

Entering Canaan's Land

As Israel entered the Land of Canaan, so the church will enter the Land of Canaan

Joshua 2-5

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Scripture Reader and Reading: Gene Tomlinson – Heb 4.8-10

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Kevin Michael – “Trust and Obey,” “To Canaan's Land”

Prelude:

I. Forty years earlier, the Lord led Israel out of Egypt spectacularly, and

A. under the Lord's leadership through Moses,

B. He led them to their own land,

1. the land of Canaan,

2. promised first to Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob.

a) After two years they finally reached the borders of Canaan.

b) Moses sent twelve spies,

(1) one from each of the twelve tribes of Israel,

(2) that they might investigate the land and

(a) report back to Moses and Israel.

(b) However, ten of the spies persuaded Israel

i) that they could not conquer the land, but

ii) two of the spies sought to persuade Israel otherwise.

C. The ten prevailed and

1. because they did not believe the Lord could give them the land,

2. He took the lives of those ten spies and

a) of all the adults 20 years old and older

b) over the next thirty-eight years.

D. Those years passed, and

1. even Moses died at the end of the time, and

2. the Lord commissioned Joshua to replace Moses (Jos 1).

II. The time had arrived for Joshua

- A. to lead Israel across the Jordan River
- B. into the Land of Canaan
 1. where they would fight for seven years
 2. to destroy the Canaanites and take the land.

Persuasion:

I. Joshua 2.1-24 – Rahab and the Spies of Israel

- A. Joshua sent two spies to view the land and Jericho, and
 1. they entered the house of a harlot known as Rahab, but
 2. the king of Jericho found out that they had entered her home, and
 - a) he ordered her to,
 - 3 “Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country” (Jos 2.3).
 - b) However, she hid the spies, and told the king,
 - 4 “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them” (Jos 2.4, 5).
- B. She hid them on the roof, and
 1. the king's men sought for the spies in the countryside.
 2. Then she went up to the spies, and
 - a) made a remarkable confession about Israel and Israel's God,
 - b) showing that everyone knew about the past forty years,

9 “I know that the Lord has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. 12 Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the Lord, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, 13 and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death” (Jos 2.9–13).

C. The men did as she requested, and

1. told her to tie a scarlet cord in her window, and
2. the children of Israel would deal kindly and truly with her.
 - a) Through that very window she let them down,
 - b) since her house was on the wall of the city,
 - (1) telling them to go the mountain,
 - (2) hiding there for three days, and then
 - (a) they could leave and
 - (b) join the rest of Israel.

D. When they did return to the children of Israel,

24 they said to Joshua, “Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us” (Jos 2.24).

II. Joshua 3.1–17 – The Final Barrier

A. Before Israel crossed the Jordan River,

1. the final barrier before entering the Land of Canaan,

2. the officers of Israel instructed the people,

3 “When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. 4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before.” 5 And Joshua said to the people, “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you” (Jos 3.3-5).

B. Then the priests took the ark of the covenant and went into the Jordan.

1. Joshua let the priests know

2. that when they touched the edge of the river,

a) they were to stand and

b) the waters of the Jordan would be cut off,

(1) standing as a heap upstream,

(2) which was a sign to them

(a) that the Lord would drive out their enemies, because

(b) this all happened during the flood stage of the Jordan!

III. Joshua 4.1-24 – The First Memorial

A. After all the people of Israel crossed,

1. the Lord told Joshua to take a man from each tribe,

2. each of whom would get a stone from the Jordan, and

a) carry them to the place where they would lodge that night.

b) These stones would serve as a memorial,

(1) so that when later generations asked the meaning of the stones,

(2) the older generations would explain the crossing of the Jordan.

B. Also, Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan River, and

1. they remained there for a long time, and
2. who knows, they may still be there!

C. Following the priests were warriors

1. from Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh,
2. about 40,000 armed and ready for battle.

D. Then Joshua commanded the priests to come out of the Jordan, and

1. when the feet of the priests touched the dry land,
2. the waters of the Jordan returned and overflowed its banks.

E. Joshua took the twelve stones from the twelve men and

1. set them up in Gilgal, and
2. he explained to Israel,

21 “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What are these stones?’ 22 then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; 23 for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, 24 that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever” (Jos 4.21-24).

IV. Joshua 5.1-9 – The First Circumcision in Canaan

A. When all the kings of the Amorites and all the kings of the Canaanites

1. heard that Yahweh God of Israel dried up the waters of the Jordan,
2. their hearts melted in fear, and
3. their spirit went from them.

B. The children of Israel continued to ready themselves for battle, and

1. they performed circumcisions on all the males
2. born in the wilderness the past 40 years.

V. Joshua 5.10 – The First Passover in Canaan

- A. At the place of circumcision,
- B. they kept the Passover for the first time in their new land, because
 - 1. the Lord did not want them to forget
 - 2. that they had been slaves in the land of Egypt, and
 - a) although they were about to battle,
 - b) they had to remember who had delivered them all along, and
 - (1) that He would continue
 - (2) to deliver them.

VI. Joshua 5.11, 12 – The First Meal in Canaan

- A. After the Passover, something monumental happened,
 - 1. the children of Israel began eating the produce of the land, and
 - 2. with that the Lord no longer provided the manna.
- B. However, they then had something better, variety.

VII. Joshua 5.13–15 – The First Divine Encounter in Canaan

- A. Before Israel started fighting Jericho, Joshua saw Someone magnificent:
 - 1. Before Joshua stood a man
 - 2. with his sword drawn.
- B. Joshua knew this was no ordinary man and asked,
 - 13 “Are You for us or for our adversaries?” (Jos 5.13).**
- C. The answer made Joshua fall on his face to the earth and he worshiped.
 - 1. The man answered,
 - 14 “No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come” (Jos 5.14).**

2. Then Joshua, the great leader of Israel, subjected himself,

¹⁴ “What does my Lord say to His servant?” (Jos 5.14).

D. Then Joshua heard words like Moses had heard,

¹⁵ “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy” (Jos 5.15).

1. Even as David heard the sound of march in the tops of the mulberry trees,

2. assuring him of victory over the enemy,

a) so now Joshua knew that the Commander of the army of the Lord

b) guaranteed victory for Israel, because

(1) they tread holy ground,

(2) the land where the Lord of heaven and earth

(a) would one day walk, work, and teach,

(b) eventually dying to bring us the promise of Abraham.

E. Now, hear what we must learn from Israel's entering of the Land of Canaan.

Exhortation:

I. Hebrews 4.8-10 – The Final Rest

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His (Heb 4.8-10).

A. The Land of Canaan on the other side of the globe,

B. represents the Land of Canaan, the Land of Rest for which we wait.

II. Hebrews 4.11 – Obedience to the End

¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the

same example of disobedience (Heb 4.11).

- A. Even as Israelites fell in the wilderness,
- B. so Christians may fall in the wilderness of the world,
 - 1. unless we give diligence to enter the final rest
 - 2. by obeying our Leader, Jesus Christ.

III. Hebrews 4.12, 13 – The Final Judge

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account (Heb 4.12, 13).

- A. The Israelites were accountable to the Lord, and
- B. Christians are as well.

IV. Hebrews 4.14-16 – The Final High Priest

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb 4.14-16).

- A. Even as the priests went before Israel,
- B. so our High Priest went before us.

V. Even as the twelve stones in Gilgal reminded the Israelites

- A. that the Lord God dried up the Jordan River
- B. just as He had the Red Sea,
 - 1. so when we cross our Red Sea, baptism, and

2. the Lord is with us the whole way,
 - a) during the baptism and
 - b) from that time till now,
 - (1) so when we cross our Jordan, death,
 - (2) He will still be with us,
 - (a) as we enter the final rest,
 - (b) in the true Land of Canaan.

VI. We do not want anyone falling behind.

- A. If you are, and you need help,
- B. let us know.