

“The Conquest of Canaan” - Class 9

A Walk Through the Old Testament

Various Scriptures

Dr. Jeff Stivason

October 4, 2019

Jeff: Don? *(Laughter)*

Don Maurer: Jeff? *(Laughter)* I have a question related to what you were talking about last week with the covenant of works, Adam and Eve and our fallen nature, our fallen state. And it's this.

Jeff: Yes.

Don: “If happy little bluebirds fly beyond the rainbow, Why, oh why can't I?” *(Laughter)*

Jeff: You know what, Don? No no no, I'm not going to give the answer into that. *(Don's tape recorder. Laughter and applause)* Don, you just go ahead and play the piano. *(Laughter)*

Don Nemit: He has too much time on his hands.

Jeff: Yes, you have too much time, right? *(Laughter)* You know, I just want you men to know, just in case there's any, any sort of, you know, doubt in your mind that Don deserves what he gets, *(laughter)*, because I don't want you to think that I'm just picking on him, *(laughter)*, he will send me emails and sign them “Willy Wonka.” *(Laughter)* Now a man who does that deserves this kind of treatment. *(Laughter)* You go ahead and play, Don, *(Laughter)*

Don Nemit: Such a sweet thought. *(Laughter. Music)*

Jeff: Father in heaven, we rejoice. We rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ because we know that in Him we have eternal life and we have it abundantly. And as the Psalmist says, we have that abundant life in the land of the living if we be in Him. Father, we're thankful to be united to You in the Lord Jesus Christ by the work of Your Spirit in us. And Father, we rejoice to know that every precious gift in the heavenly places is ours in Him. Father, we pray that You will continue to develop in us the fruit of the Spirit, that we might know more and more of these benefits. Father, we ask and we pray with longing hearts that You would cause us to be thankful unto You.

And as we pray these things, Father, we pray them not simply for our own benefit, but we pray for the folks with whom we come into contact day by day and week by week, whether they be our families, our wives, our children, our brothers, our sisters, our parents, and also those who are in the workplace, those who are in the church, those who are in our neighborhoods. We pray, Father, that You will make us a light in this dark world. And we pray that the work that You have done in us will shine forth, that it might be used to claim others. Father, as we shine, we pray that You'll help us to remember that we shine because You have revealed Your word to us in the Lord Jesus Christ, and have inscripturated that Word in Your Bible, that we might turn to it and know Your will. So Father, as we open the pages of Scripture this morning we ask for Your blessing. Bless us, Lord, as we study, that this Word, borne by Your Spirit into our lives, might shape and conform us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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And Father, we know from reading Your word that this is a cruciformed life. This is a life of humiliation. Our best life is waiting. It's yet to come at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, when our bodies will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Father, it is in that moment that we know our best life for the consummation of all the blessings that we yet see developing in us.

But Father, for now we pray that You will bless others. We think of Nancy this morning, and Sig. And Father, we know that theirs is a life of humiliation at this point. They walk through the Valley of Baca. They experience the difficulties of this life. And they know what sin has done to this world and to our bodies. And so, Father, we pray for Nancy. We pray that You will help her to overcome. We pray that You'll grant her peace. We pray that You will relieve the nausea and use the adjustment in medication and the chemotherapy to bless her and not to hurt her. And we pray, Father, for healing. We also pray for Sig. We ask that You'll strengthen him. We pray that You'll bless him as he becomes a strength to his wife. And Father, we pray that You'll let him stand. Father, the most difficult thing in the world oftentimes is to simply stand. We pray that You'll make both Sig and Nancy to stand.

Father, we also pray for our brother Bruce. We ask that Your blessing would be upon him, especially as his body begins to fail. And Lord, we pray that You'll strengthen him not only in mind but in heart as well, as he faces these difficulties and trials. Father, we also pray for Sandy, asking that You'll bless her. We certainly know the struggles of asthma and the dangers of it, so we pray that You'll bless her and keep her in that struggle.

Father, we also pray for our children and our grandchildren, asking that You will surround them. And we pray, Father, that You'll draw them to Yourself. We pray, Father, that You will make us useful in that process. Make us a means.

Father, we also pray that You will bless Brett as he goes to the Dominican Republic. And we pray that the work that You would have him to do there would be blessed along with those he takes. We also pray for his leadership in that. We also pray for his speaking and teaching. We pray that You'll make that blessing to his hearers, but also to him as well. Father, we pray all these things, all of them in Christ's precious name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Kirk Ellerbusch: Hey, Jeff, before we get started here I accidentally skipped over or missed one of the prayer requests, Terry Gaab. I don't know if Terry Gaab is here this morning. But I had mentioned him last week. His wife Mary was in the hospital for a week because of back and heart issues. I don't have any updates. But I think it would be wise for us just to keep Mary in our prayers.

Jeff: You know what? Let me pause for a minute and pray for Mary, okay? And before we pray for Mary, Brett, are you a dentist?

Brett Christman: No.

Ted Wood: Do you play one on TV? *(Laughter)*

Jeff: You know, you asked prayer for the teaching, but I figure that should be downplayed. *(Laughter)*

Brett: I lost the Quarter Bowl. *(Laughter)*

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Jeff: All right, good to know. Why don't we pray for Mary? Our heavenly Father, again we're thankful that we can come before You and we know that we have a place before Your throne of grace and know that we are heard because we're Your children. Father, we bring before You the wife of our brother, asking that You will bless him. We lay Mary before You, asking that You'll bring healing to her body. We don't know the specific struggles she faces with her back and her heart. But we know that they're present and all too real to her. So Father, we pray that You'll intervene, and ask that You'll use the doctors and medications, whatever means or no means at all, that You'll bring health and healing, and that You'll bring an end to the struggle. Yet we pray that through the midst of the struggle that You will be forming Christ in her. Father, we pray for Terry as well as for his wife. We pray for their family, Father, as they go through this struggle together. And we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: Okay, all right. So this morning we are going to continue to walk through the Old Testament. It's bad when you're not sure what Testament you're walking through. *(Laughter)* But anyway, this morning we'll walk through the Old Testament. The purpose statement that we're looking at today is this, and it's a simple one. And you'll see that what we're thinking about is how God called Abraham, and He's shown him a land. And He told him that He is going to give it to him and his family, which is going to be a nation, is going to inherit that land. And we know how God took them down into Egypt. And Egypt became something of an incubator for the nation of Israel, and they grew into a nation. And then it was time for God to move them out into the land. And so today we're going to be thinking about Israel as they take possession of the land.

Now I want you to think about this just in terms of the books. So we've looked at them. And we're going to bring to an end looking at the first five books of the Bible. So when we capped off the Joseph story, how it was that Israel moved down into Egypt, we were brought to the end of that particular portion of the story in the book of Genesis. And now we've been looking at Exodus for the story and dipping into Numbers, which you'll see. The story of Leviticus has ceremonial stipulations, some history in it. And also Deuteronomy is really a recap. It's likely Moses on the plains of Moab rehearsing all that they've been through for the last forty years, and calling them once again to a renewal of the covenant and to faithfulness as they enter into the land. So Deuteronomy is sort of a capstone book where Moses speaks to them just as they enter into the Promised Land. But it has history in it as well and it has a reminder of the covenant and the law, and so on and so forth. So we're really coming to the end of looking at the Pentateuch or the first five books of the Bible, the five books written by Moses. And now we're transitioning into looking at the book of Joshua.

So today we're going to look at the book of Joshua. Joshua is the book about giving the land to the people of Israel, okay? And it really divides up pretty nicely into two sections. 1-12 is about *taking the land*, and 13-the end, chapter 24, is about *allotments and covenant renewal* again. So basically that's the idea when we think about where we are in the Scriptures. And that's the basic purpose statement.

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For next time we're going to move beyond this and we're going to look at the continuing story of 1 Samuel. And we're going to pick up with the life of David, and so on.

But I just want to say this to you briefly. If you'd like to read the book of Ruth that would be a good connecting piece. If you want to dip into the book of Judges that would be another place that would be great. But this really brings us to the end of the Judges and moves us into the kingship, so just so you know. If you want to dip into the Judges, go ahead. If you want to look at Ruth, please do, at these texts.

Today we're going to think about some introductory material. We're just going to round things out. We didn't think much about the wandering. We're going to do that. We're going to think about *on the plains of Moab, the preparation and crossing of the Jordan, the strategy for conquest of the land, and Israel in the land*. So with those things, let's go to the introductory material.

I want you just to take a look at this for a minute. Here we have the land of Israel, or what will be the land of Israel. And up above we have Syria or Damascus. Syria or Damascus right here is always a problem for Israel in the early days before they divide as a kingdom. And so they're here.

But interestingly here's the Hittite empire. The Hittite empire has its early beginnings in 1800 B.C. So before the exodus from Israel, the Mitanni are over here. They're always fighting one with another, and Syria is caught in the middle. And so there are things that are happening in the world beyond just Israel coming out of Egypt and moving into the land. There are all kinds of political machinations and tribal difficulties happening in the world.

And part of what I want to do as we walk especially through the portion of the Kings is just touch on some of these things that are happening in the world around Israel, to provide you with something of a context for thinking about what's happening in their own life and in their own world.

So *Mesopotamia and the messengers*. About the end of the conquest, here is Mesopotamia right there. About the end of the conquest, this portion of land is really an Egyptian province. And so from the leaders of Mesopotamia we have a letter. Archaeology has revealed a letter that the Mesopotamian king has written to the pharaoh in Egypt, expressing some angst about how his messengers are treated as they go through this particular area.

Now this is the end of the conquest and the beginning of the period of the Judges when this letter is written. And remember what's happening at the period of the Judges. Everyone is doing what is right in their own eyes, at least in Israel. And that mirrors the culture.

So when the folks of Mesopotamia are bent out of shape about how people are treated in this area, we shouldn't be surprised. It's not just happening in Israel, but it's also happening in other nations around there. So that's just one indication that there are things that are happening in the world abroad that we ought to be paying attention to.

Mitanni. They're bullied. This is a nation that rises to power about the beginning of the conquest. But that's as high as they go.

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Don Maurer: What’s the name of that nation?

Jeff: Mitanni. And what’s happening is that they’re in a battle between the Hittites in the Mesopotamian area, and Syria is also in that same situation. Syria is torn between the two. So that’s just some background context for thinking about the area of the world in which Israel is about to be settled as a nation.

Let’s think about *being on the plains of Moab* and Moses speaking to these people. They’ve been led out of the land of Egypt. You know, I just really want to be brief at this particular point because, like I said, we really didn’t go through a lot of the wandering.

But you remember what happens. They appoint spies to go into the land. This is the very first appointment of the spies to go into the land. And remember, they spent forty days in the land. And they go all over the place. And they just have a ball. It’s like a 40-day vacation. It’s like an all-expense paid trip.

Remember what they bring home? They bring home grapes this big. (*Laughter*) You know what I mean? And there were twelve of them. And ten of them are opposed to entering the land.

Now you know, one of the things that I love is that I love archaeology. And I love the way in which it just sort of puts flesh and bones onto the stories that we have in the Word. I don’t know if you notice this or not, but there have been carvings found of the ten spies and the two faithful spies. Let me show you those. Oops! I must have put that in with the second round of spies. Okay, I’ll show you some pieces later.

All right. So the report that they give is a bad one. The ten spies report that it’s bad. The land is wonderful. The trouble is that there are the Nephilim living in the land, and the Nephilim are the giants. And so they say, “We’re never going to be able to take this land. We’re going to have to let it go.” And Caleb and Hoshea or Joshua, as Moses called him, think that they ought to take the land.

Now look at Numbers 13 with me. In Numbers 13 you find how the spies go into the land. In chapter 13 verse 1 they’re sent to Moses. And then they’re named.

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff shows a picture.

Jeff: It looks like your name would be in there. It looks like you were one of the ten. (*Laughter*) Preserved for all posterity. Verse 21: So they went out and spied out the land. And then the dimensions are given. And at the end of the forty days in verse 25 they return from spying out the land. And they say, “This is absolutely wonderful.” And Caleb and Joshua want to go in immediately. And the men at the end of the chapter say, “Look, we can’t do that because there are just too many big people. The Nephilim are there.”

And so what happens is that they begin to wander in the desert. And they wander in the desert of Zin for about 38 or 39 years. For a total of forty years they are in the wilderness altogether. And they’re in the Desert of Zin. And they are there in the wilderness one year for each day the spies spy out the land. So they’re in the wilderness for forty years.

Now there’s another reason for that. Not only are they there for forty years, but that becomes a generation. So everybody that is part of that generation who left Egypt, except Caleb and Joshua, they’re going to die out in the desert and not enter into the land. Caleb and Joshua will enter into the land.

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You know, at this point, folks ought to be saying to themselves, “Wait a second. Let me just count: Caleb and Joshua. *(Laughter)* Ah, the sovereignty of God! You know what I mean?”

So in the fortieth year Israel is ready to enter into the land. And Moses faithfully gets them ready, even though he knows that he’s not going to enter in with them because he struck the rock when he should have spoken to it. And so they are about ready to enter into the land.

And when you look at Deuteronomy 30 I want you to see this. In Deuteronomy chapter 30 you’ll notice something. Deuteronomy chapter 30, verses 15-20. *“See, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I commanded you today by loving the LORD your God, by walking in His ways, by keeping His commandments and His statutes and His rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of. But if your heart turns away and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you will surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over to the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I set before your life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.”*

Now I just want you to remember that this is God saying, “Look, when you enter into the land and keep the commandments, you can remain in the land. If you don’t, you’re going to be ejected and the curse is going to fall upon you.” You have to keep remembering because we are living in light of the fullest revelation. You have to ask the question. Why the law? If this is a covenant of grace and the promise was given to Abraham, does the law nullify the promise? And the answer is no.

Then why the law? The law is given to tease out or to make sin manifest. They will not be able to keep this law. And they will only be able to remain in the land because God is gracious. Just like the Canaanites, they will eventually fill up the wrath of God for themselves and be expelled from the land.

And so Moses’ projection is in Deuteronomy 31:26.

Transcriber’s Note: Deuteronomy 31:26-27, NKJV. *“Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you; for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. If today, while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD, then how much more after my death?”*

Jeff: This is what he writes in the song. Don, he writes the songs that make the whole world sing. *(Laughter)* This is when he writes the song right before they’re ready to enter into the land, and he tells them to memorize it. And it’s almost as if he looks up from the song and he says, “You know what? You guys didn’t obey when I was alive. And I’m about ready to die and you’re about ready to go into the land. I *know* you’re not going to obey when I’m not around.”

And it’s funny because Joshua says the same thing again in his life. They are not obedient people. They are stiff-necked and they’re hard-hearted, and they don’t obey.

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And they are only in the land as long as they are because God is a gracious God and not because they're obedient. It's that simple.

And so he says in this text, *“Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you, for I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death!”*

Transcriber's Note: ESV.

Jeff: And so then he gives them the final blessing and then he dies. And God is the One who is said who buries him. It is unknown where his grave is to this day. And then Joshua is commissioned.

Joshua is commissioned back in chapter 31 with that commission. The words of that commission come out in the beginning of Joshua. And here they are. *“The LORD commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, ‘Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to give them. I will be with you.’”*

And when you get to the beginning of the book of Joshua what do you find? The reiteration of “be strong and courageous. You're the one that's going to bring them into the land.”

So it's a real blessing in the sense that this is the man who is going to take them into the Promised Land. And you see that in the first nine verses. So that kind of winds us out with what we were thinking about in regard to the people of Israel coming out of Egypt, and the wandering that now connects us to the conquest. Any questions or thoughts? Yes?

Kevin Cohn: Where was Aaron at this time? Moses passed away and now Joshua has taken over.

Jeff: Well, they both die. Aaron dies before Moses. So Aaron dies prior. Anybody else? Okay, yes?

Ted: It's interesting, these admonitions from Moses and then later from Joshua. They sound very similar.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: And basically it says, “If you do everything right, you can stay in the land.” I was listening to Adrian Rogers coming in, a former let pastor of a Baptist church.

Jeff: Yes, I know.

Ted: He was talking about finding God's will. And the final point he made was that God will open the way and show us His will if we seek Him with all our hearts and are totally committed to Him. It sounded like bad news to me. *(Laughter)* And it's a favorite of a lot of preachers to give that kind of bad news. If God's got a way He's going to open it for you, but you've got to seek Him with your whole heart. And I don't know of anybody in that congregation when Adrian Rogers preached that who could have said, “I'm doing that.” Neither could Adrian Rogers have said that.

Jeff: Yes. Well, that brings up something else. Thanks for saying that, because—

Ted: It's more of the Old Testament law. And we love it. We absolutely love it. It's the easiest sermon in the world to preach.

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Jeff: Oh yeah, right. It is. Law is the easiest sermon to preach because we’re children of Adam, you know? We want to be able to keep it in order to earn it. And we have to continually remind ourselves if we’re in Christ that Christ has kept it for us.

Let me say one thing really quickly. Do you see what the Old Testament is doing? And it doesn’t stop doing what it’s doing. And what is it doing? It’s revealing the covenant of grace. This is why when somebody comes along and writes a book called *The Prayer of Jabez*,” and it sells billions of copies, it’s a great uplifting and encouraging book. But it’s totally wrong theologically, because what Jabez is doing is appealing to the Abrahamic promises in the midst of the unfolding of the covenant.

And here’s what this guy wants us to do. Can I just say it? And I’m being really crass about it. What he wants us to do is to stop living in the light of the New Covenant and go back to the Old. And that was the very problem of Hebrews. Whenever we go back to the Old and say that this is really the key to it, we’re basically saying that Christ, the Consummation of all the covenants, isn’t really the key to it.

The prayer of Jabez isn’t the key to it. The prayer of Jabez was about what was happening in the unfolding story of the people of Israel so that God could bring about the consummation in Christ.

So look. When somebody tells you, “Look, you know what?” I’m being a little bit kind of cheeky here, but this is what people do. They go, “You know, you really want a piece of property. You know what? Let’s pray for it. And let’s pray some of those promises that the Israelites prayed about the land, and let’s get you your land before God. Let’s get God to get you that land.”

And you’re like “What?” No, that is a misuse and an abuse of the Old Testament. You’re not going to get your land. (*Laughter*) It’s not what the Old Testament is about. It’s not a resource book so you can get your land. If you pray the prayer of Abraham, you’ll get a family tomb, you know? It’s not like that. Does that make sense?

Tom Hansz: Yes, totally.

Jeff: Okay, all right. I’m a little exercised about that. (*Laughter*) All right, *the spies* again. If I drink some coffee I’ll get more exercised. (*Laughter*) I forgot that there were two sets of spies. These are the good spies. And these are the spies who go in and they visit with Rahab. And let’s talk about Rahab in this setting.

I want to show you this woodcut. (*Laughter*)

Transcriber’s Note: a picture of Don Maurer eating.

Jeff: That’s not the one I was thinking of. (*Laughter*) I think I got the wrong one. (*Laughter*) Don, I don’t know how you crept in like that. (*Laughter*)

Don Maurer: I don’t either. (*Laughter*)

Jeff: Anyway, the spies go to Jericho and they meet with Rahab. And Rahab tells them, “Look. Fear has gripped us because we’ve heard about how God has led you along the way. When you come in and take the city I want you to save us.”

And they say, “Well, okay. Scarlet thread your window. As long as you and your family are in this room you’ll be safe.” And then she sends the people that are looking for the spies in a different direction, and the spies escape and get back.

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And then what happens is that they go back and they cross the Jordan. And you remember the story. The Levites step into the Jordan River at the time of flooding. You know, this is at the time of flooding. This isn't when the stream is this deep. It's at the time of flooding and the river piles up.

And you've got to wonder about his, right? You don't get the story of what happened downstream after the waters were released. That would have been a good scenario.

(Laughter) But you have to remember that the people of Canaan and this particular vicinity are under God's curse at this point. And God is about ready to use the people of Israel to punish them. And so a little lying on top of all that, well, whatever, you know?

(Laughter) I mean, that's kind of the way it is.

So they go into the river. The river stops; they're able to go over. And as they cross, Joshua says, “Now twelve of you go back and get twelve stones out of the riverbed. And then we're going to carry them to our encampment tonight and pile them up. And they're going to be a sign to our children. When they ask, ‘What is this pile of rocks? What does it mean?’, you're going to tell them, ‘This is when the Lord led us into the land of Israel.’”

And here's the thing that I want you to notice. I don't know of anybody that would scout out Jericho and find out that the enemy knows they're coming. Then you cross the river and camp within, I don't know, several miles of Jericho and say to your entire army, “All right, now everybody gets circumcised!” *(Laughter)*

You know what I mean? I mean, if I was the leader, I'm not thinking that's a good scenario. *(Laughter)* But notice how God does this. He strikes fear into hearts. They're afraid; their hearts are melting. They are not going to come after the Israelites. In a sense God has protected them by what He has done through them, so that when they get circumcised they're going to be left alone.

So they're circumcised. Why? Because their parents didn't circumcise them. Think about the stiff-necked nature of that. Their generation did not circumcise them. And then they celebrate Passover. They're reminded of what God did for them for forty years before they go into this land. So they keep the Passover.

It's at this point that you have this story where Joshua meets the commander of the Lord's army. Now why is this story here? Everybody says, “Well, this story is here so that we understand that God is not on the side of the Canaanites, nor is He on the side of the Israelites. God is on His own side.” That's certainly there. I mean, you know, Joshua says, “Who's side are You on?”

“I'm not on either side; I am the commander of the Lord of Hosts' army.” And then what happens? Joshua bows down.

I actually think that one of the things that we need to remember is that this is not only there to tell us that God is not on anyone's side but His own. I think it's there to remind us that Joshua is in fact an heir by commission to Moses' post. Think about it. Just like Moses crosses the Red Sea, so Joshua leads the people through the Jordan River.

This story is very much like the Theophany that you find of the burning bush. When the bush is burning, the Angel of the Lord is in the midst of the bush. And Moses is told, “Take off your sandals, for this is holy ground.” When he meets the commander of the

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army, what does the commander of the army say? The commander says, “Take off your sandals, for this is holy ground.” And so there are certainly parallels for what’s happening in the life of Joshua to that which happened in the life of Moses, and for good reason, because this is the rightful successor of Moses. And so I think that’s what we’re being told in stories like this.

This is an excavation site of Don Maurer’s home. *(Laughter)* No, I’m just kidding, Don. This is really a picture of the excavation site at Jericho, just so you know. I don’t want you to feel picked on too badly. *(Laughter)* I really do, but I’m just trying to be nice. *(Laughter)*

Okay, so that’s the site. And what you have to realize is that again, you have to remember that it sounds really bad. I mean, a lot of people get all exercised about this. Why would God tell them to kill all of the people and all of the animals, and so on? Because they were under the ban, or what’s called the *harim*. In other words, they were under destruction. Why? Because God had borne with them for how many hundreds of years, calling them to repentance in whatever way that He did, and they continued to go their separate way. And now it’s time for judgment to come upon them. And so they are under the ban, and Jericho is to be destroyed. Jericho is to be totally annihilated.

There are three cities that are really under the ban, Ai and Hazor. But they are not completely under the ban. In other words, they’re allowed to plunder from Ai later. Hazor is leveled.

I want to give you this shot, because what I want us to do is that I want us to walk through this. You can’t have a map in front of you all the time, at least up here. But here’s what I want you to be thinking about. What I want you to be thinking about is that the people of Israel are coming up in this direction. And they’re crossing over to Gilgal where they set up the twelve stones. And then they’re going to come down here to Jericho. Jericho is the stronghold that’s going to be sort of the gateway into the land of Canaan. And here is where all of this action takes place.

Now they’re going to conquer all of this land in the book of Joshua in twelve chapters. So it’s twelve easy steps in how to conquer a land. *(Laughter)* What a great book! *(Laughter)* So here’s where we are for the time being.

And what I want us to do is that I want us to think about *three campaigns*. I want us to think about *a central campaign* that’s going to take out the middle. I want us to think about *a Southern campaign*, and then I want us to think about *a Northern campaign*. This is the strategy by which Joshua is going to take the land.

Okay. So the first or the central campaign takes out Ai. I didn’t say much about Jericho. But you know the story of Jericho. I don’t need to repeat it to you. They march around it seven times and they shout and the walls fall down, and everybody’s happy. *(Laughter)*

Kirk Ellerbusch: Everybody except Jericho! *(Laughter)*

Jeff: All right. Now they go on to Ai. Ai poses a bit of a problem. It poses a bit of a problem because they go, “It’s not a big city. We’ll be able to take it pretty handily.” So they send a small portion of their men to handle it. And they are routed.

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And you know, Joshua is almost beside himself. He can't be comforted. He goes to the Lord, and the Lord lets him wail and weep for a while and says, “*Get up!*” (*Laughter*) “There's sin in the camp. Haven't you figured this out yet?” And so Joshua says, “Somebody sinned; somebody did something really bad.”

And so what do they do? They go and set forth; they go by tribe, then by clan, then by family, and so on. And it works itself down to Achan.

And I don't know. This is one of those stories where it bothers me every time I read it because Joshua says to him, “Tell me, my son. Confess your sin, be right with God.”

And he tells him. “I stole a robe and I took some silver and buried it in my tent.” And they go and they retrieve them. And then Joshua says, “Stone him. Stone his family. Stone everything he has.” And you know, you just say to yourself, “Wow! That's incredible!”

Don Maurer: The Bob Dylan syndrome. “Everybody must get stoned.” (*Laughter*)

Jeff: Now you know what I feel like. It's not just mornings on Friday. (*Laughter*) It's like I get these constant emails from Bob Dylan. (*Laughter*) You know I'm going to get a Bob Dylan email now. (*Laughter*)

All right. So they get right, they divide the land. They work through the land and take Ai. It works. You know, the sad thing about it is that Joshua says, “All right. I just want you to know that you can plunder this one.”

You know what I mean? It's like getting into a car wreck in the last winter storm of the season. You know what I mean? (*Laughter*) What? Anyway, the strategy of the central campaign is to go in and cut the land in half, to separate the North from the South, so that the North and the South can't make any coalition with one another. So you separate the Canaanites from the Amorites.

What happens next is that after they cut the land in half they have a covenant renewal service. In Joshua 8:30-35 this is exactly what Moses said to do in Deuteronomy 27:1-8.

Transcriber's Note: Deuteronomy 27:1-8, NKJV. “*Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: ‘Keep all the commandments which I command you today. And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, ‘a land flowing with milk and honey,’ just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you. Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, that on Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime. And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron tool on them. You shall build with whole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and rejoice before the LORD your God. And you shall write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law.’”*”

Joshua 8:30-35. “*Now Joshua built an altar to the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: ‘an altar of whole stones over which no man has*

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wielded an iron tool. And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. And there, in the presence of the children of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. Then all Israel, with their elders and officers and judges, stood on either side of the ark before the priests, the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, the stranger as well as he who was born among them. Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant to the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, with the women, the little ones, and the strangers who were living among them.”

Jeff: He said, “When you get into the land, write the law.” And they do. And they not only write the law, but this is where they get on Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Half the people are on Mount Ebal, half the people are on Mount Gerizim. And Moses reads the law and the people respond as Moses reads the law. You can imagine this. It’s like an enormous choir, you know? And they’re going through the law. And they’re reminding themselves of what God has promised them if they keep the law. And they’re reminding themselves of the blessings and of the cursings, and it’s just a phenomenal thing, you know?

Think about this orchestration, and then how miserably they failed. But you have to remember. Why the law?

And so then the Southern campaign. And the Southern campaign is an interesting campaign because the Gibeonites are in the South. And they know that a coalition isn’t going to work. So the Gibeonites are saying, “What are we going to do? Let’s dress in our oldest clothes and let’s go to the Israelites and tell them that we’ve come from far away and we want to join them.” And so they do. They say, “Look, our bread’s even moldy.” (*Laughter*)

And the Israelites are like “Wow, we’re getting famous! Awesome! All right, you can join us.”

And God says, “Hey!” (*Laughter*) “There from the land!” (*Laughter*) So now the inhabitants, they go, “You guys are going to cut wood and carry water for us; we’re going to strip your lives.” And you see that happening, right? As Israel unfolds the Gibeonites are still water carriers and wood cutters.

But the problem is that the coalition forms among five states in the South to go into “Operation Beat Up the Gibeonites.” And now what has happened? Israel has entered into a covenant with the Gibeonites. And they are bound by covenant now to protect them. And so they’ve brought themselves trouble in that sense. Now they’ve got to go out and work.

This is what happens, remember, the miracle of the long day? This is where the sun stands in the sky. And Joshua and the Israelites are able to beat the five armies of the Coalition.

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Now this is the interesting thing. I was telling you that these guys who are into this new chronology were about to strike in, because my stuff is old. And I read from Immanuel Velikovsky that I told you about in *Worlds in Collision*. He has in there two documents: the Codex Chimpanzee (*laughter*), a Mexican document that talks about there being a long night on the other side of the world.

And then this guy Bernardo, Bernie, comes just after Columbus and speaks with some of the Mexican population and finds out that they have a tradition of a long night, when the sun hangs low in the horizon, and it's a long night. It's an interesting thing. I mean, that's what we would expect, right, if it's a long day? And Joshua expected it to be a long night elsewhere. And Immanuel Velikovsky, this Jewish unbeliever who is actually an atheist, he believes that the Bible is a historical document. So he set out to prove that for various reasons, and this is what he found. So it kind of works out.

So anyway, Joshua 10:40-43. I want you to go there for just a second. “*So Joshua struck the whole land, the hill country of the Negev, and the low land and the slopes, and all their kings. He left none remaining, but devoted to destruction all that breathed, just as the LORD God of Israel commanded. And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-Barnea as far as Gaza, with all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. And Joshua captured all these kings and the land at one time, as the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.*”

So that's the Southern campaign. So he's got the Central campaign which cut the North from the South. He went in to the South and he routes the kings of the South. And now he goes back up to Gilgal which is in the middle, in the central area. And why? To get to the Northern campaign.

Now the Northern campaign, or the opposition in the North, is led by king Jabin of Hazor. And he develops a Northern coalition to fight off Joshua. And they wait in the Valley of Jezreel. And I'm just going to summarize it. Joshua defeats the North.

And this is what the campaign looks like. So he goes in. They cut the land in half. He comes down into the South, takes the South, and then goes up into the North and takes the North. And so it's a successful campaign.

In the last few minutes I have I want to talk to you about *Israel in the land*. Do you have any questions about that? No? Okay. Let's talk about Israel in the land for a minute.

I want you to go with me to Joshua 13:1-7.

Transcriber's Note: Joshua 13:1-7, NKJV. “*Now Joshua was old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him: ‘You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed. This is the land that yet remains: all the territory of the Philistines and all that of the Geshurites, from Sihor, which is east of Egypt, as far as the border of Ekron northward (which is counted as Canaanite); the five lords of the Philistines—the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites; from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorites; the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrise, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath; all the inhabitants of the mountains from Lebanon as far as the Brook Misrephoth, and all the Sidonians--them I will drive out from before the children of*

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Israel; only divide it by lot to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you. Now therefore, divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half the tribe of Manasseh.”

Jeff: And notice that he moves the people of Israel into the land. And he gives it to them, but there are still some lands to be conquered. And not in this passage, but he tells them elsewhere, that the reason is that “I’m not going to drive out everyone all at once. You’re going to take possession of all of it. But I’m not going to drive out everyone all at once, because when you make the land desolate you’re still not big enough to inhabit the land, and wild beasts might grow up and dominate areas that you are not yet able to take.” And so the land is theirs. But God is going to use them as they inhabit the land to continue to drive out the Canaanites.

But having said that, look at Joshua 21. This is really important. Joshua 21:43-45: *“The cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the people of Israel were in all forty-eight cities with their pasturelands. Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that He swore to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. And the LORD gave them rest on every side, just as He had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.”*

And here’s why I want to tell you that. Oftentimes you hear people say, “Well, Israel never possessed the land that God promised them.” Right there it says at the end of the conquest that God gave them possession of the land. Not one promise that He gave them failed. They possessed it.

Now what we’re going to find is that actually under Solomon, the borders actually begin to expand beyond what was promised. Why? Well, I’ll tell you. It’s because Solomon is actually a type of the promised Son of David who was to come and actually expand the borders to the entire earth, which He does in Matthew 28. He says, *“All authority has been given to Me.”* “Now go and disciple the nations.”

You see, if we think about this for just a second, the idea that we are so occupied with a very small piece of land in the Middle East is to go back to the very beginning of the covenant. What we really ought to be understanding is that the Old Covenant exfoliations are about taking this land and then what? Being a blessing to the other nations. God promised that they would be a nation; they are. God promised that they would receive the land; they do. Now what’s it all about? It’s to be a blessing to the other nations.

And so Solomon is expanding the borders and being a blessing. And when Christ comes He expands it to all the earth. But why is it then that we say, “We’ve got to give that little piece of land back to Israel?” I say no. We’ve got to give Israel Christ. They can have the whole world, like it is ours.

Brave Man: Amen.

Jeff: You see, I’m just saying that there are two ways of looking at the people of Israel and how one ought to see it. We have a fulfillment of this. I think that you can see that we ought not to be returning to this piece of land because this piece of land continues to expand to the whole world under Christ.

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And then Joshua reviews the covenant in Joshua 24:14 and 15.

Transcriber’s Note: Joshua 24:14-15, NKJV. *“Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

Jeff: And this is very much reminiscent of Moses. Let me say to you that in 13, through the end of the chapter, this is where they possess the land. And then now they get allotments of land. “You will get this by the casting of lots, and you will get this by the casting of lots.” In other words, they gamble. No, I’m just kidding. *(Laughter)* Mama needs a new pair of shoes. *(Laughter)* No, remember that “*the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the hand of the LORD,*” says Proverbs. So the lots that are cast are God’s decisions about what tribe gets what portion of the land.

All right. So now they’re at the end, and the covenant is being renewed. And this is what Joshua says. He says in verse 14, *“Now therefore, fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and Egypt, and serve the LORD! And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods that your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

Transcriber’s Note: ESV.

Jeff: And then Joshua dies. The problem remains. The problem that remains is the same problem that remained when Noah stepped out of the ark. It’s a sin problem. And now that Israel is going to step into the land and remain there by the keeping of the law, we’re going to see on a national scale just how bad the problem of sin is. It’s not just on a personal scale that it got passed on to posterity. This is a problem that affects individuals and nations, and has to be dealt with. How? It has to be dealt with in Someone who can perfectly obey the law, but also in Someone who can bear the curse that is pictured in the sacrifices of Israel. Somebody has to come along and be the curse-bearer and be the perfect obedient Representative in order to bring salvation to this world. And that’s being pictured in this covenant. And it obviously comes to a climax in Christ. Any questions? Yes?

Bill McCoy: At the end of the book of Joshua, you have the people saying, “We’ll obey it all.” In verse 19 Joshua says, *“You are not able to obey the law.”*

Jeff: That’s right.

Bill: So why do people today still believe that they’re able to obey the law?

Jeff: Because they’re children of Adam. Adam thought he was able to obey. And every time that we think we can obey, we even show that we’re children of Adam.

Tom Hans: I don’t know if you guys know this, but back in 1980 there was a big article in the Houston Chronicle where a natural scientist discovered a one-day inconsistency in the revolution of the earth around the sun. And they couldn’t figure it out. They were missing a day. But we know why.

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Jeff: Yes, please?

Caleb Falbo: I think I have a critical question about Rahab.

Jeff: Oh no, here it comes! *(Laughter)*

Caleb: Ethically, she told a lie.

Jeff: Yes.

Caleb: Is there an exception for lying? How do you sort through that?

Jeff: Yes. I sort of do that by saying, “It’s time!” *(Laughter)* First of all, I think that in sort of the most general way that to address that question you say that there are often a lot of things that are reported in the Old Testament that aren’t sort of evaluated. So like the multiplicity of wives among the patriarchs, it’s not really dealt with.

Now we know, for instance, if we go back to the Garden idea, that “*a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife.*” And Jesus uses that in Matthew 19 to talk about a one-man/one-woman relationship, or when you get into 1 Timothy 3, a husband of one wife kind of thing. All these kinds of things help us to understand that the multiplicity of wives is wrong. But it’s not ever really evaluated and condemned.

And it’s not that sin alone. There are often sins where you scratch your head and say, “How about this?” And so this is no different. It’s clearly wrong. And it’s just not evaluated or analyzed, and so condemned. I think that’s one way to handle it. And I think that might probably be the most Biblically consistent way to handle it, because then once you begin to ask whether a lie is ever justifiable, I’m going to argue that no, a lie is never justifiable, because a lie is a breach of the Ninth Commandment. And so even an unintentional lie, or even a white lie, or a little lie or a fib, anything. You know, “How was the meal?” It was disgusting. And you go, “It was wonderful!” And it’s a lie, right? It’s not true. So a lie is not justifiable.

So now you have to deal with the absoluteness of the Ninth commandment and Rahab. And I think that the way we understand it is that it’s not a justifiable thing, it’s wrong. But the Old Testament really lets it stand and doesn’t evaluate, analyze or condemn it at that point, like other sins. But we’re sort of left to do that on our own, right? Caleb, do you have a follow-up? You look like you might.

Caleb: Maybe I have to go back and read it. But I found in Hebrews that she was praised for hiding them.

Jeff: Yes, but she’s not praised for her lying.

Caleb: She’s not praised for her lying.

Jeff: That’s right. She’s not praised for her lie. That’s the point. When people bring in Hebrews and talk about her faith, she’s not praised for lying. The author of Hebrews takes out of what she did, something virtuous, hiding the spies.

Caleb: Okay.

Jeff: Don?

Don Maurer: Do I owe my enemy the truth when a person’s life is in danger?

Jeff: Yes, so this is the question when somebody tries to justify the lie. Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book on ethics said that if my teacher asks me if my father still beats my mother, then that person is not entitled to the truth. Something like that, or the Corrie ten Boom thing. I still think that’s trying to justify the lie.

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Brave Man: I think you have to remember that these people were killing other people. But the nations have the power of the sword. And these people were also lying because they were in power. So I think that the nations have the abilities to do these things.

Jeff: Caleb, you were going to say something.

Caleb: Well, in other words, how would you recommend handling the situation? Just refusing to answer, or—

Jeff: Here’s what I say. So I’ve got people hiding in my home. And someone comes to my door who is an authority and says to me, “Are these people in your home?”

I say, “These people are in my home. And there is a Smith and Wesson in my hand behind the door.” (*Laughter*) I mean, you’ve got to ask yourself what you’re going to do, right?

John Christopher: In Corrie ten Boom’s book *The Hiding Place* the so-called authorities came looking for the people that she had there. And what she said was, “They’re under the table,” which was true. And of course they didn’t believe her. The other thing is that the lie isn’t exactly justifiable, except that God used the lie to save the Israelites. Can God use evil in the world? Well, He has. And that’s what we see here.

Jeff: Yes, it’s clearly what we see. God even uses the missteps and the sins of his own people to bring about some good purposes. I think that we could never justify the misstep or the sin because God uses it for good.

Okay, let’s pray. Father in heaven, thank You for this day and the time You’ve given. Thank You, Lord, for Your blessing upon us. And Lord, we ask that You’ll bless us throughout the day. Be with those we mentioned earlier this morning. We ask it in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: What we’ll have to do sometime is that we’ll have to have a series on ethical questions so that I can end every class without ever giving you an answer. (*Laughter and applause*)