

**Peace** be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last program we concluded our study of the Torah of Moses, the first book in the Writings of the Prophets. In the holy Torah, we learned how sin entered the world and brought along with it a curse. However, we also saw how the Lord God, in His wonderful plan, promised to send into the world a Savior who would redeem the children of Adam from the curse which sin brought. To move forward with His plan to send the Savior into the world, God called Abraham to leave his father's house and country and move to the faraway land of Canaan. God planned to make of Abraham a new nation through which the Redeemer would descend. After Abraham arrived in the land of Canaan, God appeared to him again and promised him, saying, "*The land of Canaan in which you are now a stranger, I am going to give it to your descendants, as a possession forever!*" Today we will see **how God fulfilled what He promised Abraham** long beforehand, and **delivered the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants**, the Israelites. Canaan is the land that today is called **Israel**.

Last time, in the final chapter of the Torah, we heard how **Moses** died on the mountain overlooking Canaan. After Moses died, **Joshua**, his assistant, became the new leader. Joshua was designated by God to replace Moses. We have seen Joshua several times already. The distinguishing characteristic of Joshua was that he believed all that God promised, even when most of the Israelites did not believe. Joshua was one of the two spies who believed God when the Israelites first arrived at the border of the land of Canaan. The Israelites were ready to throw stones and kill him, simply because he encouraged them to believe the Lord and possess the land of Canaan. Today we will

see that this same Joshua, whom the Israelites rejected forty years earlier was the very one whom God chose to be the leader who would take them into the land of Canaan!

The book of Joshua, which we are reading today, is found in the Holy Scriptures, between the Torah and the Psalms. The book of Joshua recounts how God fulfilled what He had promised Abraham long ago when He said to him, *"I will give to you and your descendants the whole land of Canaan as an everlasting possession!"*

At this point in our chronological study, the Israelites did not yet have a country of their own. They were still wanderers in the desert. Moreover the land of Canaan in which they were to live was full of giants who were mighty warriors. However, the Almighty God planned to expel the inhabitants of Canaan and to destroy them because of their many repulsive sins, and entrust that abundant land to the Israelites.

Now let us see how Joshua and the Israelites entered the land, conquered it and possessed it. In the first chapter, the Scripture says:

*After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, son of Nun, Moses' assistant: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them, to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the great river...to the Great Sea on the west. No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

*"Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: "Go*

*through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own.'*"

After this, the Scriptures tell how Joshua sent **two spies**, saying to them, "Go, look over the land, especially **Jericho**." The two spies went and investigated the city of Jericho and the tall, solid walls which surrounded the city. At night the two spies hid in Jericho, staying in the house of a prostitute named **Rahab**. However, some people of Jericho saw the Israeli spies enter the house of Rahab. They immediately informed the king, telling him, "Some of the Israelites are in the city to spy." The king sent soldiers to the house of Rahab to arrest them, but Rahab hid them on the roof.

After the soldiers left, Rahab called the spies, saying to them, "*I know that the Lord, your God, is the true God. I know too that your God will deliver into your hands my city and all the land of Canaan. All the people of the land are greatly afraid of you, because they have heard how your God opened the Red Sea before you and how He has destroyed all your enemies. I believe that the Lord your God is the true God! Therefore, I ask you to swear to me that when you come and conquer our city, that you will protect me and my family, and deliver us from death!*" The two spies answered, "*When God delivers your city into our hands, we will protect you and all those who are in the house with you.*"

In chapter three, the Scriptures recount how the people of Israel needed to cross the **Jordan River** to enter the land of Canaan, but the river was deep and wide. How could a multitude of two or three million cross the wide river? Ah, that is easy to answer, because the Lord God Almighty who opened a path for them through the Red Sea had not changed! God again opened a path for the Israelites, this time through the Jordan River. Thus, they passed through the midst of the waters on dry ground. All the

Israelites crossed the river, arriving in front of the great city of Jericho. The people of Jericho had closed the gates of the city. No one could enter the city; no one could leave.

In chapter five, the Scriptures tell us that, when Joshua was near Jericho, he lifted his head and saw a man with a drawn sword in his hand standing before him. Joshua asked him, "Are you our friend or our foe?" He answered him, "I am **the commander of the army** of the Lord God!" Joshua fell face down to the ground. Then He who was called the commander of the army of God said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." Joshua did as he was told.

Friends, do you know who was talking with Joshua? It was the Lord Himself who was making a brief appearance! We have already seen how God appeared to Abraham as a man and spoke with him, and how He appeared to Moses in the flames of a fire in a bush. And now we see how God appeared to Joshua as a mighty commander holding a sword!

Thus, the Lord God told Joshua,

*"See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Make seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, make all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the soldiers will go up, every man straight in."*

Then the Lord finished speaking to Joshua and left.

Joshua immediately went to the Israelites and told them everything the Lord had commanded him. Then Joshua ordered them to take the ark of the covenant and march

around the city once. But he told them, "Do not say a word until the day I give you the command to shout. Then you can shout." After they had marched around the city one time, they went back to the camp and spent the night there. On the second day, they marched around the city once and returned to camp. This is what they did for the first six days.

But on the seventh day, at daybreak they arose and marched around the city seven times. After they had circled the city the seventh time, the priests sounded the trumpet blast. Then Joshua commanded the multitude, *"Shout! for the Lord has given you the city!"*

When the Israelites heard the trumpet sound, they shouted a great shout, and the walls around the city collapsed! The men of Israel then entered the city, every man going straight in. Thus we see how Joshua and the Israelites conquered the first city in the land of Canaan. On that day all the people of Jericho died, except Rahab and her family, just as the two spies had promised her. The house of Rahab did not collapse, because she had turned from idols and placed her trust in the God of Israel.

Why were Joshua and the Israelites able to conquer that heavily fortified city and enter the land which God had promised them? They conquered it because they **believed** the Word of God. God is with those who believe His Word. Why did Rahab not die with the people of Jericho when the city fell? She survived because she did not stop at merely being amazed by God's power; she **believed** Him to the point of taking sides with the people of God. That is what the Scripture declares when it says:

*"By **faith** the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days. By **faith** the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient....And **without faith it is impossible to please God,***

*because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*

We wish we could share with you more of the stories contained in the Book of Joshua, but time does not allow us to do so. In summary, you should know that this book describes in detail how God was with Joshua and the Israelites, and how He delivered to them the land of Canaan, city by city, just as He had promised. Thus, in chapter twenty-one, the Scripture says: *"God gave the Israelites all the land!...God gave them rest on every side!...God handed all their enemies over to them!"*

Friends, did God fulfil what He had promised Abraham and his descendants long beforehand? Did God give the land of Canaan to the Israelites as He said He would? Yes He did! God is faithful to keep His covenants! Everything He promises, He will do, even if man thinks He is slow in doing so. The Lord God longed to be gracious to the children of Israel and give them the plentiful land of Canaan, but He was waiting for them to trust Him. As we saw, the Israelites **wasted many years before they began to believe** what God had promised them. Their parents did not inherit the blessings of the land of Canaan, because they did not believe the promises of God.

How about you? Do you believe God? We are not asking you if you believe in the existence of God or in the oneness of God. The devil himself knows that God exists and that God is One! The question you must answer today is this: Do you believe **God Himself**? Do you **love** Him? Do you trust **the Word of God** with all your heart? Do you **know** what God has reserved for those who believe Him? Do you **possess** the everlasting life and the Holy Spirit, which God gives to every person who believes His Good News? Most of the children of Adam believe that God exists. Yet, sadly, those who **know** and **believe** the great and precious promises of God are few. Listening friend, God loves you and wants to bless you beyond what you can even imagine, but

you must **know** His word, **believe** it and **receive** it! Concerning this, the Holy Scripture declares:

*"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him." "We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through **faith and patience** inherit what **has** been promised!"*

Thank you for listening...God bless you as you consider this exhortation from the Word of God:

*"We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised!"*

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