

MESSIAH IN THE OT

Week 3 – “Especially Jericho”

September 24, 2019

The last words of Moses had been proclaimed to the children of Israel and...

Deut. 34:1 - *Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land....*

Deut. 34:5-6 - *So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. ⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day. (Read Jude 9)*

Moses was a prophet with whom God spoke face-to-face. Moses was a deliverer. Moses disobeyed God and was not allowed to go into the land of promise (Num. 20:10-12; Dt. 32:51-52). Moses died!

Deut. 34:10 - *But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, The people waited and watched for the Greater Prophet (Deut. 18:15) the Greater Deliverer...the Greater Moses. And so the Messianic theme continued.*

Josh. 1:1-2 - *After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: ² “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel.*

Joshua is the first book of the OT that is given the name of a person. In Hebrew Joshua's name is Yehoshua. Yehoshua comes from the root *yasha* meaning "to deliver, save, or rescue". The name Yeshua is a shortened version of the name Yehoshua. In Neh. 8:17 the short form *Yeshua* is used for Joshua (confirmed via blueletterbible). Yeshua ...leading the children of Israel into the land of promise! Yeshua in Hebrew means “the LORD is salvation.” Is this a foreshadowing of the work of THE Messiah – Jesus/Yeshua?

Num. 13:16 - *Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.*

Joshua was chosen as the leader of the group. His name was first listed as Hoshea, meaning “salvation.” Moses called him *Ya-Hoshea* meaning, “Yahweh is salvation/God is salvation.”

We read in Josh. 21:44 that under Joshua, for a short period, the children of Israel experienced rest. In Joshua we're going to grasp a foreshadowing of the greater Joshua – Yeshua/Jesus! We are continuing to understand that the Messianic theme – the promise of the Messiah which remains constant throughout the OT. Throughout the OT there is

the grasping of HOPE for the Promised One Who would come to speak God's word, to deliver, to bring eternal rest - Jesus!

Josh. 1:10 - *Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, ¹¹ 'Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'*

2

Josh. 2:1 - *Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, 'Go, view the land, especially Jericho.' So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.*

Some believers have felt uneasy with the conquests of Canaan. We struggle at times reconciling God's holiness and justice with the presence of evil in this world.

Rom. 1:18 – *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. God's judgment is always righteous!*

Rom. 2:5 – God, in speaking to mankind, declares to those who do not repent of their sin...that the judgment they receive from God is RIGHTEOUS!

We must clearly share with people that no one is innocent. And, we must declare that God is sovereign! He will do what is just because He is just and His actions are always righteous!

Gen. 15:9-21 – when God cut the covenant with Abraham... ¹³ *Then He said to Abram: 'Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land (in Egypt) that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. ¹⁴ And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.'*

God brought them to Egypt to grow the nation of Israel (Gen. 46:26-27), to provide food for the known world (Gen. 50:20), to show His power to Pharaoh (Rom. 9:17), to deliver Gentiles with the Jewish people at the first Passover (Ex. 12:38).

God judged Egypt because of Pharaoh's mocking of God...because of all the Egyptian gods...because of all the idol worship in Egypt. . .

God's judgment of Egypt through the 10 plagues marked the departure of Abraham's descendants from that land.

But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

God's judgment on the Amorites (the Canaanites) because of their wickedness (Deut. 9:5-6) would mark Abraham's descendants' entrance into that land. God's judgment on the Amorites would allow the children of Israel to partially occupy that land.

*Deut. 9:5-6 - It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of **the wickedness of these nations** that the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶ Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.*

Archaeologists have discovered that by this time, after the children of Israel had lived in Egypt for 430 years, the Canaanites had become so hideously debauched, so degenerate in custom and practice, that the judgment of God became imminent.

3

Lev. 18:25 - For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.

God NEVER acts capriciously...He never acts randomly. God, as SOVEREIGN of the universe, reserves the right to be God, doing as He chooses when He wills and with universal authority over His creation.

And so we look at *especially Jericho* as a carefully calculated act with a specific goal in mind. God ordered it (Deut. 7:2) and Joshua carried it out (Josh. 6:21).

Especially Jericho...

Jericho was five miles west of the Jordan River. God is giving the children of Israel the land; they must take responsibility and go in and possess it. Jericho was strategically located as a border city. Jericho was the first city standing in Israel's way to take possession of the land of milk and honey. Additionally, ancient Jericho controlled important migration routes between the north and south, and the east and west within the land of Canaan. Taking Jericho would split the forces of the Canaanites by coming into Canaan in the middle – dividing their communication (Canaanite to Canaanite) and dividing their supply lines. This was a wise military maneuver – directed by our all wise God!

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, 'Go, view the land, especially Jericho.' (Josh. 2:1). The sending of two spies was a reconnaissance mission. They were to check out the topography, food, drinking water, and defenses to overcome during their invasion.

And so we're at the eastern boundary of the land of Canaan, the Promised Land.

Go view the land...especially Jericho...

Jericho was a secure fortress with high, formidable walls. Jericho caused fear, dread, or apprehension – which was intentional on the part of those living within Jericho. Jericho discouraged approach or attack from enemies!

Deut. 9:1 – Moses told the Israelites before they entered the land God had given them that they were to dispossess nations greater and stronger than they were. These nations had cities with high walls reaching up to heaven– basically insurmountable walls.

STUDY TIME:



(Schematic cross-section diagram of the fortification system at Jericho)

What Archaeologists unearthed at Jericho tells us that Jericho was surrounded by a great earthen rampart, or embankment, with a stone retaining wall at its base. The retaining wall was approx. 12-15 feet high. On top of that was a mudbrick wall six feet thick and about 20 to 26 feet high. At the crest of the embankment was a similar mudbrick wall whose base was roughly 46 feet above the ground level outside the retaining wall.

This is what loomed high above the Israelites as they marched around the city each day for seven days.

Humanly speaking, it was impossible for the Israelites to penetrate the impregnable bastion of Jericho.

...especially Jericho....

Within the upper wall was an area of approximately six acres, while the total area of the upper city and fortification system was 50% larger, or about nine acres. Based on the archaeologist's rule of thumb of 200 persons per acre, the population of the upper city would have been about 1,200. However, from excavations carried out by a German team in the first decade of this century, we know that people were also living on the embankment between the upper and lower city walls. In addition, those Canaanites living in surrounding villages would have fled to Jericho for safety. Thus, we can assume that there were several thousand people inside the walls when the Israelites came against the city.

AND, the citizens of Jericho were well prepared for a siege. A bountiful spring provided much water. At the time of the attack, it was harvest time (Josh. 3:15). The citizens had an abundant supply of food. This has been borne out by many large jars full of grain found in the Canaanite homes by John Garstang in his excavation in the 1930s and also by Kenyon. With a plentiful food supply and ample water, the inhabitants of Jericho could have held out for perhaps several years.

Yes indeed -*especially Jericho*....

And God would teach them through Jericho's conquest!

...*especially Jericho*... "Because I have a plan!"

...because the two men sent to Jericho as spies were to meet Rahab, the harlot.

Josh. 2:2-7 - *So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there. So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab.*

Why is a "harlot" highlighted?

Because we continue to read through the OT that the Israelites were used by God as an instrument of blessing for the nations – for the Gentiles (Gen. 18:18) – we need to truly consider Rahab.

God had made a covenant with Israel so that all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). What were the Gentile people in the land of Canaan thinking when they heard of and saw the Jewish people moving through the wilderness with their portable tabernacle – worshipping their God Who revealed Himself in a pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud!

Gen. 12:3 – in speaking to Abram, God said, *through you all the families of the earth will be blessed.* How? Through salvation in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus!

STUDY TIME:

How does Israel blessing the nations look? A few real-life examples...

Joseph was sold to the Midianites and taken down to Egypt.

WHY? God does nothing randomly!!

Gen. 50:20 – Joseph told his brothers, *But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*

The "many people" embraced Jewish people AND MANY GENTILES!!

Remember, the world had been populated by Noah's sons, Shem (Middle East), Ham (Africa), Japheth (Europe)

Gen. 41:57 - *The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.*

Gen. 45:6 – verified the seven-year famine - *For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.*

Ex. 12:38 – mixed multitude (Gentiles) released from captivity in Egypt with the Jews!

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In this *especially Jericho* account we are introduced to Rahab the harlot, a Gentile sinner who, because she had witnessed God's protecting and fighting for Israel, and declared a confession of faith in the one true God...was delivered. Rahab is mentioned 8 times in Scripture (Josh. 2:1, 3; 6:17, 23, 25; Matt. 1:5; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25). And 6 of these times her name is found with a specific descriptive noun – HARLOT. AND – she was – at that time – a HARLOT. Not a past profession – she was a harlot at that time! Is this not God's GRACE in action?

6

Rahab is a Canaanite – a hated people. The Egyptians and the Hittites wrote against them. Historical documentation records that other cultures despised them.

Rahab is a woman. Canaanite culture had a depraved, debased view of women. In reliefs and sculptures, women were depicted as sex objects.

Rahab is a prostitute!

Josh. 2:9-12 - Rahab told the two Israelite spies, *I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹² Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, ¹³ and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.*

GOD had stirred Rahab's heart! Rahab's testimony and her request, all in faith, is confirmed in Heb. 11:31.

Rahab joined God's people. Matt. 1:5-6 - *Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse begot David the king.* From Jesus' genealogy in Matthew we read that Salmon was married to Rahab who gave birth to Boaz who married Ruth who gave birth to Obed who begot Jesse and Jesse begot David

Once again we see how God has used Israel as an instrument of blessing for the WORLD!

God loves to turn things upside down. What is God conveying? The lowest of the low is not beyond His reach...not beyond God's love! God chooses the most unexpected people. And this is foolishness to the world then and now (I Cor. 1:27-29)! Rahab was at the bottom of the social scale; the King of Jericho was at the top. And to whom did God extend mercy? To the prostitute...to the one who was considered the dregs of society...to the bottom of the barrel. Rahab, whose name means "extended," was spared/given the gift of salvation and a relationship with THE King of the universe! Rahab is in the genealogy of Jesus!

...especially Jericho...."I have a plan"

The spy mission under Joshua failed as a mission of military reconnaissance, but it succeeded in God's purpose!

The Red Cord

Josh. 2:15-21 - *Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. ¹⁶ And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." ¹⁷ So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, ¹⁸ unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your*

7

father's household to your own home. ¹⁹ So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰ And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear." ²¹ Then she said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

The "scarlet/crimson cord": the cord, which is *tikvah* in Hebrew, means hope.

The root word means to wait, to look for, to hope, to expect.

The cord, *tikvah*, marks the "hope" which the pact/the oath promised to Rahab.

The cord's scarlet/crimson color would indeed beckon the two spies to Rahab's window – her location on the wall.

The rope in her window was a sign of her deliverance, as she was not destroyed with the rest of Jericho.

On a deeper level, the reddish color at the window recalls the first Passover and the children of Israel's deliverance from death in Egypt (Exodus 12). The instructions which the spies give to Rahab parallel those which God gave to Israel in preparation for the first Passover. Like Israel in Egypt, Rahab is told to mark a portal – a window - with red (lamb's blood on the doorway in Egypt, the scarlet cord at the window in Jericho), to gather her family within her home, and to keep them within the house when destruction comes. God's mercy and forgiveness of Rahab the harlot was signified by a rope of scarlet thread, which becomes a symbol of the blood of Christ.

And do we not see the EXTENT to which God goes in bringing on woman and her father's house to salvation – a people thought seemingly “impossible” to save!?

Can we hear God thinking, “Because I have a plan...I have a plan for you to view this city that I'm telling you to conquer – but first you must be conquered – your hearts must be given over to Me.”

QUESTIONS:

What was new to you?

What impacted you and WHY?

Where do you see the Messiah?

Which Biblical principles stand out in this text? (GOD IS HOLY AND DEALS WITH SIN! GEN. 12:3; GEN. 18:18)

Do you have concerns/issues with this text?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread the handout with the Bible references.

Select one teaching from the lesson into which you desire to dig deeper:

Find the cross references in Scripture to that teaching.

Begin to jot down observations about what you're reading in the cross references.

Ask questions and begin to find answers from Scripture.

Share with at least one person what you learned from this lesson.

Read Week 4 when you receive it.