

CHOOSING GOD: THE BATTLES LED BY JOSHUA FOR THE GOOD LAND

Message One

JOSHUA TOOK THE LEAD TO CHOOSE GOD

[The book of Joshua tells us of the faithful God who brought His chosen people into the good land of Canaan which was promised to Abraham in Deuteronomy chapters 7 and 8]

Deuteronomy 30:19-20a I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life that you and your seed may live, in loving Jehovah your God by listening to His voice and holding fast to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days.

Memory Verse: *Deuteronomy 30:19*

I. Joshua was the leader of the children of Israel after Moses died—Joshua 1

A. Background and qualifications

1. The name Joshua means the deliverance of God, Jehovah saves—Exo. 33:11; Acts 7
2. He was Moses' minister and servant—Exo. 24:13; Joshua 1:1; Exo. 33:11; Num. 11:28 (one who waited upon and served)
3. He was the leader in fighting Amalek and his people—Exo. 17:9, 13-14
4. He was one of the 12 spies who searched out the land of Canaan—Num. 14:6, 30, 38; 26:65

B. He was given a commission or charge—Joshua 1:9 Have not I commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed. For Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go.

1. He was God's choice for Israel—Num. 27:18; Deut. 31: 14, 23; 34:9
2. He was given the Spirit, honor, and a spirit of wisdom—Num. 27:18, 20; Deut. 34:9

II. Why did Israel have to fight for the land of Canaan?

A. The land was promised to Abraham by the LIVING GOD—Gen. 15:18; Exo. 23:31; Joshua 1:4

B. Evil and wicked nations were in the land—Deut. 9:3-6

1. Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites—Joshua 3:9-10
2. The evil and wicked nations in Canaan were not God fearing they had other gods and idols, and did terrible things; eg., in demon worship they burned children as a sacrifice
3. The evil and wicked nations were rebellious and proud (boasting) people; one day the Lord will clean up the whole earth of all the evil corruption (bad things)—Rev. 21:1, 8

C. To gain a land for God's possession and kingdom

CONCLUSION:

1. Joshua took the lead, and the children of Israel followed.
2. They realized they could not fight by themselves but they BELIEVED in God who was faithful to defeat the enemy
3. They were a people who exercised (turned) their heart to LOVE Jehovah their God, and LISTEN to His voice. They also they WILLED to be strong and of good courage in choosing God

QUESTIONS:

1. What tribe was Joshua from? (Num. 13:8)
2. What was Joshua's original name when he was born? And who changed his name to Joshua? (Num. 13:16)

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Message Two

THE TWO SPIES AND RAHAB CHOSE GOD

Memory Verse: *Hebrews 11:31* By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, since she had received the spies with peace.

I. Joshua sent two spies to view the land, even Jericho—Joshua 2:1

- A. Spies came to Rahab's house and stayed there
- B. The king of Jericho was told that men came from Israel to search out the country, so the king sent his men to look for the spies—Joshua 2:2

II. Rahab chose God by cooperating with Him

- A. Rahab had faith in God—Joshua 2:11b
- B. Rahab feared God rather than man (She endangered her life to protect the Israelite spies)—Joshua 2:9-11
- C. Rahab hid the spies on her flat roof under some flax (flax was used to spin linen thread)—Joshua 2:6
- D. She sent away those who came knocking at her door and had been sent by the king of Jericho to find the spies—Joshua 2:3-7
- E. She wanted to be protected along with her family—Joshua 2:12-13

III. The two spies cooperated with God and promised protection to Rahab and her family—Joshua 2:14, 17

- A. Rahab let the spies down by a scarlet cord from the window of her house on the wall—Joshua 2:15, 21
- B. There were some conditions for Rahab to be protected—Joshua 2:18-20
 - 1. She had to put same scarlet cord in her window as a sign
 - 2. She and her family needed to stay in her house
 - 3. She could not tell anyone about the spies

IV. A report was given to Joshua by the two spies after they got back

- A. Jehovah had delivered the land into their hands—Joshua 2:24
- B. The inhabitants were faint and fearful because of the children of Israel—Joshua 2:24

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The two spies chose God by going in to spy out the land, and by giving a true report when they returned.
- 2. Because Rahab chose God by cooperating with God, she and the rest of her household were saved. *Praise the Lord!*

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Name 2 important descendants of Rahab. (Matt. 1:5, see footnote ⁵ 21)
- 2. How many more times is Rahab mentioned in Joshua and where? (3 times in Joshua 6)
- 3. What is flax, how is it processed and used? (Encyclopedia)
- 4. Where in the NT does it refer to flax? (Matt. 12:20)

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Message Three

ISRAEL CHOSE GOD AT THE JORDAN RIVER

Memory Verse: *Joshua 4:21b-22, 24* *What do these stones mean? Then you shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. . . . So that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Jehovah, that it is mighty and so that you might fear Jehovah your God forever.*

- I. When Israel came to the border of the land 38 years earlier they would NOT go into the land.**
 - A. At that time, there were 12 spies who went into Canaan (including Joshua and Caleb).
 - B. Ten spies told of giants and walled cities, which caused fear; two (Joshua and Caleb) spoke of the rich, bountiful land and said, "Let's go in," but Israel disobeyed and refused to go in.
- II. Because of this disobedience they wandered in the wilderness for 38 years**
 - A. They were without a home, a permanent dwelling place
 - B. God was also wandering without a permanent dwelling place, He had just a tent, the Tabernacle in the wilderness
- III. This time Israel chose Jehovah God and obeyed—Joshua 3:12-17**
 - A. The Priest went bearing the ark
 - B. The People followed more than 1/2 mile behind the ark—Joshua 3:4
 - C. When the Priests reached the river Joshua gave Jehovah's charge to the people—Joshua 3:9-13
 - D. When the Priests' feet touched the river Jordan, the waters were blocked a great way off, at the city of Adam, and the river bed was dry so the people could pass over; Jehovah dried up the waters of Jordan—Joshua 3:14-17
- IV. Jehovah God told Joshua to set up a memorial (a remembrance) of their crossing the Jordan—Joshua 4:1-20**
 - A. One man from each tribe was charged by Joshua to take a stone out of the Jordan from the place the Priests were standing, to be set up as a memorial of their crossing and the beginning of their new life in the promised land
 - B. Joshua buried twelve stones in the Jordan river as a memorial of the end of their life of wandering.

CONCLUSION:

By crossing the Jordan River we see that this time Israel obeyed and chose God.

QUESTIONS:

1. Give reference and place of where the stones were set up as a memorial. (Joshua 4:20)
2. Tell us about the length of the Jordan River and draw a map showing it in relation to Canaan.
3. Tell us other events that took place at the Jordan River from the Bible (Jesus, Mark 1:9; Elijah parted the Jordan, 2 Kings 2:8; Naaman the leper, 2 Kings 5:1-27; Luke 4:27; etc.).

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Message Four

ISRAEL CHOSE GOD AT JERICHO

Memory Verse: *Joshua 6:16* And at the seventh time, when the priest blew with the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, Shout! For Jehovah has given you the city!

- I. Jehovah came to Joshua, to instruct him in His way for capturing Jericho—Joshua 6:1–5
 - A. Jehovah told Joshua that He had given Jericho into his hand—Joshua 6:2
 1. The gates of Jericho were closed at night to traffic
 2. Jericho was full of fear of the Israelites
 - B. The plan for taking the city
 1. Men of war would compass the city for 6 days
 2. Seven priests with horns would go before the ark
 3. On the seventh day, they would compass the city seven times
 4. Then the priests would make a blast on their trumpets
 5. The people would shout a great shout
 - C. The number seven is a special number in the Bible
 1. It stands for perfection or completion, as God is perfect and complete, ie. creation, on the seventh day God rested because His creation was complete—Gen. 2:2–3
 2. There were 7 priests, 7 trumpets, 7 days, 7 times around the wall of Jericho on the 7th day
- II. Israel obeyed God's instructions and way—Joshua 6:6–16, 20–21, 24
 - A. Joshua spoke, the priests carried out, and the people followed all of God's word
 - B. The reward of obeying God's word
 1. Jericho was captured
 2. Gold, silver, brass and iron were taken for God's treasury—Joshua 6:19, 24
 3. Rahab was saved and her whole household and she eventually became an ancestor of Jesus—Joshua 6:17, 22–25; Matt. 1:5

CONCLUSION:

Jehovah was with Israel because they chose God and obeyed His plan to defeat and capture Jericho

QUESTIONS:

1. How many generations between Rahab and Jesus? (4 generations, Matt. 1)
2. Tell us about more about the city of Jericho; its walls, kind of city; it's trade, what else happened there, etc. (Joshua 2:6; 1 Kings 16:33–34) [Use a Bible and a Bible Dictionary]

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Message Five

THE RESULT OF ONE PERSON NOT CHOOSING GOD BUT CHOOSING SOMETHING FOR HIMSELF

Memory Verse: *Joshua 7:20-21a And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against Jehovah God of Israel, and this is what I have done. . . . I saw . . . I coveted . . . and took them.*

I. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai to view the city

- A. When the men returned they reported to Joshua that there were not many men at Ai, they told him to only send a few men
- B. Joshua sent only around 300 men to battle Ai
 - 1. The Israelites went up against Ai and they were chased until they fled and 36 men were killed
 - 2. Jehovah was not with them

II. Joshua rent his clothes and prayed and asked Jehovah why

- A. Jehovah told him that Israel had sinned by taking the accursed things [explain] from Jericho
- B. Jehovah said He would not be with them until they took care of the sin of stealing—Joshua 7:11

III. The next morning Joshua gathered all the children of Israel and they passed by him tribe by tribe and family by family

- A. The tribe of Judah came and was taken
- B. Then the family of Zabdi was taken
- C. Then he brought his household and Achan was taken, he was the one who had sinned before God
- D. Achan confessed to Joshua, Indeed I have sinned against Jehovah God of Israel and I took a goodly Babylonian garment and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight which I coveted and took them and hid them under my tent—Joshua 7:20-21
- E. Achan, his family, his belongings and the stolen things were all destroyed in the valley of Achor—Joshua 7: 24-25

IV. After this, Jehovah told Joshua to go take Ai and He would give it to them (Joshua 8)

- A. Joshua planned an ambush with 30,000 men and sent them away by night: some were on the west side (v. 9) and some were on the north of Ai (v. 13); Joshua and his remaining men went that night into the middle of the valley
- B. In the morning the king of Ai saw it and rose up to go out to fight Israel but Israel made as if they were beaten and began to flee; Ai pursued after Israel, this drew their army of out of Ai; after the army of Ai passed the Israelites who were in ambush they rose up against the city and set it on fire, and God delivered the enemy into their hand

CONCLUSION:

Israel lost the initial battle with Ai without Jehovah's presence due to one man's sin, which affected all of Israel. Even 36 men were killed in that battle. After Israel took care of Achan's sin, the Lord was with them and they were able to defeat the city of Ai.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. How much gold and silver was taken? (Joshua 7:21—200 shekels of silver, a wedge of gold fifty shekels weight)
- 2. What is a shekel? (See a Bible Encyclopedia)

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Pauline
* craft

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Message Six

ISRAEL MADE A COVENANT WITH THE GIBEONITES

(Doing Something By Themselves Without God)

Deuteronomy 7:2: You shall make no covenant with them, nor shall you show them any favor.

Memory Verse: *Deuteronomy 7:2 And Jehovah your God delivers them up before you and you slay them, you shall utterly destroy them; you shall make no covenant with them, nor shall you show them any favor.*

I. The Gibeonites heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai—Joshua 9:3

II. The Gibeonites deceived Israel

- A. They pretended to be ambassadors and took old sacks on their donkeys and old wine bottles, and old shoes, and old clothes, plus their bread was dry and moldy (all as a deception)—Joshua 9:4-5
- B. The Gibeonites went to Gilgal where Joshua was and asked to make a league (peace pact) with them saying that they came from a far away land (But they only came from Gibeon, Chephirah Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim, nearby cities)

III. The men and Joshua made peace with them and let them live, and did not ask for counsel about this matter from Jehovah God—Joshua 9:14-15

- A. After three days they found out that the Gibeonites were their neighbors and had deceived them, but they could not kill them because they had sworn by Jehovah God of Israel
- B. The Gibeonites explained that they were afraid and that whatever Joshua did to them would be appropriate. So Joshua did not slay them, but made the Gibeonites hewers of wood and drawers of water (bondsmen, slaves) for the congregation and altar of Jehovah—Joshua 9:21-27

CONCLUSION:

Doing something without God but by themselves created many problems for Israel. We need to choose God and not do things by ourselves or we too will have many more problems.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who were the Gibeonites?
2. What were Jehovah's reasons for telling Israel not to make any covenant with any nation? (Deut. 7:4, 6 *They (the nations) will turn away your son from following Me, so that they may serve other gods, . . . for you are a holy people (a special people) unto Jehovah your God.*)

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Message Seven

THE GIBEONITES ASKED JOSHUA FOR HELP WHEN THE AMORITES ATTACKED
(Joshua Obeyed God And His Word And Jehovah Defeated The Amorites)

Memory Verse: *Joshua 10:8 And Jehovah said to Joshua, Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hands. There shall not a man of them stand before you.*

- I. Gibeon asked Joshua for help against five kings of the Amorites who rose up against them because of their pact with Israel
- II. The Amorites were descendant of cursed Ham, and Canaan, [Noah's son and grandson]—Gen. 10:6, 15–16
 - A. They were the most numerous people in the Good Land.
 - B. They were very sinful—Gen. 15:16
 - C. It was of Jehovah to harden their hearts so they would not make peace with Israel as the Gibeonites had done so that He might utterly destroy them—Joshua 11:12
- III. Adonizedek king of Jerusalem instigated war with Gibeon
 - A. He was afraid because he heard all the things Joshua had done to Ai and Jericho and their kings—Joshua 10:2
 - B. Gibeon which was a great and royal city with many mighty men had made peace with Israel
 - C. Therefore Adonizedek gathered four other Amorite kings to do battle against Gibeon because they had made peace with God's people
- IV. Israel as God's people cooperated with God to defeat the wicked Amorites
 - A. The Gibeonites asked Joshua to save them and help them.
 - B. God miraculously empowered Joshua and Israel to utterly destroy the Amorites
 1. They marched all night from Gilgal to Gibeon and still had the strength to route them
 2. Jehovah cast great hail stones down from heaven to smash the Amorites with the result that more Amorites were killed by the hail stones than by God's people
 3. Joshua commanded the sun to stand still till they could finish the battle and God caused the sun and the moon to stand still for a whole day
 4. There has never been a day like that before nor after that day that Jehovah heeded the voice of a man and fought for Israel
- V. God's people had a wonderful victory, and the five Amorite kings had a shameful defeat
 - A. The five Amorite kings cowardly hid themselves in a cave
 - B. Joshua found them but would not be distracted by God's commission to utterly destroy the Amorites so he trapped them by rolling a stone in front of the cave
 - C. After he had finished God's commission he killed the five kings and hung them on trees until evening

VI. Joshua encouraged the men of Israel not to be afraid or dismayed but to be strong and of good courage because Jehovah would do the same thing to everyone against whom they fought

VII. Joshua defeated all the kings and the giants (Anakim, 12:21-22), and took that whole part of the land for an inheritance for Israel—Joshua 12:23

CONCLUSION: [In presenting this lesson it is not necessary to cover all the details given in this outline]

Out of fear, the Gibeonites chose to seek help through Israel. Because Israel was willing to cooperate with Jehovah, He came in to help them destroy the Amorites.

QUESTIONS:

1. What nations came out of Ham's sons? (Gen. 10:6-17)
2. The Amorites were descendants of whom? (Canaan, Ham's youngest son)
3. Name the 5 kings of the Amorites who went to fight against Gibeon. (Joshua 10:5)

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Message Eight

DIVIDING THE LAND ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD

Memory Verse: *Joshua 21:43 And Jehovah gave to Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers; and they possessed it, and lived in it.*

I. The good land was promised to the children of Israel—Genesis 13:15

II. The land was divided according to God's word and portions were allotted for each tribe and family—Numbers 26:52–56

A. The first part of the good land, east of the Jordan River—Joshua 13:23–32

1. Given by Moses to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh
2. Promised to them by Moses if they would fight to help their brothers gain their portion of land—Num. 32:1–42 (*Life-Study of Genesis*, Messages 102 & 103)

B. The remaining land was divided by casting lots between nine tribes and the other half tribe of Manasseh.

1. Judah was given the coast on the south—Joshua 15:1–12.
2. Joseph became two tribes through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, to inherit the double portion of the land—Joshua 16–17:18; cf. Gen. 48:5–6
3. Benjamin—Joshua 18:11–28
4. Simeon's portion was within the inheritance of Judah because it was too much land for Judah—Joshua 19:1–9
5. Zebulun—Joshua 19:10–17
6. Issachar—Joshua 19:17–23
7. Asher—Joshua 19:24–31
8. Naphtali—Joshua 19:32–38
9. Dan—Joshua 19:40–48

C. No portion of the land was given to the tribe of Levi because God and the priesthood were their inheritance—Joshua 13:33; 18:7a

D. Instead of a portion of the land, the Levites were given cities to live in out of all the tribes of Israel—Joshua 21:4–42; cf. Gen. 49:5–7

1. Each of the twelve tribes set aside some cities for the Levites.
2. The selection of 48 cities was made by lot—Num. 35:6
3. Six cities were to be cities of refuge—Joshua 20:7–9 (*Life Study of Genesis #98*)

CONCLUSION: Jehovah gave Israel all the land He promised—Joshua 21:43–45

1. They possessed it and dwelt in it
2. Jehovah gave them rest
3. Jehovah delivered all their enemies into their hand
4. Everything Jehovah promised came to pass

QUESTIONS:

1. What are the names of the six cities of refuge? What was the purpose of them? (Joshua 20:7–9, 3 Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron (or Kirjatharba), Bezer, Ramoth, Golan.
2. How many cities were given to the Levites? Where can they be found listed in the Bible? (48 & Joshua 21)

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Message Nine

CALEB LIVED A LIFE OF CHOOSING GOD.

Memory Verse: *Joshua 14:14 Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb, . . . unto this day, because he fully followed Jehovah God of Israel.*

- I. **Caleb wholly followed Jehovah God of Israel**
 - A. He was one of the 12 spies, but he brought a good report and encouraged the people to go up and enter the land—Num. 13:30–33; 14:6–10
 - B. Jehovah promised to bring Caleb into the land because he had another spirit in him (ie. a believing spirit to choose God)—Num. 14:20–24
- II. **When he entered the land he asked for the mountain of Hebron where the giants (Anakim) lived—Joshua 14:6–15; 15:13–14**
 - A. He was as strong at age 85 as he was in his 40's (14:11; 15:14)
 - B. He chose to fight the giants in his old age and he drove the three sons of Anak out
- III. **His daughter, Achsah, asked for a blessing of springs of water, and she was given the upper springs and the lower springs (flowing waters) in the south land (a dry land)—Joshua 15:16–19**

CONCLUSION:

Caleb lived to an old age, and was allowed to enter the Good Land [except for Joshua all of the first generation of Israel died in the wilderness] because he believed and wholly followed Jehovah God. He was still strong at 85 years of age and wanted to fight those giants, whom Israel 40 years before was afraid of. Even Caleb's daughter received a blessing of springs of water because Caleb chose God.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jehovah promise to bring Caleb into the land? (Num. 14:24)
2. In Caleb's old age who did he choose to fight and why? (Joshua 15:14, Num. 13:28–33; 14:9)
3. What area of land did Caleb ask for as an inheritance? (Joshua 14:12–13)