



## **RCD Youth Dust to Glory - #12 Joshua and the Conquest** **Canaan**

**of**

### **SCRIPTURE**

Joshua

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

—Hebrews 11:30–3

### **DISCUSSION**

Transition of Exodus generation to those who would enter the Promised Land.

- Leadership transition from Moses to Joshua
- Dependence on God displayed in conquest of Jericho
- Captain of the Army of the Lord
- Covenant reaffirmed; cannot keep it as God is holy

### **OBSERVATIONS**

- First five books of the Bible are known as the Pentateuch or Torah.
  - Some scholars have argue the book of Joshua was originally grouped with the first five books of Scripture and was known as the hexateuch.
- The book of Joshua records Israel's conquest of Canaan and the initial fulfillment of promise to the patriarchs of a promised land.
  - The Israelites move from wilderness wandering, to conquest and settlement in Canaan.
- Joshua is a prominent figure in the Pentateuch.
  - Joshua and Caleb were the only spies who returned from the Promised Land with a positive report (Numbers 14).
  - Joshua is blessed with longevity while his entire generation of Israelites die in the wilderness.
  - He is appointed as the successor to Moses who is forbidden from entering the land.

- The passing of authority from Moses to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:1–8 is an example of Dynastic Succession.
  - The covenant is renewed and the people pledge allegiance to Joshua.
  - There are similarities between this succession and Christ promising the presence of the Holy Spirit and the new covenant in the upper room.
- “After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, ‘Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. . . . No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. **Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you**” (Josh. 1:1–3, 5).
  - God’s pledge of His presence was an important part of the patriarchal blessing and is now promised to Joshua.
- The book of Joshua reads like a military history because it is the account of the Israelite conquest of Canaan.
- Joshua is met by the divine warrior in Joshua 5:13–15, and he asks the figure for what side He is fighting.
  - The warrior responds by saying He is the captain of the Lord’s army.
  - Some scholars argue this captain of the Lord’s army was Christ Himself.
  - Christophany is an Old Testament manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ.
- The book of Joshua includes the account of Rahab’s protection of the spies, the fall of Jericho, the defeat and victory at Ai, and Achan’s greed. Faithfulness, unfaithfulness, and salvation outside of Israel are depicted in these historical accounts.
- The conquest of Canaan has been criticized by some scholars as unnecessary violence and could not be sanctioned by a loving God.
  - God calls the Israelites to holy war including, “theban” in which all the men, women, and children of Canaan would be killed.
  - God did not choose Israel because they were more holy, but because He had decreed judgment against Canaan.
  - The conquest of Canaan was a holy war for God to show his glory, judgement and mercy within history.
- Joshua and the Israelites are not obedient to the commands for war.

- Joshua and the Israelites are continually warned against religious syncretism.
  - Religious syncretism is mixing various religious beliefs together.
  - The saints of the OT continually fight against the intrusion of paganism into the worship of Yahweh.
  - Holy War continues throughout the Old Testament as a conflict against religious syncretism.
- A covenant renewal ceremony occurs at the end of the book of Joshua.
  - “And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve. . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh. 24:15).
  - The Israelites pledge obedience to the law and faithfulness to the covenant
- Joshua warns the Israelites they will fall short of God’s holiness.
  - Only the Holy One of Israel faithfully fulfills the covenant.

## **APPLICATION**

- List the six books that make up the so-called “Hexateuch.” Why would scholars group these books together?
- Name the tribe from which Joshua came (Num. 13:1–16). Why is he not regarded as one of the faithless Israelites from the wilderness wanderings (13:25–14:38)?
- What important part of the patriarchal blessing does God promise to Joshua in Joshua 1:1–5?
- Who does Joshua encounter in Joshua 5:13–15? With what New Testament individual do many scholars identify him? What is the term for a pre-incarnation appearance of Jesus?
- Does Joshua predict success or failure in Israel’s attempt to measure up to God’s holiness (Josh. 24:19)? Who can faithfully fulfill the covenant?
- How are Christians today tempted to mix the beliefs and practices of false religion and the values of this fallen world with the teaching of God’s Word?
- Why is the church not permitted to take up the sword to spread the gospel?