

=THE LIFE OF JOSHUA=

Lesson 3

Joshua—Now in Canaan

AIM: to teach my pupils the type of life they are to live after becoming Christians and to show them that just being saved is not enough. We should look to greater victories, even though we are in the Promised Land.

POINT OF CONTACT: Bring twelve stones. If you have as many as twelve in your class, give a stone to each of the pupils. Have them come and stack the stones in a pile. If there are not twelve in your class, bring twelve stones and stack them yourself as you start teaching. Tell the pupils that you will explain later what these twelve stones mean. Actually, 24 stones stacked in two piles of twelve each might even be better. Later in the lesson we will explain the purpose of these piles of stones.

INTRODUCTION: The Jews have crossed over the Jordan River. Joshua has reminded them to follow the ark of the covenant through the waters. (Notice Joshua 3:14-17 for this story.) The crossing of the Jordan represents conversion. The land of promise represents the Christian life. By faith, the people have crossed Jordan. It was all a work of God, as is salvation. However, the waters parted only when the people put their feet in the water, which means that though salvation is a work all of God, the work is not done until we have placed our faith in what God has done for us. Far too many people have the idea that just becoming a Christian is all there is to the Christian life. Actually, it is just the beginning. Yes, it does settle our eternal destiny when we trust the Saviour. We are going to Heaven, but there is much more to the Christian life than that! Let us notice what the Israelites did upon their entrance into the Promised Land.

- I. JUST WHAT REALLY HAPPENED? See Joshua 4:1. It had been so long since they had set out for the Promised Land from the land of Egypt that it must have been difficult for them to realize they were in the Promised Land. When a person is saved, he oftentimes does not really understand all the implications of conversion or of the Divine involvements in what he has done. Of course, the all-important thing is that he came to the Lord in simple faith, acknowledged his lost condition and his sin, and accepted Christ as his Saviour from sin and its results. In spite of that, the person does not really realize the vast workings of God and the far-reaching transactions that are brought to pass in his heart.

Just what does happen when a person is saved? He enters into a new life; that is, he is born again. His sins are forgiven. His name is written in Heaven. He now has a new nature, the very nature of Christ, living in him.

- II. THE MAKING OF TWO MEMORIALS. Read about this in Joshua 4:1-9, 19-24. As soon as they entered into the Promised Land, they set up these two memorials. Twelve stones were placed in the Jordan River to be covered by the waters, and twelve stones were placed in Gilgal. These stones represent two things a Christian should do immediately upon being saved:
  1. They placed a memorial in the water. This, no doubt, pictures our immediate willingness to let our salvation be known by New Testament baptism.
  2. After they put twelve stones in the water, they then put twelve stones in Gilgal as a memorial. This pictures the second memorial which God gave to the church, and that is the Lord's Supper.

As soon as we cross the Jordan we are to have a water memorial. Teacher, stress this to every child. These twelve stones represent the fact that the Jews are buried with Christ. Each stone represents one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the stones collectively represent all of Israel. They are now in a new land. Upon entering that new land, they immersed themselves (by the twelve stones) in water. Teach what baptism means: (1) It is an outward expression of an inward experience. It is like an x-ray or fluoroscope. It shows outwardly what is going on inwardly. (2) It is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (3) It is identifying ourselves with the death of Christ. (4) It is putting on a uniform and letting the world know that we are saved.

It is very interesting that in the Bible, water always follows salvation. It is always the second thing in order. It was on the second day of creation that God spoke of water. The second piece of furniture in the

tabernacle was the laver, which had the water. The second thing that happened to the Jews when leaving Egypt was the crossing of the Red Sea. It is in the second chapter of John that Jesus turned the water into wine. In the opening of the seals in Revelation, the second one has to do with water. Hence, after salvation, a person should be baptized. The twelve stones in the Jordan River symbolize this.

Then Joshua led them to set up a memorial that they could see while they were in the Promised Land. The Jordan River came just one time, but this memorial set up in Gilgal could be seen over and over. This pictures the Lord's Supper. Notice, the Lord's Supper is not to be taken until the Jordan River is crossed (conversion) and the stones have been placed in the river (baptism).

- III. THEY ATE NEW FOOD. See Joshua 5:11, 12. For 40 years they had been eating manna from Heaven. This manna fell from Heaven each morning. The Jews gathered enough each morning for that day. It was simply a vitamin tablet that contained all the necessary minerals and vitamins for health. They could collect only enough manna for each day, except for the day before the Sabbath. On that day they could collect two days' manna, and it would stay fresh. If they collected two days' manna any other day, it would spoil. This pictures the fact that God gives us enough for today; tomorrow we have to have new fellowship with Him and new blessings.

The purpose of the manna is now passed. They are now in the Promised Land. There is no need for manna now. Now they have corn to eat. Why the change from manna to corn? Simply this: Manna was not planted. There was not a seed which had to die. Now that they are in the Promised Land, they are to live resurrected lives, and they are to eat food that comes by resurrection. Hence, they eat corn. This corn represents the fact that once we are in the Promised land (saved), we are to feast on Him Who was buried (planted) and rose, even Jesus, our corn of wheat. The way we feast on Him is to feast on the Bible. When a person is converted, he is to learn the Bible. It is his food. The Bible is called milk, meat, honey, bread, etc.

(Teacher, you might even want to use for a point of contact a portion of the aforementioned foods. You could bring a piece of bread, a small bottle of milk, a small jar of honey, a small portion of meat, etc. and remind the class that the Bible is all of these things to a Christian and that a Christian should live in the Bible.)

- IV. THEY STAYED ARMED, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE NOW IN THE PROMISED LAND. Notice Joshua 4:11-13. These tribes had been given arms, and they stayed armed, even though they were in the Promised Land. To be sure, they fought battles before entering the Promised Land, but there still would be battles inside the Promised Land. The battles of Jericho, Ai, and others faced the children of Israel. Just because one is saved does not mean he has fought all his battles. We must stay armed even though we are saved. The battle still rages.

(Teacher, teach the pupils here about the two natures which war against each other—the old nature and the new nature. Tell them about the Indian who said there was a black dog and a white dog fighting on the inside of him. Someone asked him who won the fight, and he said, “The one I say, “Sic ‘em,’ to!” The war still rages even though a person is saved.)

- V. THEY HAD THE VERY PRESENCE OF CHRIST. See Joshua 5:13-15. This is so interesting. It wasn't until they crossed the Jordan and entered into the Promised Land that the unseen Captain (Jesus Christ Himself) stood by them. Now that they are in the Promised Land, they have the Lord Jesus Himself. Oh, to be sure, they had had the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night on their way to the Promised Land; but now they have His presence.

(Teacher, teach the pupils here that the Holy Spirit comes to indwell a Christian. He is always with us. Ask them if it would help them to live better if the pastor went with them everywhere they went, or if some other person they consider a good Christian were always with them. Remind them that Jesus is

always with them to give them strength, help, encouragement, comfort, etc. Teach them that the moment they got saved, He came in them to live, and He will always be with them.)

- VI. EVEN THE UNGODLY COULD SEE A CHANGE. See Joshua 5:1. This is a great verse! Even their enemies, those who hated them most, could see that God was with them. When a person is saved, it should be obvious to those who see him and know him that God is with him. The change should be a constant testimony to the world.

(Teacher, stress to the pupils that they should go back to the old crowd and try to bring them to Christ, and that their lives should be the kind of lives that would be a testimony to the old crowd.)

CONCLUSION: The priority of the lesson is to teach the pupils that just being saved is not enough. There are new battles to fight, new victories to win, new ground to conquer, new things to do. Salvation is only the beginning of the Christian life. It is just the entering into the Promised Land. The land must be possessed.

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

1. The Israelites placed twelve stones in the \_\_\_\_\_ River.
2. These 12 stones represented the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel.
3. They also represent to us the fact that when a person is saved he should immediately be \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The twelve stones in Gilgal represent the observance of the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When a person is saved, really the battle has just \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The Israelites no longer ate \_\_\_\_\_ from Heaven, but they had \_\_\_\_\_ to eat.
7. This represents the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. When a person is saved, then he immediately has the presence of \_\_\_\_\_ with him.
9. This is pictured by the \_\_\_\_\_, Who stood beside Joshua after entering the Promised Land.
10. Baptism pictures the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
11. Baptism is much like what a medical person would call an \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Even the \_\_\_\_\_ should see a difference in the new Christian.