

We will begin the 8<sup>th</sup> lecture on “An Introduction to the Old Testament.” /Following our studies on the Pentateuch, we will move on to Joshua. The book of Joshua is the first of the Historical Books. /The books of Joshua, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther make up the Historical Books.

/The books are about Israel crossing the Jordan River and settling in the land of Canaan. From there, we enter the period of the judges and the period of kings, and then we see Israel perish, be taken into captivity, and finally return from captivity.

/The book of Joshua is about the Israelites crossing the Jordan River, conquering the land God promised them, and distributing the land, all of which happen after Moses’ death. /God, after the death of Moses, appoints Joshua as Moses’ successor, and he encourages him and gives him courage.

/The land that they claim by crossing the Jordan had already been promised to Abraham. That is why God said, “Be bold and trust in his word, and take the land of Canaan.”

/In Joshua 1, the phrases “God has given you the land” and “Be strong and courageous” appear multiple times. /Joshua, who has been encouraged and comforted by God, crosses the Jordan River with the people of Israel. This is written in chapter 3.

/Much like what happened during the crossing of the Red Sea during the exodus, the Jordan River was cut from flowing when the priests believed in the word of God and stepped into the water, and everyone was able to cross.

/In this way, God took the people of Israel across the river. Joshua 4:24 reads, “so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”

/We need to pay attention to this verse. God performed the miracle of the Jordan River so that all the peoples of the earth would see God’s power and return to him. The Israelites were used as a gateway through which this would happen.

/In Joshua 5, the Israelites, before conquering the land of Canaan, have a ritual to remember their relationship with God. /The most important part of the ritual is conducting circumcisions as God’s people of the covenant and keeping the Passover to remember that God saved them.

/There exist important grounds on which the Israelites cross the Jordan River and conquer the land of Canaan. That is they are the people of Israel and they are people redeemed by God. In Gilgal, the Israelites did two things.

/However, there is another important point. /The people of Israel remembered that it was not up to them to conquer the land, but that it was up to God.

/To remind the people of this, God, in Joshua 5:13, sends his commander, who has his sword drawn, to appear before Joshua. /The first city they had to conquer after crossing the Jordan River was Jericho. But why did the LORD's commander who had a sword drawn suddenly appear to Joshua?

/The commander of the LORD appeared to Joshua sword in hand in order to show them that God is fighting the war to conquer Canaan and that the outcome is in God's hands.

/From Deuteronomy, we learned about the ways to serve God, that we must serve him in the way he wants us to serve him. /The method by which God will hand over the Promised Land to his people is also up to him.

/If we look at the process of conquering the first city of the land of Canaan, we can see the way in which God will conquer the land of Canaan. /The Israelites sent spies to spy on the city of Jericho. Then, the Israelites marched around the city one time everyday for 6 days, and on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, they marched around the city 7 times and blew trumpets.

/How thoroughly God conquers the city of Jericho is revealed in Joshua 6:18. /God orders the Israelites to destroy everything in the city of Jericho, to not take anything from within the city.

/The Hebrew word for this is "charam," which means to completely destroy everything for God. /As God commanded, the people of Israel marched around the city once every day for six days, and on the seventh day, they marched seven times and blew the trumpets. Then the city of Jericho fell.

/They proceeded to destroy everything in the city. Joshua 6:21. Male or female, old and young, oxen, sheep and donkey, were all destroyed by the sword. However, as promised, Rahab the prostitute and her family were saved.

/Hearing about the power of God that brought the people across the Jordan River, Rahab came to believe in God. /She actively assisted the spies, and through them, she wanted to be saved.

/God's work of salvation happens this way. God guides, protects, and gives the land to the Israelites. But the purpose does not lie here. God works so that people of foreign lands will know of God's power, believe in him through the Israelites, and return to him.

/In this way, God saved people from foreign lands. There was, however, an unfortunate event. /Achan, a man from the tribe of Judah, took clothing and gold for himself, when all of it was to be given to God.

/God isn't unaware of what happened. /Because the war was a holy war in which God was victorious, he should receive all the glory. However, Achan put his interests first.

/He stole gold and clothing and hid them as if he was receiving fair payment for winning the war.

/However, conquering Jericho was done completely by God, and we know that it was God who had brought victory. /Thee Israelites, after taking Jericho, go to capture the city of Ai. 7:2

/Joshua thought several thousand men would be enough to conquer Ai. The reason is Ai is a small city. /However, the Israelites fail to capture Ai.

/Through their failure, the people learn that war is in God's hands. /God tells them the reason why they failed. /It is because of Achan's sin.

/God tells the Israelites to take care of Achan's sin and to make themselves clean. /Joshua removes Achan's sin by killing Achan and his family.

/God wanted to plant the Israelites in Canaan as a holy people. /He desired to remove all the factors that could corrupt his holy people. /God didn't want to remove the tribes of Canaan partially, but he wanted them completely gone.

/God told Abraham that he would wait 430 years for the tribes of Canaan to be destroyed. /Because the sin of the people of Canaan was severe, God commanded the people to kill everyone, even children.

/God isn't a cruel God because he gave these orders. The evil of the tribes of Canaan was like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, an evil that could not avoid God's judgment. /They should have completely destroyed Jericho and dedicated it to God, but Achan disobeyed.

/Because of the sin of one individual, all of Israel was put into a difficult place, and they failed to conquer Ai. /After Achan's sin is removed, Joshua and the people of Israel take the city of Ai.

/When the Israelites trust God and move forward according to his way, they win the war and receive God's blessings. /Carried away by the news of victory, Joshua and the Israelites make another mistake.

/We learn about it in Joshua 9, that the Israelites make a covenant with the people of Gibeon. /The Gibeonites, claiming they are not from the land of Canaan but from a faraway land, deceive Joshua and make a covenant with him.

/According to God's commands, the people of Israel must not make a covenant with foreign people. /If they were to make a covenant, Joshua should have asked God about it.

/However, Joshua didn't pray before he made a covenant with the Gibeonites, so he could not conquer their land. /We need to look for God's will, asking him and moving forward

according to his word, in order for us to be victorious and blessed. But if we trust ourselves and ignore God's word, we will repeat our mistakes.

/In spite of Israel's mistakes, God helps the Israelites conquer the remaining land. /In Joshua 11 and 12, we learn about Israel's conquests of kings and the land of Canaan.

/Their conquest of Canaan was not yet complete, but the Israelites believed that God would give them the land. From chapter 13, we see the land being distributed among the twelve tribes.

/Whoever believes in the promise and obeys in conquest will receive the land that is distributed. /In Joshua 21:43 and forward, God says he will give them the land that is distributed.

/Verse 43 says, "Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there."

/Verse 45 says, "Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass."

/The conquest of Canaan was not yet complete, but from God's point of view, he had already fulfilled what was said. /From God's perspective, God always fulfills what he says.

/If there remains something that isn't fulfilled, it isn't because of God's lack of power but because of the Israelites' disobedience. /Due to Achan's sin and Joshua's mistake, some portions of Canaan were not taken.

/Some portions of the land were distributed but not yet conquered. /While this is happening, Joshua, like Moses, dies. /Before they crossed the Jordan River, before they conquered the Promised Land, Moses taught the Israelites. Before Joshua dies, when there is still some land left, he admonishes the people of Israel.

/This is explained in the last part of the book of Joshua, from chapters 22 to 24. /The most important message is on how they are to conquer the remaining land. Joshua 23:5 says, "And you shall possess their land, just as the LORD your God promised you."

/Joshua 23:6 continues, "Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left,"

/By trusting in God's word and being obedient, the people can solve the problem of the unconquered land. /To remind the people of this, Joshua, at Shechem, makes a covenant with the Israelites with the Book of the Law of God.

/The making of the covenant is recorded starting from 24:25. /Verse 26 says, “And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. The covenant was made with the Israelites.”

/Through Joshua, we see how God uses Joshua, how he guides the Israelites to victory in war, and how he gave them most of the Promised Land.

/Then how will they conquer the remaining land? /The conquest of the remaining land is written in Judges. /Judges 1 talks about this conquest.

/Because the conquest of the land of Canaan is a holy war, the people must always fear God and begin by asking God. /This is the way in which the Israelites fight the war, and this war is called a “holy war.”

/It is a war fought by God. /Judges 1:1 has details about this kind of war. /The Israelites asked God who was to go first to fight. God answered by saying that Judah must go first, and that Judah will win the war.

/The tribe of Judah attacked and conquered Bezek and Jerusalem. /The tribe of Judah’s conquest may seem to be a success, but it wasn’t the case. /Judges 1:19 tells us that the LORD was with Judah as they took possession of the hill country, but Judah could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because these inhabitants had iron chariots.

/Because God was with Judah, they were able to drive out the people of the hills, but they could not drive out the people of the plain. /Did the tribe of Judah fail because God was not with them on the plain?

/No. Judah feared the enemy’s chariots of iron. They did not know that God that was with them, so they lost the war. /This is a problem of Israel’s ancestors, but it is also their current problem.

/Rather than fearing God who is the Lord of war, they feared the chariots of iron that were real before their eyes. /Judges 1:21 says that the tribe of Benjamin was called to conquer the rest of Jerusalem, but they couldn’t. /Benjamin could not drive out the Jebusites.

/Then how did the tribe of Joseph conquer the land they were given? /1:22 is about the house of Joseph’s conquest of Bethel. /The tribe of Joseph is about to conquer Bethel. /However, they do not completely conquer them.

/Why did this happen? /It happened because through human ways, the tribe of Joseph held hands with the people of Bethel to make a covenant. /In verse 24, the spies approach a man coming out of the city. /They make a deal with this person from Bethel, promising him that they will deal kindly with him.

/Bethel was conquered because of this covenant, but because they let the man and his family live, the man and the family went to another region and raised another city. /In appearance, this conquest is similar to the conquest of Jericho, but the results were different.

/The spies at Jericho did not make a covenant with the people of Jericho. /They simply agreed to Rahab's request. However, when they were conquering Bethel, the tribe of Joseph first asked to make a covenant, and they end up paying for their part of the covenant.

/What is the result? /They may seem to have conquered the land, but they haven't completely taken it. /We also learn about the other tribes' conquests.

/Manasseh, Ephraim, and Zebulun could not drive out the people of Canaan, but instead, they lived with them. /At first, the war of conquest seemed to go well, but in the end, they fail to take the remaining land.

/In Judges 2, an angel of the LORD appears and assesses their conquest. /The angel says that God is giving them the land according to the covenant, but the Israelites have gone against the covenant by making a covenant with the people of Canaan.

/God is telling them that because they made a covenant with the people of Canaan instead of going forward blamelessly in their faith in God, they will fail in their conquest.

/The Israelites failed to conquer the remaining land, and they are failing in their relationship with God. /Judges 2:11 to 3:6 explain that the main cause of their failure is their failure in their relationship with God.

/The people of Israel served Baal. /As they do this, God hands them over to the people of Canaan. /Suffering in their hardship, the Israelites cry out to God to save them.

/God has mercy on the people, and he raises up deliverers known as judges. /Through these judges whom God has raised up, the Israelites receive salvation. But once life becomes livable, the people return to Baal and Astharoth.

/The introduction to the book of Judges shows us how the main message will proceed. /Because Israel forsook God and did not obey the word, God will not give them the remainder of the land.

/Judges 3:5-6 summarize the introduction. /Israel's descendants lived with the people of Canaan, took their daughters as wives, gave their daughters to marry their sons, and accepted their gods.

/This is something that God strictly forbade through Moses. /The introduction to the book of Judges, which is Judges 1:1 to 3:6, tells us why the Israelites failed to conquer the

remaining portion of the land. The reason for their failure is their failure in their relationship with God.

/This applies to our lives in the same way. /If we believe in God's word and obey, we will be happy in God who is in control of life and death and in control of life's ups and downs. /But if we trust our human power, if we walk in worldly ways, we will fail even though it seems like we will succeed.

/We think that our effort and thoughts will bring us success, but it cannot be. /Through the story of the judges, God explains to them in detail. /By raising Othniel as judge, God delivers Israel.

/In spite of this, the Israelites once again do what is evil in the sight of God. /God judges the Israelites through the king of Moab. /In their misery, the people cry out to God again.

/God raises up Ehud as judge and deliverer. /Ehud is left-handed. /He is not a normal person. /It may be that he had a disabled right hand. /However, God chooses him and delivers Israel.

/Shamgar is introduced in verse 31. /He isn't a famous person, but with an ox goad, he saves the Israelites from the Philistines. /If the people trust in God alone, God will save them through any person.

/Therefore the people of Israel must trust in God alone. /However, in chapter 4, we see that they continue to betray God. /Using the kings of Canaan, God again judges them.

/God raises up Deborah, a prophetess, for the people. /In a male-centered society, God uses a woman to save Israel. /Deborah the prophetess appoints Barak as general of the army.

/Barak was not a man of courage. /He says that Deborah must go with him in order for them to fight the war. /Deborah says that Barak will win the war, but he will not receive glory.

/As Deborah had predicted, Barak won the war, but he did not capture Sisera, the general of the enemy's army. /Instead, a weak foreign woman by the name of Jael kills Sisera. /Jael was a foreign woman, but she kills Sisera who is Israel's enemy. Verse 21.

/How does God work? /He uses two weak women to save Israel. /God in his sovereign power delivers Israel, but Israel continues to live apart from God.

/We can see this in Judges 6:1 in the story of Gideon. /This time, God judges the Israelites by giving them into the hands of the Midianites. /The Israelites cry out to God that he would save them.

/God says he will no longer save the people. /But listening to their pleas, God raises Gideon. /Even though Israel betrays God, God raises up Gideon to save Israel.

/Thank you.