

## Lesson 11– Joshua 2-3

Text: Joshua 2-3

Key Passages:

- Joshua 2:9-11 – The Canaanites had heard about God and were terrified, just as was prophesied.
- Joshua 2:24 – The spies affirmed that the Lord had given the land over to them.
- Joshua 3:14-17 – Just as the generation before them had crossed the Red Sea, so the new generation of Israelites crossed over the Jordan River on the way to the Promised Land.

Main Storyline:

Before they entered Canaan, Joshua sent two men to go into the land and spy it out. They were told to look especially at the city of Jericho (which would be the first city to be taken by the Israelites when they entered Canaan). The two men did as Joshua instructed them. When they arrived at Jericho, they went inside and stayed with a prostitute named Rahab.

Somehow, the king of Jericho heard about the spies from Israel. He sent word to Rahab, ordering her to bring the Israelite spies out of her house. Rahab, instead of following the king's orders, hid the two spies on her roof in piles of flax that she had laid out on her roof. She lied and told the king that the men had left the city just as the gate was being closed. She said that, if he sent men to chase after them, he would catch them. The king listened to Rahab and sent men out to chase the spies.

After the king's men left, Rahab went up to the spies and told them that she had heard about the Lord and all that He had done. She confessed that she and all of the other Canaanites were terrified because of Him and His people, the Israelites. She begged them to spare her and her family's lives in exchange for her saving their lives. The spies agreed to spare her and her family, as long as she met two conditions. First, everyone to be saved was to be gathered into her house; nobody outside of her house would survive. Second, Rahab was to tie a scarlet thread in her window to identify her house. Rahab agreed to the conditions, and she helped the spies escape out of the city by letting them down a rope out her window (her house was built on the city wall).

The spies left Jericho and spent three days in the mountains while they waited for the king's men to stop looking for them. After the three days, they left the mountains and went back to the eastern side of the Jordan River, where the rest of the Israelites were camped. There, they told Joshua about what they had seen and what had happened to them. In contrast to the first set of spies that were sent into Canaan (Numbers 13-14), they told Joshua that the Lord had given them the land.

Three days after he had given the warning to prepare to cross the Jordan River (Joshua 1), Joshua went through the camp with specific instruction for the Israelites. He told them that the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant (God) would lead them, as the Israelites had not been there before. God told Joshua that He would begin exalting him that day. He said that when the toes of the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant touched the waters of the Jordan, He would stop the water from flowing. The Israelites followed Joshua's and God's commandments, and, just as God said, the water of the Jordan River was stopped. The priests carrying the Ark stayed in the center of the river while the rest of the Israelites crossed over on dry land.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) There is none "too bad" to turn and obey God, or to be used by Him (Matthew 1:5).
- 2.) Sins of the penitent, righteous one are overlooked by God (compare to others who sinned).
- 3.) True belief will be evidenced by works (James 2:20-26, Hebrews 11:31).
- 4.) Prophecies of God will always come true (see Exodus 15:14-16 and Deuteronomy 2:25).
- 5.) Even when a nation has been judged by God, individuals within that nation can be saved.