkened unto my voice in all that I commanded you: ye have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of Jehovah your GOD. And now Jehovah your GOD hath given rest unto your brethren, as He spake unto them: therefore now turn ye, and get you unto your tents, unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of Jehovah gave you beyond the Jordan. Only take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you, to love Jehovah your GOD, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto 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 unto their tents."  
(ASV)

The time had finally come for the two and one half tribes who received their inheritance on the east side of Jordan to go home to their families. All of Israel had now received their land, and these two and one half tribes had been faithful in helping them conquer the west side of Jordan. Their job was finished.

Joshua also gave them a parting charge, which can be summed up in six words: Do, love, walk, keep, cleave, and serve. These six commands were to be done toward GOD **"with all your heart and with all your soul."**

**"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"** (Matthew 22:37; cf. Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).

**"For this is the love of GOD, that we keep His commandments: and His**

**commandments are not grievous"** (1 John 5:3).

**Jesus said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments"** (John 14:15).

**"And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it"** (2 John 6).

**Joshua 22:7-9 "Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given possession in Bashan: but unto the other half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them, And he spake unto them, saying, Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses."**

"Now to the one half-tribe of Manasseh Moses had given inheritance in Bashan; but unto the other half gave Joshua among their brethren beyond the Jordan westward; moreover when Joshua sent them away unto their tents, he blessed them, and spake unto them, saying, Return with much wealth unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the land of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof

they were possessed, according to the commandment of Jehovah by Moses." (ASV)

Here one sees the division of the tribe of Manasseh stated quite clearly. I remember (in a Bible class years ago) a man trying to argue that Manasseh was only a half tribe and that Ephraim was the other half. He wanted Levi to be numbered among the twelve. But Joseph, as has already been seen, received the double portion of inheritance; thus, both Ephraim and Manasseh each became a whole tribe.

As Joshua sent them to their homes, he gave them a blessing. One also notices they were taking a great deal of spoil home from their enemies. Joshua gave instructions for them to divide these spoils with those who had stayed at home during these wars. Those who remained at home, *"keeping the home fires burning,"* were to receive a fair share of the spoils of war.

Shiloh is also mentioned in this passage, for it is their main base camp, and the place where the Tabernacle resides.

**Josh. 22:10-12 "And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to. And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them."**

"And when they came unto the region about the Jordan, that is in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, a great altar to look upon. And the children of Israel heard say, Behold,

the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar in the forefront of the land of Canaan, in the region about the Jordan, on the side that pertaineth to the children of Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up against them to war." (ASV)

When they got to the Jordan River, these two and one-half tribes built a mighty altar. The purpose of this altar will be seen later in the chapter.

The children of Israel, i.e., the nine and one half tribes, **"heard say,"** and **"heard"** of this altar. This was a rumor which almost caused a war. This author wonders how many times in history a rumor has caused a war between nations, tribes or individuals. It is also wondered how many times a rumor has caused internal difficulties and estrangement in families or the church. Thankfully, they checked out the rumor before war was declared. The armies were gathered in case their imagination was proved correct. The only basis for gathering the armies of the tribes together was that there was to be only one altar of worship for the GOD of Israel (v. 16). They must have thought this second altar was built for worship, too. Thus, when they heard about the altar, they assumed it had been built by their brethren in rebellion to the true worship of GOD.

**Where was this altar was built?** The ASV says it was built *"on the side that pertaineth to the children of Israel"* (v. 11). Here is a detail that might easily be overlooked. What it shows is that the altar was built on the west side of Jordan, on the land which was originally slated to be the promised land (not inclusive of the land on the east bank).

**Josh. 22:13-16 "And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, And with him ten princes, of each chief**

house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the GOD of Israel, to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the LORD?"

"And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten princes, one prince of a fathers' house for each of the tribes of Israel; and they were every one of them head of their fathers' houses among the thousands of Israel. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, Thus saith the whole congregation of Jehovah, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the GOD of Israel, to turn away this day from following Jehovah, in that ye have builded you an altar, to rebel this day against Jehovah?" (ASV)

One sees the importance attached to what was done and by who was sent. The High Priest was represented by his son (Phinehas) and the ruler of each of the tribes west of Jordan were also sent. Phinehas served as the leader of this delegation.

In verse sixteen, one sees the charge leveled against the eastern tribes. That this was a serious charge can be seen from Leviticus 17:4-9, Deuteronomy 12:4-14, and Deuteronomy 13:12-16. In those passages, one sees the punishment decreed for those who would build another altar designed for worship.

**Joshua 22:17-20 "Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not**

**cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, But that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the LORD, that to morrow He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD'S tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our GOD. 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 perished not alone in his iniquity."**

"Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves unto this day, although there came a plague upon the congregation of Jehovah, that ye must turn away this day from following Jehovah? and it will be, seeing ye rebel to-day against Jehovah, that to-morrow He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. Howbeit, if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of Jehovah, wherein Jehovah's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against Jehovah, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar besides the altar of Jehovah our GOD. Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the devoted thing, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity." (ASV)

The sin of Peor is found in Numbers, chapter twenty-three. Remember that Phinehas is the leader of this delegation, and it was he who had taken a major role in ending the plague which came upon Israel for their sins at Peor. It should also be remembered that the major part of their sin at Peor was the worship of idols. In Israel there was not to be another altar, except the ONE dedicated to GOD. Thus, when the two and one-half tribes built this altar, the other tribes thought it was

an altar to rival the one true altar. They then reasoned that GOD'S punishment for such would come upon all of the Israelites, just as it had at Peor. Notice also that Phinehas seemed to be saying that either the price of their rebellion was still being paid, or that there were still some among them who had not given up the false worship. Either way, the consequence of their sin was still being felt.

In verse nineteen, one again sees words which show him that the east side of Jordan was not originally part of the promise of GOD for Israel. It was not the promised land; it was not **"the land of the possession of the Lord."** Notice the clear contrast of the **"land of your possession"** and **"land of the possession of the Lord."**

This author is not sure what the idea behind the phrase **"if the land of your possession be unclean"** means. It may be that it has reference to their considering the land beyond the sphere of the protection and cleansing of the Tabernacle. If so, then Phinehas' implication is that the altar may have been built as a way of maintaining a relationship with GOD. If that is the case, then his suggestion makes sense for them to move to the west side of Jordan. Also notice the generosity involved. Rather than arouse the anger of GOD, they were willing to have these tribes move to the west side and they would be glad to give them an inheritance among them.

To emphasize that their sin would not only affect them, but would affect the whole of Israel, Phinehas pointed to the example of Achan. Not only did Achan and his immediate family perish, but others lost their lives because of his sin. And the whole nation suffered defeat in battle.

**Josh. 22:21-29** **"Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel, The LORD GOD of gods, the LORD GOD of gods, He knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in**

**transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day,) That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the LORD Himself require it; And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the LORD GOD of Israel? For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the LORD: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD. Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. GOD forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our GOD that is before His tabernacle."**

"Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered, and spake unto the heads of the thousands of Israel, The Mighty One, GOD, Jehovah, the Mighty One, GOD, Jehovah, He knoweth; and Israel he shall know: if it be in rebellion, or if in trespass against Jehovah (save thou us not this day,) that we have built us an altar to turn away from following

Jehovah; or if to offer thereon burnt-offering or meal-offering, or if to offer sacrifices of peace-offerings thereon, let Jehovah Himself require it; and if we have not rather out of carefulness done this, and of purpose, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with Jehovah, the GOD of Israel? for Jehovah hath made the Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no portion in Jehovah: so might your children make our children cease from fearing Jehovah. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice: but it shall be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we may do the service of Jehovah before Him with our burnt-offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no portion in Jehovah. Therefore said we, It shall be, when they so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we shall say, Behold the pattern of the altar of Jehovah, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice; but it is a witness between us and you. Far be it from us that we should rebel against Jehovah, and turn away this day from following Jehovah, to build an altar for burnt-offering, for meal-offering, or for sacrifice, besides the altar of Jehovah our GOD that is before His tabernacle.” (ASV)

Here one finds the answer of the two and one-half tribes to the charges made against them. They show that instead of rebelling against GOD, they were doing just the opposite. They were affirming their knowledge of the one true place of worship, which was where the Tabernacle was found. Instead of dividing the nation in rebellion, they were actually showing their unity with the nation in their belief of the one GOD and in the institutions which He had set forth for them. They built this large altar, not to sacrifice upon, but as a reminder to those on the west bank as well as those on the east bank, that they were one people, serving one GOD.

*"When Moses misunderstood the*

*motives of these tribes in their request about their possessions (Num. 32:6-15) on the east side, they replied with humility and respect and gave a satisfactory explanation. Now when their motives have again been misunderstood and falsely accused they again manifest humility and respect. Not the slightest sign of resentment, but a complete willingness to make all things plain"* (Zerr, p. 339).

This occasions the following thought: only the innocent could act in the way they did. They knew they had done all things in innocence, and so they could patiently wait and then explain what they had done. They were confident in their relationship with GOD, and so they were able to declare that if they were guilty of the charges laid against them, then they should not be spared. When they laid out their case and the reason for building the altar, peace was indeed restored among both parties.

**Josh. 22:30-34 "And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed**

**GOD, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is GOD."**

"And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, even the heads of the thousands of Israel that were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them well. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we know that Jehovah is in the midst of us, because ye have not committed this trespass against Jehovah: now have ye delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of Jehovah. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed GOD, and spake no more of going up against them to war, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and the children of Gad dwelt. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Ed: For, said they, it is a witness between us that Jehovah is GOD." (ASV)

Here is the conclusion of this matter. The nine and one half tribes have made their accusation, and their suspicions have been proven to be wrong. Notice the joy expressed by the Israelites when it was determined that they were wrong. They were glad they were wrong in this matter. They rejoiced that unity was maintained.

One can learn a great deal from the events of this chapter. When something is suspected or rumored to be wrong among brethren, one ought not immediately go to war with them! First, one needs to check out the report which has been received and learn the facts. Having done that one can act properly. If one finds that the accusation is true, then

one can sadly deal with the error. But if the report one has received is found to be false, then one can rejoice that it was found false and that unity may be maintained. Notice also that no hard feelings were felt by those who were accused toward their accusers. They were willing to stand the test. Having been found innocent of the charges, they went on with their lives — unity and peace were maintained.

## **Joshua — Chapter Twenty-three**

**Josh. 23:1-8 "And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. 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: 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. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward. And the LORD your GOD, He shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your GOD hath promised unto you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; 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: But cleave unto the LORD your GOD, as ye have done unto this day."**

"And it came to pass after many days, when Jehovah had given rest unto Israel from all

their enemies round about, and Joshua was old and well stricken in years; that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and for their heads, and for their judges and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and well stricken in years: and ye have seen all that Jehovah your GOD hath done unto all these nations because of you; for Jehovah your GOD, He it is that hath fought for you. Behold, I have allotted unto you these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun. And Jehovah your GOD, He will thrust them out from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as Jehovah your GOD spake unto you. Therefore be ye very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; 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 down yourselves unto them; but cleave unto Jehovah your GOD, as ye have done unto this day." (ASV)

The time of Joshua's death was approximately seven years after the land was divided among the tribes. He was one hundred and ten years old. Joshua called for the leaders in Israel and reminded them of all GOD had done for them. He rehearsed the fact that the land had been divided among them. Nevertheless, there were still pockets of resistance among them. He encouraged them to continue the conquest of these people. The main forces or armies of these people have been destroyed. The only thing which will keep the Israelites from conquering these people will be themselves.

Joshua further challenged them to be very courageous in doing everything they found in the Law of Moses.

*"By the word of GOD alone his followers are bound. Nothing is to be received as an article of faith which GOD has not spoken"* (Clarke, p. 90).

They were not to turn to either side from GOD'S word, i.e., they were not to become liberal or ultra-conservative.

Verses eight and nine tell the Israelites to have no fellowship with the nations who remain among them at this time. Remember that they were to destroy these nations. They were further warned about having anything to do with the gods of the Canaanites; they are not even to mention the names of these gods. Instead, they must cleave (*"to adhere; cling; be faithful"*) to Jehovah GOD.

**Josh. 23:9-10 "For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day. One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your GOD, He it is that fighteth for you, as He hath promised you."**

"For Jehovah hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath stood before you unto this day. One man of you shall chase a thousand; for Jehovah your GOD, He it is that fighteth for you, as He spake unto you." (ASV)

The emphasis is again on the fact that the Lord had delivered their enemies to them. It was not their own abilities or strength which had allowed them to win all of these victories. The people needed to be reminded (as does any generation) it is GOD who gave the victory which came their way. Understanding this principle will help keep men humble.

Verse ten may indicate that numerically, their enemies were far greater than they, but no matter since GOD fought for His people; a thousand would flee before one.

**"How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?" (Deuteronomy 32:30)**

**Josh. 23:11 "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your GOD."**

"Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love Jehovah your GOD." (ASV)

Zerr tells one that the word **"heed"** means *"observe to do"* (Zerr, p. 340).

**"And He answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself"** (Luke 10:27; cf. Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30).

The word **"selves"** refers to the whole of man, which idea is seen in the passage mentioned above in the New Testament.

**Josh. 23:12-13 "Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: Know for a certainty that the LORD your GOD will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your GOD hath given you."**

"Else if ye do at all go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you; know for a certainty that Jehovah your GOD will no more drive these nations from out of your sight; but they shall be a snare and a trap unto you, and a scourge in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which Jehovah your GOD hath given you." (ASV)

Moses had warned the people that they were to have no fellowship with the nations of Canaan. (1) Israel was not to let any of these people live. (2) All of the heathen gods were to be destroyed. (3) They were not to marry any of these people. If Israel allowed the Canaanites to stay in the land, then it would not be many years until they would associate with some of them, then marriages would take

place, and finally, due to these marriages Israel would begin following their gods. A study of the great king Solomon shows this progression quite clearly, as he married the wives of foreign nations and then worshipped at their altars.

**"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly"** (Deuteronomy 7:3-4).

Joshua also warned Israel that if they allowed these people to live and marry among them, then these people would not be a benefit to them but rather "pests" and a snare. As one studies the book of Judges, he will see exactly how the thing warned of in these verses came to pass.

**Josh. 23:14 "And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your GOD spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof."**

"And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your GOD spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof." (ASV)

The phrase **"this day I am going the way of all the earth"** is simply another way of saying he was about to die.

**"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"** (Hebrews 9:27).

This verse is very important, for it shows that everything the Lord had promised His people had come to pass; all had been

fulfilled. The land GOD promised had been given to them, their enemies had all been defeated, the cities which they had not built, and the vineyards they had not planted had all been given to them. No one could deny at the very time these words were spoken that all of GOD'S promises had been fulfilled — **"not one thing hath failed thereof."** It was only in much later times that people denied that Israel received everything GOD had promised them. And the only reason people deny this passage's truth is so they can follow a man-made doctrine known as premillennialism.

**Joshua 23:15-16 "Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your GOD promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until He have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your GOD hath given you. 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."**

"And it shall come to pass, that as all the good things are come upon you of which Jehovah your GOD spake unto you, so will Jehovah bring upon you all the evil things, until He have destroyed you from off this good land which Jehovah your GOD hath given you. When ye transgress the covenant of Jehovah your GOD, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods, and bow down yourselves to them; then will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which He hath given unto you." (ASV)

Just as GOD had fulfilled every promise with regard to blessings for Israel; He would in turn fulfill His promise to destroy them if they became unfaithful to Him. This would be accomplished in the time of the judges through nations occupying their territory. In later times

it would be through the great carrying away of Israel into Assyrian captivity and later, Judah into Babylonian captivity. Folks always need to consider that for every blessing for faithfulness issued by GOD, there is a corresponding punishment which is promised for disobedience.

## **Joshua — Chapter Twenty-four**

**Joshua 24:1-3 "And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before GOD. And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD GOD of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac."**

"And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before GOD. And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith Jehovah, the GOD of Israel, Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the River, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac." (ASV)

In verse one, one sees that Joshua called for the people to present themselves at Shechem. This would be Joshua's last recorded public address to the people before his death. But some have a problem with Shechem, because of the phrase **"before GOD."** The Tabernacle, they proclaim, was at Shiloh; so this assembly must have been at Shiloh and not Shechem. The LXX reads Shiloh instead of Shechem in this verse. But

scholarship is generally in favor of its being Shechem. The thing forgotten by those who object to Shechem is that the Tabernacle was quite moveable. And Joshua, being of advanced age, may not have been able to travel.

**"The other side of the flood,"** refers to the other side of the Euphrates River. The fact is also mentioned that their forefathers had been idolaters in Ur of the Chaldees. It is there that GOD called Abraham to be His "friend" and to establish a separate people from his seed. Jewish tradition says,

*"Abraham, while in Ur of the Chaldees was persecuted for his abhorrence of idolatry, and hence was called away by GOD from His native land"* (Cook, p. 408).

Joshua then jumped from the call of Abraham to the birth of Isaac in this brief history.

**Josh. 24:4-13 "And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out. And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red sea. And when they cried unto the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam**

**the son of Beor to curse you: But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand. And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat."**

"And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it: and Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did in the midst thereof: and afterward I brought you out. And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and with horsemen unto the Red Sea. And when they cried out unto Jehovah, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness many days. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, that dwelt beyond the Jordan: and they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, and ye possessed their land; and I destroyed them from before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel: and he sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you; but I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand. And ye went over the Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; and I delivered them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; of vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat."

(ASV)

Joshua continued his brief history of how the Lord had taken care of His people. Notice that Joshua did not use the word "I" to represent himself, but rather he spoke as if it were GOD speaking to the people. The fact is, it was GOD speaking to them through him. In verse thirteen, he reminded them that all they now possessed was not through their own efforts; these things had been provided through the labors of others.

**Josh. 24:14-15 "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 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."**

"Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." (ASV)

The phrase **"put away the gods which your fathers served"** seems to indicate that some of the people were still holding on to the false worship. Some of them may have been holding on to some of the more recent gods of their fathers, that is, gods of the Egyptians. They had to realize, as does modern man, that one can only serve one GOD, the GOD of heaven and earth.

**"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love**

**the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve GOD and mammon"**  
(Matthew 6:24).

Joshua understood that one must serve GOD from a desire to serve Him — a free choice. GOD has designed mankind as agents who have free choice, because only the worship of such a being is worth anything. A robot could be trained to go through all the actions of worship, but such would not bring honor and glory to GOD. Further, the people were told that they must show absolute loyalty to GOD in order to continue receiving His blessings. GOD will not accept worship such as the Athenians offered to the many gods (Acts 17:22-23). Worship must be only to Himself.

Joshua then affirmed that he and his house would serve GOD and not the idols which their forefathers had previously served. What a wonderful, honest state of mind Joshua had — oh, that one saw more of that kind of mind-set today. Joshua was not willing to blindly accept the religion of his forefathers but sought only to serve the GOD of Heaven. Joshua had seen all the evidence, he had listened to all the words of GOD, and knew only service to Him was worthwhile. After all of his years of service, this choice which Joshua placed before the people was an easy one for him to make.

**Josh. 24:16-18 "And the people answered and said, GOD forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; For the LORD our GOD, He it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for He is our GOD."**

"And the people answered and said, Far be it

from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods; for Jehovah our GOD, He it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed; and Jehovah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land: therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for He is our GOD." (ASV)

When one views the promise made by the leaders here, he sees that they were sincere, for **"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua"** (v. 31). Further, their language indicated a horror at even the suggestion that they might follow the gods of the heathen.

In verse seventeen, one sees an admission that it was GOD who delivered them from Egypt, protected and took care of them as they journeyed, and finally delivered the land of Canaan into their hands.

**Josh. 24:19-21 "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for He is an holy GOD; He is a jealous GOD; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that He hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD."**

"And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for He is a holy GOD; He is a jealous GOD; He will not forgive your transgression nor your sins. If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that He hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah." (ASV)

If one looked only at verse nineteen, he would say it is hopeless to try to faithfully serve

GOD and might be inclined to give up. But notice the next verse where the condition is set forth. They could not serve the Lord "IF" they seek after the strange gods. GOD would not forgive their transgressions "IF" they served the strange gods.

Verse twenty should remind one of some passages in the New Testament.

**"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not"** (Jude 5).

**"But with many of them GOD was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play"** (1 Corinthians 10:5-7).

Again, the people declared their loyalty to GOD. They were shown the grave consequence of disobedience, and they accepted the terms given.

**Josh. 24:22-25 "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD GOD of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our GOD will we serve, and His voice will we obey. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem."**

"And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve Him. And they

said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the GOD of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our GOD will we serve, and unto His voice will we hearken. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem." (ASV)

Verse twenty-two is an acknowledgment that they are responsible for whatever comes. The whole tenor of these passages shows that if punishment must come upon them, it will be because they have chosen to disobey GOD, bringing GOD'S wrath upon themselves.

Verse twenty-two again shows that some of the people were inclined to idolatry (v. 14), for they were again instructed to put away the strange gods which were among them. It is not always easy to break away from long-practiced sin, in fact, it is often very difficult. Sometimes the residue of sin lingers for some time, even years, but that does not excuse one who does not take every step to try to eliminate it from his life. When one fails, going back into some sin, they need to repent and start again toward the road of perfection.

Again, the people affirmed they would serve GOD and obey His voice. Joshua recorded their promise with a covenant, a very solemn occasion.

**Josh. 24:26-28 "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of GOD, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which He spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your GOD. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance."**

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of GOD; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the

sanctuary of Jehovah. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of Jehovah which He spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your GOD. So Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance." (ASV)

Joshua recorded in a book all that was said, including the promises of the people to obey GOD. Further, he set up a stone of witness to all that had been said. After recording these events, Joshua sent the people home. He had done all he could to encourage the people to obey GOD, and now they will have to go on without his leadership — death is near.

**Josh. 24:29-33 "And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathserah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that He had done for Israel. And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim."**

"And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathserah, which is in the hill-country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash. And Israel served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and had known all the work of

Jehovah, that He had wrought for Israel. And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in the parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money: and they became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in the hill of Phinehas his son, which was given him in the hill-country of Ephraim." (ASV)

*closed Deuteronomy, so the death of Eleazar and Joshua closed this book"* (Coffman, p. 272).

It is believed by some that Eleazar outlived Joshua by a few years.

Verses twenty-nine and thirty show one the death of the great warrior and leader, Joshua. There is something which stands out in this passage — *Where is the national mourning which one saw for Joseph and Moses?*

This verse again emphasizes the truth seen in verses fourteen and twenty-three. The time period here is believed to be about fifteen years. In just fifteen years one sees many of them turn from faithfulness to idolatry. Such a thing does not happen overnight. The false gods were among the people, but during Joshua's time, they did not dare let them "out of the closet." When all those who were alive during the wilderness wandering (who had seen all GOD had done for Israel since the time they left Egypt) were dead, then the people began moving away from GOD.

*"The main thought we may get from this verse is that people seem to need the immediate influence of teachers and leaders to keep them in line. Hence, it can be understood why GOD had always had some lawful representative between Him and His people, in all of the dispensations"* (Zerr, p. 342).

Verse thirty-two shows the fulfillment of the promise made to Joseph that his bones would be buried in Shechem (Genesis 50:22-26). This does not necessarily mean they waited until after Joshua died to bury Joseph. His burial probably took place as soon as the land was divided among the tribes.

Next, the death of Eleazar and his replacement by Phinehas is noted.

*"just as the death of Aaron and Moses*

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Some of the books in my library were given to  
a preacher student before I got the necessary  
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