

The Lord's Command to Go in and Possess the Land of Canaan Joshua 1:1-9

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. There is a land of spiritual blessings for the believer's enjoyment.

2. There is a land of spiritual battles for the believer's victory.

Practical Application

1. Let's follow God's prerequisites for prosperity.

Questions

1. What is the dual message of the Book of Joshua?
2. Joshua replaced Moses as God's leader of the people of Israel. How was he qualified for this position?
3. Why were Joshua and Caleb the only two men from their generation allowed to enter the promised land?
4. In Joshua 1:4, we read the extent of the land God promised to His people. Does Israel actually possess it?
5. What events are recorded in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11?
6. Refer to 1 Corinthians 10:11. What does "example" mean? What is the message for God's people today?

Answers

1. It is the inspired record of Israel's conquest of Canaan. It is also a spiritual picture of the land to be possessed by God's people today.
2. Joshua was not some new, young, raw recruit. General Joshua was already experienced and battle-hardened.
3. As two of the twelve spies that went in to spy out the land, they alone showed faith and courage.
4. Under Solomon's reign, Israel's control extended to these boundaries, but Israel has not yet possessed all of the land God gave them. We believe that they will one day possess all the land God promised to them.
5. Events which took place as Israel journeyed from Egypt to Canaan.
6. "Example" is from the Greek word, "typikos." A type is an Old Testament person, place, event or other item which illustrates or pictures a New Testament truth. Thus, all the events that happened to the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan are types or spiritual pictures for us today.

Discuss / Consider

1. Note the parallel between Ephesians 1:3 and Joshua 1:3. The land of spiritual blessing has been given to you as a believer. Are you experiencing the enjoyment of this land? Enter in and possess it.

2. There are spiritual blessings to be enjoyed by the Christian, and there are spiritual battles to be fought by the Christian. You may suffer doubt and discouragement and temptation, but you don't have to be defeated. Have you put on the whole armor of God so you will be victorious in spiritual warfare?

Challenge

1. Refer to Joshua 1:5-9. Do you want to be spiritually successful and prosperous? Review and then follow God's prerequisites for prosperity.

The Israelites Prepare to Cross the Jordan River
Joshua 1:10-18

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God wants His people in the land He has given them.**

- 2. God wants His people with the courage He has given them.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't belittle a fellow believer from the two and one-half tribes.**

Questions

1. What are the historical events of the Book of Exodus? What are the historical events of the Book of Joshua?
2. Is the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12:7 still valid today?
3. Was the Abrahamic Covenant unconditional?
4. What is the assurance of Romans 11 concerning this Abrahamic Covenant?
5. Name the tribes who decided to settle in Trans-Jordan, and why did they want to stay there?
6. What was the condition by which the Lord allowed this?

Answers

1. Exodus records how God led His people out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. Joshua records how God led His people into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, but the land was only enjoyed fully when Israel was following the Lord.
4. There will be a spiritual revival in the nation of Israel, and many will turn to the Messiah they once rejected. Then the Lord will come and overcome Israel's enemies and the land will belong to the nation of Israel.
5. The Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh. Because it was good grazing land and more protected for their families.
6. The military from these tribes must cross the river and fight with the rest of the tribes until the land was conquered.

Discuss / Consider

1. God wanted His people in the land He gave them but rebuked them for their lack of faith. Similarly, today, the Lord desires us to be in the spiritual land He has given, but He allows us to remain only as committed as we choose. Are you a 100% committed Christian? Or are you less committed like the Trans-Jordan tribes?

2. The two and a half Trans-Jordan tribes lacked faith and courage, admiring it in others but not embracing it themselves. Do you have the courage to fully obey and trust God, or are you holding back, fearing He won't take care of you? Are you afraid that God will not take care of you in every area of your life if you commit yourself to Him 100%? Read 2 Timothy 1:7. When God calls us to be 100% committed, He gives us the courage to do so.

Challenge

1. Don't belittle fellow believers from the two and a half tribes—they fell short but were still God's people. Some Christians may not be fully committed, but they are not completely uncommitted either. Where do you stand on the scale of commitment? Are you 100% committed in every area of your life?

Rahab Protects the Spies Sent to Jericho
Joshua 2:1-7

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should be aware of satanic strongholds.**

- 2. Believers should be aware of satanic strategy.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember, God has His Rahabs out there to protect us.**

Questions

1. What are these spies, children of Israel, God's people doing in the house of a prostitute?
2. What about Rahab's lie? Does the Bible teach that lying is acceptable in some cases?
3. Where was Rahab's house located? What is the significance of this location?
4. Why was the conquest of Jericho necessary?
5. What is a satanic stronghold blocking spiritual blessings today?
6. What is Satan's strategy today?

Answers

1. They went to Rahab's house because many would be coming and going and they would not be noticed as readily. It was also a good place to glean information about the city.
2. The Bible does not teach that it is right to lie. In biblical interpretation, we must distinguish between what did happen and what should happen.
3. In the city wall. It was the ideal place to allow for her escape.
4. Jericho was a stronghold of the enemy, blocking the entrance into the central part of the land that God had given His people.
5. Materialism is perhaps one of the greatest strongholds blocking the entrance into spiritual blessings.
6. To keep believers out of the land of spiritual blessings.

Discuss / Consider

1. God wanted His people in the Old Testament to enjoy the promised land, and He wants His people today to enjoy the spiritual blessings He has given them in Christ. The children of Israel were to check out Jericho for its strengths and weaknesses, and believers today should be aware of satanic strongholds. What is keeping you from victory? What hinders you from fully enjoying your spiritual blessings? See 2 Corinthians 10:4 to help you pull down strongholds.

2. Satan is not ignorant of the works of God, and he uses strategy to keep believers out of the land of spiritual blessings. God, on the other hand, protects us, fights for us and enables us to be aware of Satan's strategy. How aware are you of Satan's strategies in your life? Keep your focus on Christ.

Challenge

1. God has His Rahabs to protect us. Sometimes the most unlikely person will come to our rescue. Can you give an example of this from your life? We don't have to run scared or be afraid of Satan.

The Spies Make a Promise to Rahab
Joshua 2:8-24

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The works of God are known by the unbeliever.

2. The grace of God is extended to the unbeliever.

Practical Application

1. Let's have a Rahab-like faith and concern for our families.

Questions

1. What do recent excavations confirm about houses on the walls of Jericho?
2. The spies departed and went to the mountain (Joshua 2:22). Why did they flee there?
3. This wilderness was the site of other significant events. Can you name them?
4. What happened when the people of Jericho heard about the works of the Lord?
5. Was the spy mission successful?
6. What did the people of Jericho remember about the works of the Lord?
7. What significant role was given to Rahab?

Israel Crosses the Jordan and Enters the Promised Land **Joshua 3**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The ark of the covenant is a picture of Christ as our leader.**

- 2. The ark of the covenant is a picture of Christ as our Savior.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let God exalt you.**

- 2. Let's not question God about His flood stage tactics.**

Questions

1. Why didn't the nation of Israel use a bridge to cross over the Jordan River?
2. Why couldn't the Israelites just wade across at a narrow point?
3. What was the major miracle here?
4. Name the place where the river was cut off.
5. How is the ark a picture of Christ?

Answers

1. There were no bridges then. Importantly, God did a major miracle.
2. The river was at harvest time and at flood stage, overflowing its banks.
3. God cut off the Jordan River from about 15-20 miles north of where the people were. The river stopped flowing, so the riverbed was dry from that place all the way down to the Dead Sea.
4. Adam.
5. It is a picture of Christ as our leader and of Christ as our Savior.

Discuss / Consider

1. The ark of the covenant of God was kept in the holy of holies in the tabernacle. The holy of holies was the meeting place between God and man. The blood of the atoning sacrifice was put on the mercy seat which covered the ark. Thus, the sins of Israel were covered and the relationship between God and His people was maintained. Update this in terms of the ark as a picture of Christ. This should have a profound meaning to you. Does it?

2. The ark led the people into the Jordan River and through it. The spiritual picture? The waters of Jordan picture the waters of death and Christ conquered death all the way back to Adam. The way of spiritual blessing has been opened up for all who would follow the ark. Have you followed the ark into the waters of death to self?

Challenge

1. God was glorified in the miracle of the crossing of the Jordan, and He also exalted Joshua. Read 1 Peter 5:6. What does this say to you?

2. God purposely waited until flood stage so He could do a miracle. The Canaanites realized it. The Israelites realized it. Do you ever question God's timing in your life? Remember, He may want to show His power to you. Can you remember a time when this has happened in your life?

Monuments Are Built to Commemorate the Crossing of the Jordan River Joshua 4

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers are united with Christ in His death.

2. Believers are united with Christ in His resurrection.

Practical Application

1. Have you come to the place in your Christian life where you've said, "No turning back?"

2. Take time to tell your children about the markers.

Questions

1. What is the tradition of setting up stones as memorial markers?

2. Refer to a) Genesis 28:18, b) 1 Samuel 7:12, and c) Joshua 24:26. What do these markers commemorate?

3. Where were the two sets of stones placed in the Joshua 4 account?

4. Why were there two sets of stones set up?

5. Does the land of Canaan represent the heaven of the future?

Answers

1. The setting up of a large stone or stones mark a place as significant because of a covenant made, or as a reminder of an important event.
2. a) Jacob set up a stone as a pillar in commemoration of the dream God had given him at Bethel
b) Samuel set up a stone in commemoration of the time Israel defeated the Philistines
c) Joshua made a covenant with the people and set up a stone in commemoration of that event.
3. In the River bed and on the west bank of the Jordan.
4. The twelve stones represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The meaning of the twelve stones set up in the river was that the twelve tribes of Israel were identified with where the ark had been in the Jordan River. The second set was on the shore, in order to teach the future generations about the miracle passage through the Jordan River.
5. No. It represents the heavenlies now, or the realm of spiritual realities that we enter when we become Christians. It is where we enjoy our spiritual blessings in Christ.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Lord Jesus had to pass through the waters of death in order to pay the penalty for our sins, and thus open the way to the land of blessing for believers, as pictured in the ark of the covenant. Have you passed through the waters of death and are you now enjoying the land of blessings?

2. We are identified with Christ in His death, and we are identified with Him in His resurrection, as pictured in the Jordan and on the west shore. See Romans 6:5-11. Do you reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to Christ?

Challenge

1. There was no turning back when the feet of the Israelites touched dry land. They were committed. Are you committed to possessing the land of spiritual blessings? Are you committed to winning the spiritual battles in the land? Can you say, "No turning back?"

2. The markers are there. Are you telling your children about spiritual benchmarks in your life?

The Rite of Circumcision
Joshua 5:1-9

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Spiritual circumcision should come after crossing the Jordan.**

- 2. Spiritual circumcision must come before conquering Jericho.**

Practical Application

- 1. Don't let the enemy scare you when you can scare him.**

Questions

1. What was circumcision a sign of?

2. In Joshua 5:2, we read, "...*circumcise the second time.*" Does this mean a re-circumcision of those already circumcised?

3. Why was the act of circumcision an act of faith on the part of Israel?

4. Recall the two sets of stones. What did they memorialize?

5. What is the meaning of Romans 6:11?

6. Refer to Colossians 2:11. Physical circumcision has to do with cutting off the flesh literally. What is the spiritual position and picture here?

Answers

1. The Abrahamic Covenant. See Genesis 17:9-11.
2. No. The new generation born in the wilderness was to be circumcised.
3. You don't circumcise your men with the enemy nearby. But God protected them because they stepped out in faith and obeyed in this matter.
4. That God's people identify with Him, both in death and in resurrection.
5. Believers are to "reckon" (or count it true) that they are dead to sin and alive to Christ. This is their spiritual position in Christ.
6. It is the cutting off of the flesh, or the sinful nature. It is done by Christ. When He died for our sins, He died for our sinful natures as well. The flesh has been judged.

Discuss / Consider

1. Circumcision is practiced by applying the knife of the word of God to our flesh, the sinful nature. It is the death-to-self principle; it is the judgment of self in light of God's word. It logically follows the Jordan River in the spiritual picture and in our experience. Elaborate, using your life as an example. See Colossians 3:1-3, 5.

2. Circumcision is painful. Putting the word of God to the flesh can be painful, but it must be done. Only then can we move on to conquer the Jerichos. Have you identified and conquered the Jerichos in your life? Are you crucified with Christ so He can live His life through you? See Galatians 2:20.

Challenge

1. Review Joshua 5:1. The nation of Israel was scared before the enemy. Read Joshua 5:9. It was not of Israel's doing, but the Lord turned the heart of the enemy. Can the Lord do the same for you? Read James 4:7.

The Celebration of the Passover, and the Manna Stops
Joshua 5:10-15

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Committed believers observe the remembrance feast in the land.**
- 2. Committed believers eat the food of the land.**
- 3. Committed believers serve the Lord of the land.**

Practical Application

- 1. You can always be sure of your next meal.**

Questions

1. Name some of the reasons why Gilgal was particularly important to Israel.
2. What is the land of Canaan a spiritual picture of?
3. What is the ark of the covenant a spiritual picture of?
4. List the three pre-requisites in this lesson for living in the land.
5. How do the verses in Joshua 5:10 and Exodus 12:6 relate to each other?
6. Did the children of Israel keep the Passover during their wilderness wandering?

Answers

1. Gilgal became Israel's base camp for their military conquest of the land. It is where they set up one of their stone monuments to commemorate their crossing of the Jordan River. It is where the new nation was circumcised. It was where they celebrated the Passover and where they first ate the food of the land after the manna stopped. Gilgal is where the Lord, as Commander of the army, appeared to Joshua.
2. It is a type of the spiritual land that God wants believers today to possess.
3. It opens up the way into the land. We enter into the land by first recognizing our spiritual position in Christ, that we have died with Him and that we have been raised with Him.
4. Committed believers observe the remembrance feast in the land, committed believers eat the food of the land, and committed believers serve the Lord of the land.
5. The children of Israel arrived in the land just in time to keep the Passover, celebrated on the eleventh day of the month.
6. No, because of their sin of unbelief.

Discuss / Consider

1. The children of Israel observed the Passover. Today, believers observe the Lord's Supper. Consider the need for self-judgment prior to partaking. Read 1 Corinthians 11:26-32. Is it possible that you are partaking in an unworthy manner? How much do you appreciate the remembrance of the Lord's Supper? What impact does it have on your life?
2. Manna is a picture of Christ, the bread of life come down from heaven. The food of the land is also a picture of Christ because He is not only our Savior, but our sustenance. Is He this to you? Are you feeding on Christ?
3. When Joshua realized who the Commander of the army was, he fell on his face and worshipped. He realized that he was standing on holy ground. Do you have this sense of awe in the presence of the Lord?

Challenge

1. See Matthew 6:25-34. Which do you tend to seek first – the kingdom of God or your needs?

The Walls of Jericho Fall
Joshua 6:1-20

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Jerichos are conquered by following the ark.**

- 2. Jerichos are not conquered overnight.**

Practical Application

- 1. Are you an early riser like Joshua?**

Questions

1. What happened at Jericho?

2. What confirmed the conquest of Jericho?

3. The Book of Joshua is not only the inspired record of the military conquests of Canaan; it is a Christian handbook for spiritual warfare. What does this mean?

4. In what realm are the spiritual blessings and the spiritual battles taking place today for the believer?

5. What is the spiritual lesson of the conquering of Jericho?

6. How is the ark a picture of Jesus Christ, Mediator between God and man?

Answers

1. A great victory! A miracle of God. The city of Jericho was destroyed by an unusual battle plan.
2. The word of God. Also, archaeologists confirmed the biblical account and the date of the conquest.
3. All the tactics of the enemy in the Book of Joshua were to keep the Israelites from possessing the land. They are illustrations of the tactics Satan uses to keep God's people today from possessing the spiritual land.
4. In the "heavenlies." See Ephesians 1:3 and 6:10-13.
5. Jericho was a major stronghold of the enemy, blocking the whole entrance into the central part of the land. Israel could not move on and possess the land until Jericho was conquered. Thus, the Jerichos are those major blockades that Satan puts up to keep the believer today from moving on and enjoying the blessings of the land. Satan wants to keep the believer defeated and standing still in his walk with the Lord.
6. The ark of the covenant was kept in the holy of holies in the tabernacle. The blood of the atoning sacrifice was put on the mercy seat of the ark to maintain the relationship between God and His people. The blood of the Lord Jesus was our atoning sacrifice, and now He sits on the right hand of God interceding for us.

Discuss / Consider

1. The land of Canaan was the land God promised to His children, the Israelites. It was a land flowing with milk and honey. It pictures the land of spiritual blessing that God has given to His children today, but Satan wants to keep us from enjoying the land and from moving forward in the Christian life. Have you found the battles unconquerable? Why, or why not? Is your enjoyment of the land limited? Why, or why not?

2. Jerichos are not conquered overnight. Identify your Jerichos, then in patient faith watch God remove them. God is greater than the strongholds in our lives.

Challenge

1. "*Joshua rose early in the morning.*" (*Joshua 6:12*) Are you an early riser like Joshua? Getting up early to have communion with the Lord is a great way to start the day.

Rahab is Rescued and Jericho is Burned
Joshua 6:21-27

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. **God keeps His word of salvation.**

2. **God keeps His word of judgment.**

Practical Application

1. **Be faithful and your fame will spread throughout the land.**

2. **Let's not allow the walls of Jericho to be built again.**

Questions

1. Why would a loving God destroy the people of Jericho?
2. What was the result of the Israelites' disobedience by leaving pockets of the enemy throughout the land?
3. Why were the Israelites to remain in Egypt for many years?
4. What was saved out of Jericho?
5. After Rahab was spared, what distinguished her?
6. How is 1 Kings 16:34 the confirmation of God's word in Joshua 6:26?

Answers

1. Jericho was a pagan Canaanite city, gross in their immorality and idolatry. God did not want His people polluted and contaminated because of their influence.
2. It led to their downfall.
3. See Genesis 15:16. Because of the iniquity of the Amorites (Canaanites). God gave them many years of opportunities to change their ways, but they would not.
4. The precious metals to go into the treasury of the Lord; AND, of course, Rahab and her family.
5. She not only came into the covenant family of Israel, but she married there and became the great-great grandmother of David, the line of the Messiah. See Matthew 1.
6. God said that the man who rebuilt the walls of Jericho would be cursed. Its foundation would be laid on his firstborn, and with his youngest son he would set up the gates. In the days of King Ahab, 500 years later, God kept His word of judgment.

Discuss / Consider

1. Rahab asked the spies to spare her and her family. She believed, and God's word of salvation was kept. Read Hebrews 11:31 and Romans 10:9 and 10:13. Is your faith, like Rahab's, centered in what God has done and will do?

2. God keeps His word of judgment. Note the judgment of God to both Rahab and Ahab. Read John 3:36. This is God's sure word of judgment. Have you acknowledged Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord?

Challenge

1. All the Canaanites knew about Joshua's faithfulness in standing for the Lord. What does your life say? What will your epitaph say about your faithfulness in standing for the Lord?

2. A major doubt or fear or temptation can keep you in despair. It can become a stronghold to keep you from possessing the spiritual land and its blessings. And even when you think it's been conquered, it can rise again. Don't let the walls be built again. There are no walls too high or too thick for God!

Israel is Defeated at Ai Joshua 7:1-12

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. There are definite causes for defeat in the believer's life.**
 - a. Disobedience (verse 1)**

 - b. Overconfidence (verse 3)**

 - c. No prayer (verses 6-7, 10)**

- 2. There are definite consequences of defeat in the believer's life.**
 - a. God is angry (verse 1)**

 - b. Others are affected (verses 1, 11)**

 - c. Blessings are withheld (verse 12)**

Practical Application

- 1. Are you an Achan?**

Questions

1. What was Israel' military strategy for the conquest of Canaan?

2. Name the beginning point of the central campaign.

3. How does this portion of Scripture illustrate God's program for this world under judgment?

4. What kind of a city was Ai? Why did it have to be conquered?

5. How many military defeats did Israel suffer during the conquest

Answers

1. To divide and conquer.
2. The destruction of Jericho.
3. As with Rahab, only people will be saved out of this world, because it is programmed for destruction.
4. It was a small city, about fifteen miles from Jericho up on the ridge line. Ai was strategically placed, blocking one of the natural passes up into the hill country. It had to be conquered if the central campaign was to move on.
5. Only one, and that was at Ai.

Discuss / Consider

1. Review the three causes for defeat in the believer's life. Discuss the meanings or spiritual applications for you, as a believer. Are you in any way robbing God? Have you ever suffered defeat after a spiritual victory? Do you turn to God first in prayer or do you move ahead in your own strength without consulting Him?

2. Review the three consequences of defeat in the believer's life. Discuss the spiritual applications for you, as a believer. How do you respond to God's discipline? Do you really believe that you can sin in a vacuum without affecting others? Have you experienced a standstill in your life because you have not dealt with sin? See 1 John 1:9.

Challenge

1. Are you an Achan, a troubler? Is the forward progress and blessing on the Lord's people held up because of your sin? Don't be an Achan.

Achan's Sin and Judgment
Joshua 7:13-26

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. **Believers must scrutinize their lives for the sin causing defeat.**

2. **Believers must deal decisively with the sin causing defeat.**

Practical Application

1. **Don't travel the Achan trail.**

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the name, Ai?
2. Have the ruins of Ai been located?
3. Was the judgment pronounced and carried out on Achan a bit harsh?
4. Didn't Achan repent?
5. What was God's response after the judgment was carried out

Answers

1. It means ruins.
2. Not for certain, but an excavation for a possible location is planned.
3. Not in light of what Achan did. Remember, he was directly responsible for the death of at least thirty-six men and he had robbed God as well as Jericho.
4. No. Only when he was found out, did he confess to the sin, and he didn't show remorse.
5. The anger of the Lord subsided.

Discuss / Consider

1. God selected a systematic method to give all of Israel time to examine themselves before Him. When we suffer defeat, we must let our lives pass in review before the spotlight of God. See Hebrews 4:12 and Psalm 139:23-24.

2. It is one thing to pinpoint sin, but sin must be judged before the believer can move on. Have you scrutinized, located and dealt with sins in your life?

Challenge

1. What is the Achan trail? "*I saw, I coveted, I took.*" (Joshua 7:21) Don't travel the Achan trail. See James 1:14-15.

Israel's Victory Over Ai Joshua 8:1-29

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. The enemy does not have the last laugh.**

- 2. The enemy does not know the tactics of the Lord.**

Practical Application

- 1. Let God give you victory in your place of defeat.**

Questions

1. God gave a great victory over Jericho. Why, then, were the Israelites defeated in a little place called Ai?
2. How did Achan rob God?
3. What was the strategy used to defeat Ai?
4. Why did the men of Ai think they had won again?
5. What was the name of the valley where Israel was judged for their sin?
6. What was the restriction concerning the booty to the victors in Jericho? What was the restriction concerning the booty to the victors in Ai?

Answers

1. Because they were disobedient, overconfident and didn't consult the Lord for His direction.
2. By taking some of the silver and gold of Jericho, which was to go into the treasury of the Lord.
3. Joshua divided his forces to set up an ambush and trap the enemy between his contingents.
4. They thought that Israel had come up as before when Joshua's main force pretended to flee. But they were trapped with no way of escape.
5. The Valley of Achor.
6. The silver and gold were to go into the treasury of the Lord. There were no restrictions - it was free for the taking.

Discuss / Consider

1. The people of Ai probably laughed in derision as they saw the army of Joshua running away as before. Little did they know that Israel would have the last laugh. Similarly, Satan tries to defeat us in the land of spiritual realities, and sometimes he is able to trip us up with the little Ais. But the enemy does not have the last laugh. God is the ultimate victor and will turn defeat into victory. When you feel defeated, remember that God can pick up the pieces of your life.

2. The pagan Canaanites were outfoxed by Joshua and the army of Israel, who were directed by the Lord Himself. At the cross, Satan thought he was victorious when Jesus died. But God conquered death and raised Jesus from the tomb. Christ Jesus lives today! Have faith in God.

Challenge

1. God wants to give you victory in the place of defeat. Israel was defeated at Ai, but the second time around, Ai was defeated. The Valley of Achor, where Israel was judged for their sin and defeat, would become a door of hope for Israel in the future. See Hosea 2:15. In the very place of your Ai, the place of your defeat, God can bring victory.

The Covenant is Renewed at Shechem
Joshua 8:30-35

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The old covenant was established with animal sacrifices and writing on stones.
2. The new covenant is established with the sacrifice of Christ and writing on hearts.

Practical Application

1. Let's take time out for worship.
2. Let's take time out for covenant renewal.

Questions

1. After the victory at Ai, why did Israel take time out temporarily from further battles?
2. Where did this event take place?
3. Which mountains were central in this event, and what took place on each of these mountains?
4. List the other two significant events that took place during this time.
5. Who were the strangers of Joshua 8:33-35?

Answers

1. To renew the covenant in obedience to God's command. See Deuteronomy 17:1-8.
2. In Shechem, in the heart of the land.
3. Mt. Ebal, where the blessings were read, and Mt. Gerizim, where the cursings were read.
4. a) Joshua built an altar of natural stones on the slopes of Mt. Ebal, and the people offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord
b) Joshua wrote on the stones the words of the law.
5. A number of Egyptians came out of Egypt with the children of Israel, and likely during their forty-year wanderings in the wilderness, a number of wilderness Bedouins joined the covenant community.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Mosaic Law given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai is the renewed and ratified covenant in Joshua 8. It was a conditional covenant and Israel broke the condition. Put yourself in the place of the children of Israel as they broke the covenant and failed to bring the required sacrifices for sin. Does this not take on new meaning for you as you embrace the new covenant?
2. Christ is the end of the law to everyone who believes (Romans 10:4). The old covenant pointed toward a better covenant. Read Hebrews 8:10, a quotation from Jeremiah 31. Read Matthew 26:28, and thank God for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Is God's law written on your heart?

Challenge

1. Do you find that you become so busy, even in serving the Lord and fighting the good fight that you fail to give proper place to worship? Joshua 8 is an example of "time out." Take time out to worship.
2. In a day of little commitment and broken covenants, renewal is important. In what ways can you renew your covenants?

The Deception of the Gibeonites **Joshua 9:1-15**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Deception is a trademark of the enemy.

2. Deception is a trap of the enemy.

Practical Application

1. Let's look before we leap.

Questions

1. What was the overall strategy for conquering the land of Canaan?
2. What did the first strategy have to do with the Gibeonites?
3. Why didn't the Gibeonites mention the recent victories of Israel over Jericho and Ai?
4. What made the Gibeonites think that this strategy would work?
5. What was the biggest mistake Joshua and the children of Israel made concerning this deception of the Gibeonites?
6. The Book of Joshua is not only the inspired account of the military conquests of Canaan. What else is it?

Answers

1. First to divide the country in two with a central campaign, then conquer the South and then the North with respective campaigns.
2. Gibeon was only a few miles from Ai, and the Gibeonites realized that they were probably next in line to be conquered.
3. They wanted them to think they were from a far country and hadn't heard of recent events.
4. They knew what God had told His people under the law. See Deuteronomy 20:10-11.
5. They did not ask counsel of the Lord. See Joshua 9:14.
6. A handbook for spiritual warfare. All the tactics of the enemy in the Book of Joshua illustrate for us the tactics that Satan uses to try to defeat us.

Discuss / Consider

1. Satan is a great deceiver. Notice how he comes to the Christian in 2 Corinthians 11:14. Just as the Gibeonites knew the law of God, so does Satan, and he will try to trick the believer into making mistakes and doing the wrong thing. Beware the deception of the enemy. Think of times Satan has deceived you. How could you have countered this deception?

2. Deception is a trap of the enemy, and Satan is interested in more than just tripping us up and tempting us with sin. He wants to trap us into making covenants and decisions which will compromise our testimony long-term. Has Satan entrapped you so that you have become entangled with the world and therefore ineffective? If so, confess your entanglement and ask God to help you. Tell Him that you want to become the person He wants you to be, and the one He can use for His glory.

Challenge

1. Before you leap into making decisions and choices, check it out. Look vertically to the Lord, and horizontally to the situation. Israel failed in both ways with the Gibeonites (9:14 and 9:7). Look before you leap.

The Consequences of the Gibeonite Deception **Joshua 9:16-27**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Serious covenants made before God must be honored.**

- 2. Foolish covenants made before God may have long-term consequences.**

Practical Application

- 1. We don't have to be deceived.**

Questions

1. Why did God command the Israelites to destroy the pagan nations from the land?
2. Why didn't the children of Israel attack the cities allied with the Gibeonites?
3. Why did the Israeli congregation complain about this?
4. What role did the Gibeonites have with Israel?
5. Why couldn't Israel just admit their mistake, break the covenant and do away with it?
6. How did the covenant with the Gibeonites affect King Saul many years later?

Answers

1. Because He did not want His people contaminated by the immoral and idolatrous pagan nations. See Deuteronomy 7:1-6. Israel was a holy people, chosen, a special treasure of the Lord.
2. Because of their peace treaty and their oath with the Gibeonites, which included these people. See Joshua 9:17-18.
3. Because of the treaty, they could not inhabit these cities and have use of the wells and vineyards.
4. They became servants of the tabernacle and temple in Israel. Specifically, they were wood cutters and water carriers.
5. Because it was a covenant made before God.
6. See 2 Samuel 21. Seven of Saul's descendants were hanged following King Saul's murder of some Gibeonites.

Discuss / Consider

1. Israel was deceived into making a covenant with the enemy, and it had to be honored. Serious covenants made before God must be honored. Have you honored a covenant that you regretted making?

2. Israel had to live with the consequences of their covenant long-term. Have you made foolish covenants that have had long-term consequences? What kind of fall-out did you endure? The good news? See 1 Chronicles 12:4 and Nehemiah 3:7. And in your case, expect a working for good in spite of your mistake. See Romans 8:28.

Challenge

1. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your capacity to say "No." See 1 Corinthians 10:13. God will not allow any deceptive tactic of Satan to overtake you. In other words, you don't have to be deceived. Learn from past alliances with the world.

A Great Miracle: The Day the Sun Stood Still
Joshua 10:1-15

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The Lord can use natural events to help His people.

2. The Lord can use supernatural events to help His people.

Practical Application

1. Your prayers can save the day.

Questions

1. Joshua was called upon to honor his peace treaty with the Gibeonites. What did they ask him to do?

2. How did Joshua and the Israeli army honor the treaty?

3. What natural event did the Lord use in conquering the enemy?

4. What supernatural event did the Lord use during the battle?

5. Is the NASA computer report valid?

6. Has this supernatural event ever happened again?

Answers

1. To fight for them when five Amorite kings ganged up on them.
2. They attacked the enemy at dawn after an all-night march of about twenty-five miles uphill. The surprise attack routed the enemy.
3. He sent hailstones from heaven, killing many enemy troops, more than the Israeli soldiers killed with the sword.
4. He caused the sun and the moon to stand still.
5. No. It's just a story whereby men try to help support God. But that is not necessary. God is God, and He can do miracles without our explanations or help.
6. No. See Joshua 10:14

Discuss / Consider

1. Hailstones came down from heaven, giving victory to the children of Israel. Do you recall a natural event that God used to help you?

2. The sun stood still. Can you recall a miracle that happened in your life?

Challenge

1. Joshua consulted God, then prayed and God answered with a miracle. Are you in the habit of consulting God, then praying, then expecting Him to answer miraculously?

A Coalition of Five Kings is Defeated
Joshua 10:16-27

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. The faithful believer should be efficient in spiritual warfare.

2. The faithful believer will be effective in spiritual warfare.

Practical Application

1. Let's put our foot down on sin.

Questions

1. What did Joshua do first when he found that the kings were hidden a cave and the enemy troops were running away in defeat? Then what did he do?

2. Why did Joshua have his army captains place their feet on the necks of the kings?

3. Why is it that when Joshua shut the 5 kings up in the cave he was being efficient in defeating these nations?

4. What is the spiritual lesson in Question #4?

5. What is the particular spiritual lesson in Joshua 10?

6. What are root sins?

Answers

1. The first thing Joshua did was to temporarily seal the kings in the cave, then he pursued the enemy forces.
2. It was a symbolic gesture in that culture that the pagan nations had been conquered by Israel.
3. Rather than dealing with these kings immediately, he put them under guard so they were checked and ineffective. Meanwhile, he used his energies and forces to deal with the armies of these kings, more of an immediate problem before the troops could escape.
4. Remember, the Book of Joshua is a handbook for spiritual warfare. All of the enemies in the land of Canaan picture in some way the opposition that we face in spiritual warfare - the world, the flesh and the devil.
5. Our battle with the sins of the flesh. Some sins are more open and some are more hidden, like the kings in the cave.
6. In most cases, the hidden sins of the flesh are root sins; the more open sins usually trace their origin and power to the root sins.

Discuss / Consider

1. Just as Joshua dealt with both the kings and the enemy troops, the faithful believer should be efficient in spiritual warfare. The sins in our lives and in the life of the church must be dealt with, both the open and hidden sins. Recall some of the sins that your church has had to deal with. Recall some of the sins that you have had to deal with in your own life.

2. Consider some of the results of hidden sins, and discuss how you would deal with the hidden sins of pride, the love of money, selfishness, self-righteousness and evil thoughts.

Challenge

1. Joshua had his captains put their feet on the necks of the defeated kings. The God of peace will crush Satan under His feet shortly. In the meantime, put your foot down on sin, realizing that sin and Satan have been conquered on the cross.

The Conquest of Canaan: Southern Campaign Completed
Joshua 10:28-43

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Faithful warriors let nothing escape.

2. Faithful warriors return to Gilgal.

Practical Application

1. If God is for us, who can be against us?

Questions

1. What was Joshua's basic military strategy?

2. Why did God command Joshua and the army to completely destroy all the land and the people? (Josh. 10:40)

3. List some historical reasons for choosing Gilgal as Israel's base camp.

4. In the spiritual picture, what does Gilgal represent?

5. What is spiritual circumcision?

6. List some of God's miracles for His people as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan

Answers

1. First, to divide and conquer in the central portion of Canaan (Jericho and Ai), then to deal with the five kings of the southern coalition, and finally to attack the northern coalition.
2. So that they would not be influenced by the wicked Canaanites. See Leviticus 18:24-30.
3. Gilgal was the place where Israel had entered the land, where the reproach of Egypt had been rolled away, and where they had set up the twelve stones from the riverbed. It was where they celebrated the Passover once again, and where the new generation had been circumcised.
4. Gilgal represents the place of self-judgment and the place of spiritual strengthening for the believer.
5. Applying the knife of God's word to the strong desires of the flesh. It is the death-to-self principle, the judgment of self in light of God's word.
6. It was only by God's grace that they had been brought out of Egypt, through the wilderness and into the promised land. Some of God's miracles included the parting of the Red Sea, the manna in the wilderness, and the stopping of the Jordan River.

Discuss / Consider

1. Under the command of God, Joshua led faithful warriors to completely conquer the pagan opposition. We are to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Are you able to do this? Have you cast down every high thing that exalts itself against God?

2. Only as we return to the base camp of Gilgal in the Christian life are we kept humble and spiritually strengthened. Remember God saved us by His grace alone. Only as we practice self-judgment, we are truly humbled and enabled to go out and fight spiritual battles in His strength. Galatians 2:20 and returning to Gilgal go together, spiritually speaking. Are you crucified with Christ?

Challenge

1. Do you really believe that if God be for us, who can be against us? Believe it and act on it. You don't have to fear the enemy, just follow the Lord.

The Northern Campaign and a Summary of the Seven Year Conquest Joshua 11

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Faithful warriors don't fear numbers

2. Faithful warriors do not fear giants.

Practical Application

1. Do you know what rest is all about?

Questions

1. What was Joshua's strategy in attacking the coalition of kings during the northern campaign?
2. Throughout the whole conquest, only three cities were burned. The rest of the cities were taken over and inhabited by the children of Israel. Which three cities were burned?
3. What was God's rod of judgment against the hard-hearted Canaanites?
4. How long did the conquest last?
5. Recall the giant/grasshopper complex. What made the difference?
6. The land rested from war. Did that mean that all the land was possessed by Israel?

Answers

1. Joshua decided to attack them with a pre-emptive strike before the enemy was fully organized. He attacked them in the hill country and completely demobilized them, crippling their horses and burning their chariots. He attacked Hazor, the largest city in Israel at that time. Hazor controlled the whole northern half of the land of Canaan.
2. Jericho, Ai and Hazor.
3. Israel was brought in as God's rod of judgment. God had given the Canaanites plenty of time to repent and change their ways, but they would not. They hardened their hearts against God.
4. About seven years.
5. Israel no longer feared the giants nor did they see themselves as grasshoppers because their eyes were now on the Lord. It was a matter of perspective.
6. No. The Lord said to Joshua, "There remains much land yet to be possessed." According to the Book of the Judges, we know that enemy forces continued to exist in the land.

Discuss / Consider

1. The enemy opposition in Joshua represents spiritual opposition today. Just as the northern coalition of pagan enemy forces outnumbered and outclassed the army of Israel, so the spiritual opposition we face in the world today appears to be superior to the small Christian community. There is a tendency to be scared because we are in the minority, but God is with us and He has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7). Israel trusted in the Lord, not in a captured cavalry or their own military strength. See Psalm 20:7. Are you trusting God with the victory?
2. Do you fear giants that you face in spiritual warfare? What about the fear of losing your job, or the fear of dying, or the fear of loneliness, or security in your old age? Those can be giants to keep you from enjoying your blessings in Christ. There are no giants that cannot be brought down by faith. Be faithful and watch God work.

Challenge

1. Have you come to the place in your Christian life where the control of sin and spiritual opposition is no longer overwhelming? Are you resting in Christ in the land of spiritual blessings? The major battles of the world, the flesh and the devil have been fought and won. See Romans 6:14.

A Summary the Kings Conquered by Israel on Both Sides of the Jordan Joshua 12

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God keeps a record of the believers' enemies in the land.**

- 2. God keeps a record of the believers' victories in the land.**

Practical Application

- 1. Count your many battles. Name them one by one.**

Questions

1. What is the difference between the Amorites and the Ammonites?

2. How many kings were conquered by Israel on the east side of the Jordan? How many kings were conquered on the west side of the Jordan?

3. What were so many kings doing in a land about the size of the state of New Jersey?

4. What does the physical land of Canaan represent spiritually?

5. What do the kings represent?

6. Why does God keep a record of our spiritual victories?

Answers

1. Amorites were enemies of Israel. Ammonites were descendants of Lot.
2. East side - 2; west side - 31.
3. The Canaanites were not united as a nation, but they were fractured up into many city-states with a ruling king for each city.
4. The blessings and battles that the Lord has given to Christians and wants them to possess. God wants us to enjoy the blessings and be victorious over the battles.
5. The satanic forces that work to keep Christians defeated, and to keep them from enjoying the spiritual blessings in Christ. See Ephesians 6:12.
6. So He can reward us. See 1 Corinthians 3:12-14

Discuss / Consider

1. God keeps a record of all the enemy opposition that we face. He knows everything that Satan is doing. Do you doubt that He is aware of your battles? Do you doubt that He can give you the victory? Don't ever doubt God's concern for you.

2. God not only knows about the enemy forces, but He enables us to have victory over them. God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able to bear. Do you believe this? Believe it!

Challenge

1. Remember to thank the Lord for giving you victory over certain temptations. Just thanking the Lord gives you strength for further victories, even in the same areas of temptation. Don't rest on your laurels.

**The Division of the Land on the East Side of the Jordan
Joshua 13**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers must possess their inheritance.

2. Believers must dispossess their inheritance.

Practical Application

1. Let's live more like the Levites.

Questions

1. Which tribes took their inheritance on the East Side of the Jordan River, and why?

2. Why was Levi given no inheritance?

3. How is the Book of Joshua divided?

4. Why did the Lord say to Joshua that he was old and advanced in years?

5. Did the tribes complete the job of possession of the land?

6. How will the enemy be disposed from our inheritance?

Answers

1. Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh. They had asked to live there. See Numbers 32.
2. Because the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance. They were to serve the Lord full time.
3. The first half concerned the conquering of the land; in the second half, beginning with Joshua 13 the division and settling of the land is recorded.
4. Joshua was at least in his 90s. He had done a great job and the seven years of conquest was over, but a lot of territory still needed to be possessed.
5. No. They failed to conquer the Philistines (see Joshua 13:2).
6. By looking to the Lord and following the principles that God has laid down in His word.

Discuss / Consider

1. The land of Canaan was given to the Israelites by God Himself. But they had to possess their inheritance. The same is true for believers today. God has given us an inheritance in the land of spiritual blessings, but it is up to us to possess it. Have you possessed your inheritance? Or are you full of fears - of dying, of the future? Do you have the joy and peace of the Lord?

2. Before Israel could fully possess their inheritance, they must fully dispossess the land of the enemy forces. God promises victory to us just as He promised it to them. Little by little as we follow the Lord and mature in the faith, we will see victory over sin and temptation, and we will be strengthened as we move out and claim territory that is still in enemy hands. This applies not only to our priorities and world views, where Satan loves to have control, but it applies to our Christian service as well. How are you doing?

Challenge

1. The Levites had no inheritance except the Lord God. He was sufficient for every need. They were not concerned with material things like houses, property, herds, etc. They were more streamlined in their lifestyle. They were occupied with serving the Lord. As a result, they were closer to the Lord. Are there things that keep you more occupied than serving the Lord? What are your priorities concerning possessions? Can you say with David, *"The Lord is the portion of my inheritance"* (Psalm 16:5-6)? Can you identify your goal with Paul's, *"That I may know Him"* (Philippians 3:10)?

Caleb Claims His Special Portion of the Land **Joshua 14**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. There are mountains to be reclaimed in the land.

2. There are giants to be removed from the land.

Practical Application

1. Let's all say, "I want to be like Caleb."

Questions

1. What was to happen after the seven-year conquest was over?

2. Was it God's desire that the two and one-half tribes settle on the east side of the Jordan River?

3. Refer to Joshua 14:1. Was Eleazar the priest in line with what God had declared in Numbers 34:16-18?

4. Why did Caleb receive a special portion of the land?

5. Name all those who were faithful to the Lord from the time the Israelites came out of Egypt through the wandering in the wilderness.

Answers

1. The land would be possessed by the Israelites.
2. No, but He allowed them to have their way. They settled for God's permissive will rather than His perfect will.
3. Yes.
4. Because out of the twelve spies Moses sent to spy on Canaan, only Joshua and Caleb gave favorable reports.
5. Joshua and Caleb were the only two from that generation who trusted the Lord wholly and who entered the promised land.

Discuss / Consider

1. There were mountains to be claimed in the land of Canaan, and there are mountains to be claimed in the unseen world of spiritual realities. Satan and his world system have captured many truths with lies and brainwashing. Reclaim the mountains so the real truth is known. One example: the Bible teaches that man is born bad, with a sinful nature. Satan's lie is that man is born good and with enough education he can climb out of his environment. List other lies of Satan and how you can help reclaim mountains with God's truth.

2. The Anakim, the giants were still in the land, but Caleb drove them out in the strength of the Lord. There are giants today, the enemy forces and forms of spiritual opposition that control certain areas of the land. For example, secular education that teaches evolution. Are you countering this lie with the truth of creationism? Are there other giants that you are driving out?

Challenge

1. There was no mid-life crisis for Caleb, no retirement, no jealousy. Are you a Caleb? Are you conquering mountains, regardless of your age?

The Boundaries for the Tribal Area of Judah Joshua 15

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God sovereignly distributes our portion in the land.**

- 2. God graciously grants our requests in the land.**

Practical Application

- 1. Is our problem lack of strength or lack of faith?**

Questions

1. How does Joshua 11, where we read that Israel conquered Hebron and drove out the giants, harmonize with Joshua 14-15, where we read that Caleb took Hebron?

2. In Joshua 15:21-32 there is a listing of 38 cities, but verse 32 says the total is only 29. How is this explained?

3. How does 1 Corinthians 12:4-12 relate to this passage in Joshua?

4. Was Achsah's request for springs of water a selfish request?

5. Why didn't Judah fully drive out the Jebusites (until the time of David)?

Answers

1. Most likely they are one and the same, with the latter chapters giving the detail.
2. Most likely the answer is found in Joshua 19, where we see that the tribe of Simeon had its tribal area within the tribal area of Judah, and thus possessed nine of these cities.
3. God sovereignly distributed the land to His people, and God sovereignly distributes gifts to His people today. God knew what was best for the Israelites and He knows what is best for each of us.
4. Not at all, for she needed the water to make the land more productive.
5. The Lord had promised total victory, so Judah's problem was not lack of strength, but lack of faith.

Discuss / Consider

1. God sovereignly distributed to each tribe its portion of the land. God sovereignly distributes to each Christian the gifts of His choice. In the land of spiritual realities God determines our gifts, ministries and Christian service. He knew what was best for Judah and He knows what is best for us today. Are you content with your portion, with what God has given to you? Do you know what your spiritual gift is? Are you using this gift for His glory?

2. Just as Achsah's request for the springs of water was granted, so will ours be when we ask for things to make us more fruitful. See John 15:16. What are you asking God for?

Challenge

1. Because of lack of faith, Judah did not fully drive out the Jebusites until much later in history. Is the enemy controlling some of the land in your life? Are you living with doubts, discouragements, defeat? Are you causing yourself grief because of lack of faith? Read and memorize Isaiah 40:31.

The Inheritance of Ephraim and Half the Tribe of Manasseh
Joshua 16-17

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. **God is more pleased with territory gained than with tribute given.**
2. **God is more pleased with faith walkers than with faith talkers.**

Practical Application

1. **Will it be said in heaven that you could not or that you would not?**
2. **The ball is in your court.**

Questions

1. Why wasn't there a tribe called Joseph?
2. What did this have to do with Joseph's birthright?
3. In whose territory was Shiloh located?
4. Judah, for lack of faith could not drive out the Jebusites. What was Ephraim lacking?
5. Why did Zelophehad's daughters receive their father's inheritance?

Answers

1. Joseph received his blessing in the land through his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.
2. He received a double portion of the land, an aspect of his birthright.
3. In Ephraim's territory. This is where the tabernacle would be located for more than 300 years to come.
4. They had a lack of will.
5. Because there were no sons, and the daughters asked for their father's inheritance and received it.

Discuss / Consider

1. God is more pleased with territory gained than with tribute given. Ephraim failed to drive out the enemy completely, but they did put them to work and made them pay tribute. However, this was not God's desire or design. Today, many Christians are motivated by the love of money. As a result, there is money given to the work of the Lord, but the Lord is not their number one priority. How is it with you?

2. The children of Joseph said that they were a great people. They were good faith talkers, like some Christians today. They wanted more territory, but they didn't want to work for it or fight for it. Could you be in that category?

Challenge

1. Will it be said in heaven that you could not or that you would not? The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh failed to drive out the enemy, rather they chose to co-exist with them if they could get some benefit out of the relationship. Don't be a worldly Christian!

2. Joshua challenged Ephraim and Manasseh to assume responsibility. Do you want blessing in your life? Do you want to become a more mature believer? Then be a spiritual great and work for what you want.

Setting Up the Tabernacle at Shiloh and the Boundaries for Benjamin Joshua 18

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Worship should have a central place in the believer's life.**

- 2. Life's major decisions should be made before the Lord.**

Practical Application

- 1. Good things can come in small packages.**

Questions

1. The tabernacle was moved. When and why?

2. What was one of the first things the Israelites did once the tabernacle was moved?

3. Why did Joshua rebuke the children of Israel?

4. What is the lesson in this for us?

5. The seven tribes chose lots for their territories. What does this mean?

Answers

1. When the people moved, the tabernacle moved. When the Israelites crossed over the Jordan River and came into the promised land, they set up the tabernacle at Gilgal. Now that the land was conquered the tabernacle was moved to Shiloh. Thus, after the conquest, the tabernacle was placed in the center of the land for easier access.
2. They divided the rest of the land among the seven tribes who still had no assigned tribal territory.
3. He rebuked them for their procrastination in possessing the land.
4. We are rebuked for failing to possess the spiritual land of blessing that God has given us. We are exhorted to be more victorious in the spiritual battles in this land.
5. Jewish tradition says that the priests took two urns and put the territories in one urn and the names of the tribes in the other urn, then the high priest drew one from each urn. In any case, God controlled the division of the land. See Proverbs 16:33.

Discuss / Consider

1. The tabernacle was the focal place of worship for the children of Israel. It was the place where God dwelt among His people to maintain a relationship between a holy God and a sinful people. A top priority for Israel was to have a central place of worship. Similarly, worship should have a central place in the believer's life today. See Psalm 96:6-9 and John 4:23. Does worship have a central place in your life?

2. Life's major decisions should be made before the Lord. The Israelites surveyed the land and brought it before the Lord. These decisions would not only affect their position in the land, but much of their future history as well. Do you make your major decisions in life before the Lord? Give examples, both of when you have done this, and when you have gone ahead without consulting the Lord.

Challenge

1. Benjamin was one of the smallest tribes, and its territory was located between the two major tribes of Ephraim and Judah. Benjamin became a buffer zone between these other tribes. Jerusalem was one of the cities given to Benjamin, and it would become the capitol of the nation. The temple would eventually be there. Saul, the first king of Israel would come from the little tribe of Benjamin, and so would the apostle Paul. Benjamin was a good thing in a small package. Do you feel like you are a small package with no great upfront gift or talent? Be encouraged. God says that you are necessary in the body of Christ. See 1 Corinthians 12:21-22.

Boundaries for the Remaining Tribes of Israel **Joshua 19**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Every believer has a portion in the land.

2. The Lord's portion is His people.

Practical Application

1. Let's set the example like Joshua.

Questions

1. Why is Simeon's inheritance not found on Bible maps that show tribal lands?
2. In which tribal territory will the Battle of Armageddon take place?
3. Name some noteworthy events that later took place in the territory of the tribe of Asher.
4. Timnath Serah. Whose portion was this?
5. Which three cities were burned in the conquest?

Answers

1. Simeon's inheritance was within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah.
2. In Issachar's territory, which includes the Plain of Jezreel, where the final battle will take place. See Revelation 16.
3. Elijah would defeat the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. The godly prophetess Anna was from the tribe of Asher.
4. Joshua's.
5. Jericho, Ai and Hazor.

Discuss / Consider

1. Just as God sovereignly divided the portion of the land to the different tribes, so God sovereignly distributes the different gifts and ministries among His people today. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 and 1 Peter 4:10. Have you identified your gift? Are you a good steward of your gift? Are you using your gift for the profit of other believers? Are you using your gift to glorify God?

2. Believers are the Lord's portion, just as Joshua's inheritance was an abundant portion. What does this mean spiritually? Refer to Ephesians 1:18.

Challenge

1. Joshua was a man of noble spirit, a godly man who practiced self-denial. Do you practice self-denial?

The Cities of Refuge **Joshua 20**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Christ, the true city of refuge, provides security from wrath.

2. Christ, the true city of refuge, is readily accessible.

Practical Application

1. Let's be clear refuge signs for the unbeliever.

Questions

1. In Old Testament days before the giving of the law, when a person was killed by another person, who took on the responsibility of getting revenge?

2. Is the practice of blood-revenge still carried out today?

3. How many cities of refuge did God provide for people who had killed unintentionally or accidentally?

4. Were cities of refuge commanded to be set up under the law?

5. Read Deuteronomy 19:4-5. What is this an example of?

6. How long was a manslayer safe, and under what circumstances?

Answers

1. A near relative of the slain person.
2. Yes, by some of the Bedouin Tribes of the Middle East.
3. Six cities of refuge.
4. Yes. See Numbers 35.
5. Of an accidental killing where the manslayer flees to a city of refuge.
6. He was safe as long as he stayed in the city of refuge and until he stood trial and until the death of the high priest. If, however, he was found guilty he received the death penalty - a life for a life.

Discuss / Consider

1. Refer to Hebrews 6:18. Here the author of Hebrews draws upon the city of refuge as an illustration of the refuge we have in Christ. Refuge from what? What does this mean to you? See also John 3:36 and Hebrews 6:18-20.

2. Read Romans 10:13, John 3:16 and Revelation 22:17. Do you see something common in these passages? Have you drawn on the accessibility in Christ as your city of refuge?

Challenge

1. Jewish tradition says that all roads leading to the cities of refuge had to be kept in good repair and clearly marked. Are you a clear refuge sign that can point others to Christ? Do your friends and neighbors know they can turn to you in times of crisis?

The Cities Given to the Levites

Joshua 21

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God provides Levites for His people.**

- 2. God provides His people for the Levites.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember, rest land is not vacation land.**

Questions

1. How many cities were given to the Levites in all?
2. Why didn't the Levites receive territory in Israel?
3. What territory was Simeon given?
4. What special role was given to the Levites and why?
5. Who were the official interpreters and scribes of the law?
6. Why were the Levites situated throughout the land in the forty-eight cities, and not just around Jerusalem and the temple?

Answers

1. 48
2. Because of their participation with Simeon in leading the unholy slaughter of the Jeshonites.
3. Only cities scattered throughout Judah's territory.
4. They were servants of the Lord because they stood with Moses at the tragic event of the gold calf. See Exodus 32:26.
5. The Levites.
6. So they could teach the word of God to all the people. No Israelite lived more than ten miles from a Levitical city. Anyone who had questions about the law and the word of God could have easy access to speak to a Levite.

Discuss / Consider

1. God provided the Levites as servants and teachers of the Word for His people. Today, God continues to provide for His people. See Ephesians 4:11-12. Recall servants of the Lord who have taught and ministered the word of God to you over the years.

2. The tribes of Israel gave up 48 of their cities for the Levites, as well as the surrounding pasture lands and suburbs. The Levites were provided for by God's people both in this way and they were supported by their tithes. Can you relate this to today? See Galatians 6:6 and 1 Corinthians 9:13-14. How have you shown your appreciation for the Lord's servants who have ministered to you through the years?

3. Read Nehemiah 13:10-12. During the closing days of the Old Testament period portions were not given by the People. As a result, the Lord's servants had to go back to secular employment, and the work of the Lord suffered. Do you know of a case like this today? Do you at least tithe? If you are serving the Lord full time, remember that the Levites tithed, too. See Numbers 18:26.

Challenge

1. The tribes got bogged down, failing to fully possess all the land that God had given them. Are you possessing all the spiritual land of blessing that the Lord has given to you? See Matthew 11:28-29 and 1 Corinthians 15:58.

The Controversial Altar Built Near the Jordan River
Joshua 22:1-20

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. It is wrong for believers to judge the motives of other believers.

2. It is right for believers to investigate before taking action.

Practical Application

1. Give credit where credit is due.

2. Don't forget to share.

Questions

1. Why did Moses rebuke the two and one-half tribes?

2. How did Moses deal with this issue?

3. After the seven years conquest was over, the soldiers were commended by Joshua. Why?

4. There was a threat of civil war in Israel. What was this about?

5. How was the threat of war settled?

Answers

1. Because of their lack of full commitment and unwillingness to go all the way into the land of promise.
2. Moses gave the two and one-half tribes permission to settle on the east side of the Jordan River as long as their armies went over and fought with the rest of Israel until the land was conquered. They agreed and kept their word.
3. They had served well, and they were given an honorable discharge.
4. The two and one-half tribes built a large altar, and the other tribes believed that they were setting up another system of worship. This would have been an act of rebellion and apostasy.
5. The nine and one-half tribes investigated, sending a delegation of men to see what was happening. They realized they had misjudged their motives when the two and one-half tribes explained that they were only setting up a symbolic and memorial replica altar as a witness for their families that they were one nation under God.

Discuss / Consider

1. The nine and one-half tribes misjudged the motives of the two and one-half tribes, jumping to a wrong conclusion which nearly resulted in civil war. They were right in being concerned and zealous for the holiness of God, but they were wrong in so quickly judging their brothers. Can you identify? Did you learn a lesson, too?

2. The nine and one-half tribes investigated before taking action, sending a delegation of ten men headed up by the priest. They asked before assaulting, and things were straightened out. Do you investigate before taking action within your church and family structure? Beware of misguided zeal.

Challenge

1. Joshua was a good and beloved leader because he gave credit where credit was due. See Joshua 22:1-3. We should do the same.

2. Joshua told the tribes to share the booty of war with their brethren when they returned home. Are you sharing from what the Lord has given you?

The Two and One-half Tribes Explain the Purpose of the Altar
Joshua 22:21-34

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. It is wrong for believers not to think ahead.

2. It is right for believers not to retaliate.

Practical Application

1. What kind of message are you sending to the next generation?

Questions

1. What was the basic problem between the tribal divisions?

2. How was the situation resolved?

3. Why is Joshua 22 a good chapter to study whenever misunderstandings arise between believers, whether it be in a Christian family, a Christian ministry, or in the church?

4. In what way were both divisions wrong?

5. How did God safeguard a common worship of Himself by His people?

Answers

1. The two and one-half tribes built an altar, which caused great concern on the part of the other tribes, thinking that they were setting up a separate system of worship. In their eyes, this was rebellion, apostasy, idolatry.
2. The accusing party sent a committee to investigate, and found that the motives were pure, that they had built only a memorial replica of the true altar at Shiloh to be a witness to their families for generations to come. Their interpretation was that even though they lived on the east side of the Jordan River they were part of Israel that lived on the west side. They were one nation under God.
3. When a major misunderstanding took place between the two divisions of tribes, it nearly caused a civil war. Fortunately, an investigating committee was set up to understand the real reason for their actions. When the “offending” party was given an opportunity to explain their actions, the “accusing” party realized they had misjudged their motives. Not only was war averted, but the two divisions realized that they were one nation under God.
4. Even though their motives were good, the east siders failed to think ahead as to how their actions might be interpreted by the west siders. The west siders were quick to judge (misjudge) the motives of their brothers.
5. God chose a central sanctuary in the land where all His people were to come to worship. Read Deuteronomy 16:16-17.

Discuss / Consider

1. The east siders failed to think ahead as to what their actions might mean to their brothers, even though their motives were good. We need to avoid even the appearance of evil to others. This means thinking about a situation and prejudicing our own actions in light of others.

2. It would have been easy and “natural” for the east siders to retaliate, but they didn’t. Instead, they responded, “The Lord knows! If we are in error, let the Lord Himself require an account.” They were willing to be disciplined if they were wrong. What a great lesson for us! Read 1 Peter 5:6 for a proper attitude in such a situation.

Challenge

1. Be careful of the message you are sending to the next generation. Think before you act. Make sure your motives are pure and your actions read rightly.

2. When the older generation faithfully follows and worships the Lord, then the next generation will get the message. Is this the message you are sending?

Joshua's Farewell Address to the Israelite Leaders Joshua 23

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. God is faithful to His promises in the land.**

- 2. God is faithful to His warnings in the land.**

Practical Application

- 1. Practice the three steps of preventive maintenance for your spiritual life:**
 - a. Obey the word of God**

 - b. Separate from the world**

 - c. Love the Lord your God**

Questions

- 1. In the last three chapters of the book of Joshua, there are three farewell messages:**
Chapter 22 - Joshua's farewell to _____ .
Chapter 23 - Joshua's farewell to _____ .
Chapter 24 - Joshua's farewell to _____ .
- 2. Where was the covenant renewed?**
- 3. How long after the conquest was over did Joshua's second farewell address occur?**
- 4. What does the physical land of Joshua represent?**
- 5. What is this land called in Ephesians?**
- 6. Is this the heaven to come in the future?**

Answers

1. 1) ...the military troops of the two and one-half tribes whose territories were on the other side of the Jordan River.
2) ...the rulers and leaders of Israel.
3) ...all the people.
2. Shechem
3. Anywhere from 5 to 20 years.
4. The spiritual land we enter when we become Christians.
5. The “heavenlies.”
6. No. It is the unseen but real realm of spiritual blessings and battles now.

Discuss / Consider

1. As God was faithful to His promises concerning the physical land of Canaan for Israel, so he is faithful to His promises concerning the spiritual land He has given to us. See Ephesians 1:1-3. This was a continuing promise, just as Philippians 1:6. What is the evidence of God’s sanctification continuing in your life?

2. God gave warnings to the people in the land. The same is true today for the spiritual land that God has given us. If we do not follow faithfully, we suffer loss and ruin. What do you believe is keeping you from following fully?

Challenge

1. Are you practicing the three steps of preventive maintenance for your spiritual life? How diligently are you reading and obeying the word of God? Are you separated from the idolatry and evil of this world system? Do you love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind?

Joshua's Farewell Address, Part One
Joshua 24:1-13

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. God is sovereign over nature for His people.

2. God is sovereign over history for His people

3. God is sovereign over mankind for His people.

Practical Application

1. Make sure you hear the rest of the story.

Questions

1. List Joshua's three farewell addresses in Joshua 22-24.

2. Where did Joshua's final farewell address to all of the people take place, and what had happened previously in this place?

3. Why were there two covenant renewals?

4. What did Joshua summarize in the first part of this covenant renewal?

5. In Joshua 24, we see that God is sovereign, in full control, over three areas. Name these three areas.

Answers

1. Joshua 22 - Joshua's farewell address to the two and one-half tribes who lived on the east side of the Jordan River; Joshua 23 - Joshua's farewell address to the leaders of Israel; Joshua 24 - Joshua's final farewell address to all of Israel.
2. Shechem. It was where Israel had ratified God's covenant soon after the battles of Jericho and Ai, probably about 25 years before this.
3. Why not? It never hurts to renew a covenant before God, especially after twenty-five years. Covenant renewal is a good practice.
4. He summarized God's faithfulness to His people, especially in the way He chose, protected and guided Israel. See also Psalm 44:1-3.
5. Over nature, history and mankind. That is, God is in full control over all these areas, and makes them work together for the good of His people.

Discuss / Consider

1. List Old Testament examples or evidences of God's sovereign control over nature for His people. Consider New Testament examples. Consider current evidences of God's sovereign control over nature for His people.
2. List Old Testament examples of God's sovereign control over history for His people. Consider New Testament examples. Consider current evidences of God's sovereign control over history for His people.
3. List Old Testament examples of God's control over mankind for His people. Consider New Testament examples. Consider current evidences of God's sovereign control over mankind for His people.

Challenge

1. In times past, the present seemed dark, but when the whole story was played out, it was different. Are you going through a dark period right now? Be patient and wait for God to finish the story. Read Romans 8:28 and 1 Corinthians 2:9. Trust Him, who is sovereign over nature, history and mankind.

Joshua's Farewell Address, Part Two
Joshua 24:14-24

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Faithful believers cannot serve two masters.

2. Faithful believers cannot lead two lives.

Practical Application

1. You must surrender before you can serve.

Questions

1. Where was Israel gathered to hear Joshua's farewell address?

2. What was the purpose of this farewell address?

3. What do a number of commentaries have to say concerning this farewell address?

4. How does this relate to the situation in Joshua 24?

5. What is the structure of this treaty?

Answers

1. At Shechem in the central part of Canaan.
2. To say goodbye to the people as Joshua retired from public life, and to have the people renew their covenant with the Lord.
3. They point out that Joshua 24 is written in the typical form of an ancient treaty between a king and his vassals.
4. It is a covenant treaty between the Lord, as King, and His people as His servants.
5. Preamble (24:1-2)
Historical prologue of what the king has done for his servants (24:2-13)
Stipulations of the covenant (24:14-24)
Writing and depositing of the agreement (24:25-28)

Discuss / Consider

1. Joshua challenged Israel to put away their idols and cult objects. You cannot serve God and other gods at the same time. See Joshua 24:19, Matthew 6:24 and 1 Timothy 6:6-11. Are you fully serving the Lord?

2. Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15) Several times the people answered, "We will serve the Lord." The difference was that Joshua surrendered his life to the Lord and the people hadn't. Israel's commitment was short lived. What is your commitment? Does your life show it? What choices do you make when no one else is watching?

Challenge

1. Have you totally surrendered your life to the Lord? Are there still idols in your life? (An idol is anything that takes your focus away from the Lord). Read and memorize Romans 12:1-2. Have you come to that place in your life? Can you say with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?"

The Death and Burial of Joseph, Joshua, and Eleazar the Priest
Joshua 24:25-33

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Faithful believers publicize their commitment to the Lord.

2. Faithful believers appreciate their title to the land.

Practical Application

1. Are you a hen or a hog when it comes to commitment?

Questions

1. What did the memorial at Shechem commemorate?

2. Was the “sanctuary of the Lord” the same as the tabernacle?

3. What is meant by the “sanctuary of the Lord?”

4. What other events may have taken place here at Shechem?

5. When did Joshua die in relation to the renewal of the covenant? How old was he at his death?

Answers

1. The call and ratification of covenant renewal between the Lord and His people Israel.
2. No. The sanctuary was at Shechem and the tabernacle was located at Shiloh.
3. It seems to refer to the location at Shechem as special and set apart as a holy place.
4. Abraham built an altar to the Lord when he entered the land of Canaan about 700 years earlier; Jacob built an altar about 500 years prior to this time when he came safely to Shechem in the land of Canaan.
5. Joshua died soon after his farewell address and covenant renewal. He was 110.

Discuss / Consider

1. Review the words of Joshua to the people when he set up the memorial marker of the covenant commitment (Joshua 24:27). This stone was to be a public testimony of the verbal commitment that the people had made to the Lord. Have you set up a memorial marker, so to speak, to publicize your commitment to the Lord? In other words, do you have a public testimony that you are a believer?

2. Joshua, Joseph and Eleazar appreciated their title to the land the Lord had given them. Are you established in the land? Have you realized and experienced the joy of the Lord in your life? Have you appropriated the spiritual blessing of your eternal security in Christ? Have you seen Satan's tactics overthrown because of your prayers? True fulfillment, blessing and satisfaction comes only by appreciating your title to the land the Lord has given to you.

Challenge

1. Are you a hen or a hog when it comes to commitment? Are you just playing church and making token contributions or is your commitment real, total and good for the long haul? Have you committed yourself as a living sacrifice? (Romans 12:1-2) Read and be challenged by Hebrews 12:1 and Philippians 3:13-14.