

History of Salvation 7

ENTERING THE PROMISED LAND



Entering the Promised Land

Moses is succeeded by Joshua as leader of Israel. *Joshua* is a bridge between the Pentateuch & the rest of the Old Testament. Joshua leads the people across the Jordan & fights the Canaanite kings, claiming much of the land God promised first to Abraham & again to Moses & the Israelites.

The people who have grown up in the desert cross the Jordan river to enter the promised land. A type of baptism.

The Ark leads. When priests' feet touch the Jordan it dries & they all cross. As the Israelites were led out of Egypt across the dry bed of the Red Sea, led by the pillar of cloud, the presence of God, so Joshua leads the people across the dry land of the Jordan, behind the Ark of God's presence. Their crossing takes place in the same month as the Exodus and, as with Exodus, they're circumcised and celebrate the Passover.

Renew covenant with God. Manna ends.

The Ark of the Covenant is crucial. It is a symbol of God's election of Israel as His chosen people. The Ark contained signs of God's covenant with Moses (the tablets of the Law, the staff of Aaron, some manna). It was God's dwelling place, the sign of His presence among the Israelites.

Joshua says: "This is how you will know that there is a living God in your midst...The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of the whole earth will precede you into the Jordan" (Jos 3:10-11).



Entering the Promised Land: Joshua

- You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for 6 days. And seven priests shall bear 7 trumpets of rams' horns before the ark; & on the 7th day you shall march around the city 7 times, the priests blowing the trumpets. And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout; & the wall of the city will fall down flat." (Js 6)
- Emblematic of the Israelites' conquest of the Promised Land. At every stage it was won, not by military might, but by priestly & religious means. Victories are God's, the Israelites obey.
- Survivors: Rahab (a prostitute who helps the Israelites) & her family. She married an Israelite & became an ancestor of King David & Christ (Mt 1:5).
- Joshua renews covenant & reads the law to them all.
- Conquests continue & the people are largely faithful during Joshua's life. The heads of all the tribes swear to serve God. Joshua dies. Once these elders die Israel begins to lapse again.
- Violence/genocide: Israel's faith wasn't strong enough for them to co-exist with idolaters in Canaan. (Dt 20:16-18), one evil consequence of Israel's lack of faith.
- Joshua tells them to be faithful & not to intermarry with outsiders or join them.
- Death of Joshua.



The Twelve Tribes

God says he will gain the rest of the land, and in the meantime tells Joshua to divide up what they have between some tribes. Division of the land among the tribes.

The Israelites don't actually drive everyone out and some foreigners do still co-exist.



The Canaanites

- At the time of Joshua's death, Israel had conquered much, but not all, of the promised land.
- God had ordered Israel to drive out all the inhabitants of Canaan and to destroy all their idols. If any Canaanites were permitted to remain, God warned, they would become "as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides....and I will treat you as I had intended to treat them" (Nm 33:55-56).
- How could God permit the Israelites to wage genocide against the peoples living in the Promised Land? Mass murder is not God's way. What we see is a reluctant concession, God's sorrowful accommodation to Israel's spiritual weakness.
- Later, under the monarchy of David & Solomon & word of the prophets, Israel's true character will be revealed: a people living among the nations as a sign of God's providence & wisdom, a people sent to teach & convert the nations to the ways of the living God.
- But at this early stage, God knew that His chosen children weren't ready, spiritually or morally, to live among the idolatrous pagans across the Jordan. He knew they could never live among them without succumbing to idolatry themselves.



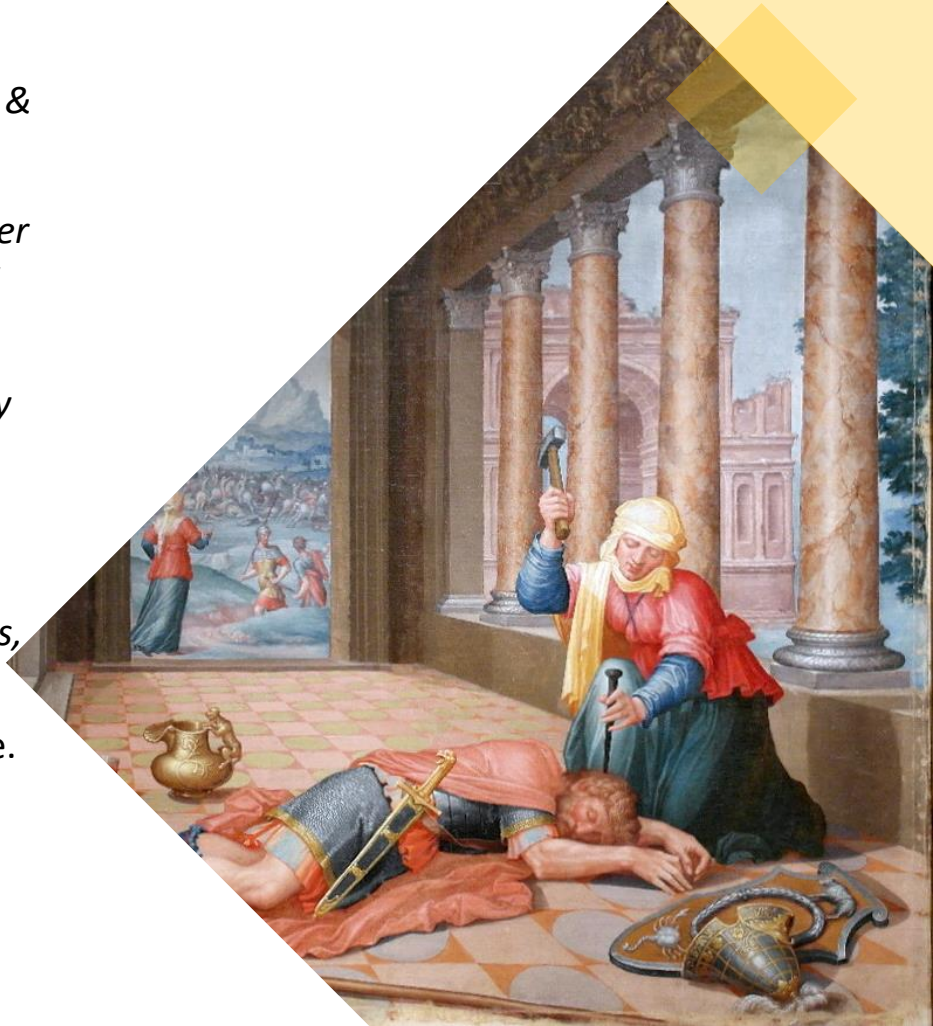
Reading *Judges*

- Israelites fail to complete the conquest. Others keep living there.
- New generation who never knew desert or Joshua & the elders, etc arises, & turn to idolatry.

Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them. And yet they did not listen to their judges ... they soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, & they did not do so. Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, & he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted & oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they turned back & behaved worse than their fathers, going after other gods ... they did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; & he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, & have not obeyed my voice, I will not henceforth drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, that by them I may test Israel, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their fathers did, or not." So the LORD left those nations, not driving them out at once, & he did not give them into the power of Joshua.

So the people of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, & the Jebusites; & they took their daughters to themselves for wives, & their own daughters they gave to their sons; & they served their gods.

- The pattern throughout Judges. Disobedience, defeat & oppression, repentance, deliverance. Repeat. Lesson: Success comes from God.
- Some judges: Deborah, Gideon, Samson
- End of Judges: 'In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes'.



Reading the Book of *Ruth*

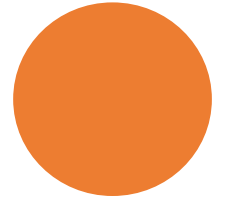
In the midst of the corruption & weakness of His people, God continues unfolding His saving plan. Beneath the big political & military events of Israel's history, God works quietly to fulfill His promises.

During Joshua's conquest of the Promised Land, God used Rahab (a pagan, a woman & a prostitute) to ensure the success of His plan. During the time of the judges, God turns to a pagan woman, the servant girl Ruth, to advance the objectives of His saving plan.

- Naomi: a widow from Bethlehem living in Moab.
- Ruth: a Moabite. Naomi's widowed daughter-in-law.
- Ruth returns to Bethlehem with Naomi. Rahab had the faith to recognize the Israelites' God as the true God. Ruth vows herself to the Israelites' God, using covenantal language - "Your people shall be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16).
- Ruth marries Boaz & is the great-grandmother of King David.

Boaz: a righteous man from Bethlehem, the son of Rahab. Ruth bears Boaz a son, Obed, who becomes the father of Jesse. "Jesse became the father of David" (Ruth 4:17,22). This is the first mention of David in the Bible.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/ruth/> (7.11 mins)





Samuel: Bad Times

- Samuel is born in a time of political and moral chaos.
- Israel falls into anarchy: 'Every man did what was right in his own eyes' (Jg 21:25).
- Levites become mercenary.
- Israelites saw something had to be done, but instead of turning back to God, they decided that they needed a king like other nations.
- The high priest Eli, & the Ark, are at Shiloh, the main place of worship. Israel's infidelity & the corruption of the priesthood, is punished by an attack of the Philistines, who kill 4,000 Israelites, including Eli's sons, Hophni & Phineas, & carry off the Ark of the Covenant. Upon hearing of the Ark's theft, Eli topples back in his chair & dies.
- Eli is succeeded by Samuel, born in answer to a barren woman's prayers & consecrated to God.
- Samuel 1:
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-samuel/> (7.18 mins)

Samuel



- Samuel's mother, Hannah, prepares the way for Mary, the mother of Jesus (CCC, 489). Hannah describes herself as the Lord's "handmaid," using the same term that Mary will use in vowing to bear Jesus (1 Sam 1:11,16; Lk 1:38).
- Parallels between Exultets of Hannah and Mary (1 Sam 2:1-10; Lk 1:46-55).
- Samuel becomes prophet of the Lord, the last Judge – leader of Israel & prophet, victories over Philistines. Great leadership.
- The Philistines suffer curses wherever the stolen Ark goes so after 7 months they return it.
- Samuel leads people in return to God, put away idols, sacrifice, etc.
- When Samuel is old, he appoints his sons as judges. They take bribes & pervert justice (1 Sam 8:3). The people demand a king.
- Samuel disapproves but prays about it.
- Samuel anoints Saul
- Saul defeats the Ammonites
- Saul stuffs up. Saul's wars. Saul is rejected.
- The anointing of David
- The establishment of the eternal kingdom of David, which occupies the rest of the Bible - including the New Testament - is prepared by Samuel.