

# OUR GOD'S FAILURES & FAITHFULNESS

## STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Part 2 — “Joshua & the Initial Conquest of Canaan” — May 18, 2025

### Introduction: “The Sandals of Leadership”

Josh. 1:9—“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

**Main Point:** God exhorts His people to act in obedient \_\_\_\_\_, in light of His \_\_\_\_\_, strengthened by His \_\_\_\_\_, and with the assurance of His \_\_\_\_\_.

### The Land of Canaan & the Promise of God

1. God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his offspring in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:7-11, 17-21).

- The covenant \_\_\_\_\_ demonstrated that this promise was unilateral and unconditional.
- The covenant anticipated both the Exodus and conquest of Canaan, viewing them as God’s judgement upon evil.
- The territory promised was \_\_\_\_\_, extending from Egypt to Mesopotamia.

2. God reiterated this promise to each of the patriarchs.

- To Abraham once again (Gen. 17:7-8), to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5), and to Jacob (Gen. 35:11-12)

**Key Point:** The Abrahamic Covenant is the foundational promise for Israel’s \_\_\_\_\_ as a people.

### Instructions for the Conquest of Canaan

1. In the Mosaic Covenant, Israel’s faithfulness to God became the condition for their experience of life and blessing in the Promised Land (Exod. 23:20-33).

- God would go before them, but they must \_\_\_\_\_ His Word in faith (vv. 20-22)
- They were to \_\_\_\_\_ the people and their idols. (vv. 23-24)

Deut. 7:2,5—<sup>2</sup> and when the Lord your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them...<sup>5</sup> But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire.

- Failure to heed the Lord’s instructions would ultimately lead to their own \_\_\_\_\_. (vv. 32-33)

Exod. 23:33—“They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

2. Israel was warned by God not to engage in the same abominable practices that were committed by the peoples who dwelt in the land (Lev. 18:1-30).

- The language used of these practices demonstrates the seriousness of God’s warning:
  - “depravity” (Lev. 18:17)—*zimma*—A wicked plan or action; used of harlotry & adultery (metaph. for “idolatry”).
  - “abomination” (Lev. 18:22)—*to’eba*—A disgusting or abhorrent thing; a violation of God’s created order or of His specific ritual/ethical commands.
  - “perversion” (Lev. 18:23)—*tebel*—An unnatural confusion, a pollution that profanes.
- Although these practices had characterized the people of Canaan, they should not be practiced or \_\_\_\_\_ by God’s people.

Lev. 18:26-27—<sup>26</sup> But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you <sup>27</sup> (for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean)...

**3. Israel was warned not to become prideful regarding their eventual conquest of the land (Deut. 9:1-6).**

- The people of Canaan were far \_\_\_\_\_ and more powerful than Israel (vv. 1-3).
- God reminded them that the land was a \_\_\_\_\_ of His grace that they were not deserving of (vv. 4-6).

**Key Point:** These promises and warnings should be understood as exhortations to \_\_\_\_\_ in the Word of the Lord and to order their lives in accordance with it.

**The Initial Conquest of Canaan**

**1. God spoke to Joshua to strengthen him as he prepared to lead Israel into the land (Josh. 1:1-9).**

*They must step out in faith!* (v. 2)

*They must believe God's promises!* (vv. 3-5)

*They must know His Word* (vv. 7-8)

*They must rely on God's presence with them!* (v. 9)

**2. The generation led by Joshua was successful in beginning the conquest of Canaan.**

Josh. 1-5 — Preparation and Covenant Renewal

Josh. 6-8 — The Central Campaign (the fall of Jericho & capture of Ai)

Josh. 9-10 — The Southern Campaign (defeat of the 5 Amorite kings, conquest of S. cities)

Josh. 11-12 — Victory over the N. kings

Josh. 13-21 — The Allotment of the Land (beginning fulfillment of the land promise)

**3. At the end of his life, Joshua spoke to Israel a final time, exhorting them to complete the conquest and to renew their commitment to follow the Lord (Josh. 23-24).**

- He reminded the people of the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (23:5-14)

Josh. 23:5— The Lord your God will push them back before you and drive them out of your sight. And you shall possess their land, just as the Lord your God promised you.

Josh. 23:13—...know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you, but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground that the Lord your God has given you.

- He reminded them that they must remain \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord as he sought to complete the conquest.

Josh. 24:15—And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods 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."

Josh. 24:22-24—<sup>22</sup>Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses."<sup>23</sup> He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel."<sup>24</sup> And the people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey."

**Key Point:** The initial conquest of the land demonstrated that God would \_\_\_\_\_ His Word to His people and that they should therefore continue in faith to complete what they had begun.

**Concluding Thoughts**

- Do we trust in the promises of God \_\_\_\_\_ us?
- Do we know the Word of God \_\_\_\_\_ us?
- Do we believe in the presence of God \_\_\_\_\_ us?

Josh. 1:8-9—<sup>8</sup>This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. <sup>9</sup>Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

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