



COGNWM Youth Bible Lesson – Lesson 7

Israel Enters the Promised Land

God led the Israelites forty years through the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula. During those years, the adult generation which had rebelled against God by fearing to enter Canaan, had died. Moses, Joshua and Caleb, however, were still alive. Now, another generation had grown and it was time to enter the Promised Land.

You may remember from your last lesson that the Israelites defeated the giant Og, and his army. Also, many of the Israelite men were punished for marrying the Moabite and Midianite women, and taking part in their sinful practices.

The time had come for God to punish the Midianites because they had led many of the Israelites into idolatry. Moses ordered his officers to choose a thousand men from each tribe to fight against the Midianites.

After the men were chosen, the small army of Israelites began their march towards the Midianite camp. The Midianite spies who were watching Israel quickly reported this to the five rulers of Midian.

In the meantime, scouts ran hurriedly into the Israelite camp with news that the Medianite army was fast approaching. “There are thousands of soldiers coming!” the scouts shouted. “Their army is much larger than our own!”

As the two armies came closer and closer, the Midianite army suddenly rushed towards the oncoming Israelites. They were trying to quickly surround the Israelites. Then, at Joshua’s command, trumpets were blown, signaling for the army of Israel to attack the enemy. The Israelites moved much faster than the Midianites and surrounded them first.

Even though the Israelites were far outnumbered, they quickly killed all of the Midianite soldiers (Numbers. 31:7-12).

Afterwards, the men who had gone to battle were not allowed to enter the camp for seven days.

What did the Israelites soldiers have to do during the seven days? (Number 31:21-24). _____

This was done so that harmful diseases would not be brought into the camp of Israel. God wanted Israel to obey the laws of health. It is very important for us to obey good health laws, too. Can you think of things we should do, so that we will be healthy? If so, write them on the lines below. _____

Later, a count was taken of all the men who had gone to battle. Not one Israelite has been hurt or killed.

The area east of the Jordan River had now been conquered by the Israelites. Much of the land in this area was dry, but there were some parts suitable for grazing cattle and sheep.

Leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe Manasseh came to Moses with a very special request. They asked if they could live in the land east of the Jordan River. They thought it was good land for grazing their animals.

Moses was shocked when he heard their request. Moses feared that these tribes were rebelling against crossing the Jordan River and entering the land of Canaan. Moses promptly reminded them of what happened to their forefathers who had rebelled.

What was the answer from the leaders of the Reubenites and Gadites? (Number 32:16-18). _____

Moses agreed, and gave them permission to settle on the eastern side of the river. So, the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh soon set out to rebuilt the broken buildings and houses that had been destroyed in the earlier battles. They also worked very hard to restore many of the broken shelters and corrals for their animals (Numbers 32:34-42).

During the time that the Israelites were camped on the east side of the Jordan River, God, through Moses, gave more instructions to the Israelites. Moses told the Israelites that when they entered the land of Canaan, their duty would be to kill all the people who lived there. Also, they were to destroy all idols and pagan altars (Numbers 33:50-53).

Why did God want Israel to do this? What did God say would happen to the Israelites if they spared any Canaanites? Read Numbers 33:55 and fill in the blanks.

“But if ye will not _____ the _____ of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that _____ which ye let _____ of them shall be _____ in your eyes, and _____ in your sides, and shall _____ you in the _____ wherein ye dwell.”

God did not want any Canaanites in the same land as the Israelites. He knew that they would lead the Israelites into serving false gods.

The land of Canaan was to be divided among the nine and one-half tribes, according to the amount of people in each tribe.

Moses was instructed by God to choose a group of men to help divide the land. He also gave forty-eight towns to the Levites, because they were not to inherit any land (Numbers 34).

Six of these towns would become “cities of refuge.” These special towns were for the protection of those who accidentally killed a person. If they fled to a city of refuge, they would be safe from angry relatives or friends who might want to kill them.

Moses reminded the people of what had happened since they left Mt. Sinai. Moses also told them that he would not be allowed to enter Canaan because of his disobedience in striking the rock. However, God would allow him to view the land from a high mountain.

The Israelites were told that God would deal harshly with them if they broke His commandments. But, he would also be merciful to them, and never forsake them if they observed His laws.

The Israelites were to observe the weekly and annual Sabbaths. These days were to be kept by all generations forever.

Today, those in God’s Church keep the weekly and annual Sabbaths, too.

On the lines below, list the seven annual festivals found in Lev. 23.

Laws such as tithing, letting the land rest during the seventh year, and rules for civil government were also given by God through Moses.

After Moses had finished speaking to the people, he brought Joshua to stand with him in front of everyone and appointed Joshua to be the one to lead Israel into the Promised Land. Read what Moses said to Joshua in Deuteronomy 31:7 and fill in the blanks.

“Be _____ and of good _____: for _____ must go with this _____ unto the _____ which the _____ hath sworn unto their _____ to give them; and _____ shalt cause them to _____ it.”

God then called for Moses and Joshua to come before Him in the Tabernacle. When they had entered the Tabernacle, God appeared to them in a pillar of a cloud. He told them that not long after Moses’ death, the people of Israel would once again turn from obeying God.

Moses wrote a song from the words that God had spoken, and it was to be sung by the children of Israel as a reminder of God’s promises. When Moses had finished teaching the people the song and had given them final instructions, he prepared to climb Mt. Pisgah, a tall peak near Mt. Nebo. It was from the top of this mountain that he would view Canaan.

Before reaching the very top, Moses told those whom he had taken with him., probably, Joshua, Eleazar and the elders of Israel, not to follow him any farther. They were very sad to see him leave.

From the top of Mt. Pisgah, Moses saw the beautiful land of Canaan. After a short time, he turned and waved to the people of Israel and then walked over and down the other side of the mountain. The people of Israel would not see Moses again.

Do You Remember?

1. Which tribes wanted the land on the east side of the Jordan River?

2. Which tribe was not to inherit land? _____

3. What were the cities of refuge? _____

God spoke with Joshua, after the death of Moses, and told him that he would be Israel’s new leader. God promised that He would never leave him if he would obey His commandments. Read what God said to Joshua in Joshua 1:5, and fill in the blanks.

“There shall not any _____ be able to _____ before _____ all the days of thy life: as _____ was with _____, so I will

be with thee: I will not _____ thee, nor
_____ thee.”

Joshua was very encouraged to hear these words from God. Joshua then began to assemble the tribes. In three days, they would be crossing the Jordan River. Joshua reminded the tribes of Reuben, Gad and one-half of the tribe of Manasseh of their promise to lead the army of Israel in battle against the Canaanites.

“Remember your promise that you made to Moses,” Joshua said. “Remember that you are to lead the army of Israel with your strongest and bravest fighting men until all Israel is settled in this new land” (Joshua 1:12-15).

Before the Israelites entered Canaan, Joshua sent two spies across the Jordan River to the city of Jericho. Jericho was a major city along one of the trade roads through Canaan. The spies, dressed as Canaanite travelers, walked through the large gateway and into the city. As they looked around the city, they stopped at an inn located on top of one of the outer walls of Jericho. A woman named Rahab invited them in for a meal.

While the men were eating, the sun began to set. This meant the gates of the city would be closed.

The two spies were now trapped inside the city. Suddenly there was a loud knock on the door. It was soldiers who had come to arrest the two Israelites. Rahab quickly led the scouts to the roof where she covered them with stalks of flax.

Rahab told the soldiers that the Israelites had already eaten and left the city. “Go after them, quickly, and you will probably catch them,” she said (Joshua 2:5).

After the soldiers had gone, Rahab helped to lower the men down the wall to safety. But, before the spies left, Rahab made them promise to spare her and her family when the Israelites attacked the city.

“We will spare you and your family if you remain in this inn when we destroy the city,” one of the spies said. “Put a red ribbon in this window so our men will know where you are,” said the other.

After promising Rahab that she and her family would be spared, the two spies returned to the Israelite camp.

Who’s Who

1. _____ became the new leader of the Israelites.
2. Two Israelite _____ were sent to Jericho.
3. _____ helped lower the two spies down the walls of Jericho.

After hearing the report from the two spies, Joshua ordered the Israelites to break camp and move to a place near the Jordan River. It took most of the day to arrive at the river.

It was the springtime and the river had become very deep because of the spring rains. It was impossible for everyone with all their flocks and belongings to cross the river. But God had a special plan.

Early the next morning, Joshua did as God commanded. Joshua told the priest to take the Ark and wade into the water's edge and stop. God would do the rest.

The priests did as they were told and stepped into the Jordan River at the water's edge. Suddenly, the water to their left flowed away, and at the same time, the water on the right stopped flowing. The Israelites then crossed on dry land to the other side of the River.

This was such a fantastic miracle that Joshua chose a man from each tribe to bring a large stone from the river. He then built a monument for the people of Israel. The stones were to be a reminder of the miracle that God had just performed.

The Israelites then moved to a place called Gilgal. While at Gilgal, they kept the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. At this time, the people began living off the produce of the land. Manna, which had been the main food for 40 years, ceased to appear on the day after the Passover. Do you remember what the word "manna" means? _____.

One day while Joshua was out looking at the city of Jericho, he came face to face with a man holding a sword. Joshua boldly walked up to the man and said, "Are you a friend of Israel or an enemy?" The man said he was the commander of the army of God. Joshua realized he was speaking with God, the One who would later become Jesus Christ. He quickly fell face down on the ground.

"What would you ask of me?" Joshua humbly asked.

"Remove your shoes – for where you are standing is holy ground," God replied (Joshua 5:13-14).

God went on to tell Joshua how the Israelites were to destroy the city of Jericho.

The people in the city were very fearful, because they had heard how the Israelites crossed the Jordan River on dry ground. So, no one was going in or out of the city (Joshua 6:1).

The next morning, Joshua rose early to prepare the army of Israel to march on Jericho. God had given very specific instructions as to what Israel was to do. According to God's instructions, all the mighty men of Israel were to march around the walls of Jericho once every day for six days.

Following the army would be seven priests. Each of the priests had a trumpet made from a ram's horn. Behind the priests were the Levites who would carry the Ark.

On the seventh day, they were all to march around Jericho seven times, and the priests were to blow their trumpets. When everyone heard the final blast from the trumpets, they were to give a loud shout!

The Israelites did as they were told, and on the seventh day when they had marched around the city seven times, the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted.

With a great roar, the walls of Jericho came crashing down. The Israelites charged in and conquered the city.

Part of the city was not destroyed. That was the house where Rahab lived. God spared her and her family from harm, because she had helped the two Israelite spies when they were trapped in the city. Rahab had great faith in God to protect her and her family (Heb. 11:31).

The Israelites then collected certain precious metals that were in the city, but they were not allowed to take anything else or they would bring a curse upon Israel. The city of Jericho was then burned.

News of the fall of Jericho spread very quickly (Joshua 6:27). The people of Ai were very fearful that they would soon be conquered by the Israelites. Ai was a much smaller city than Jericho. So, Joshua decided to send only about three thousand men to the city of Ai.

The Israelite soldiers boldly marched towards the city. They were very confident that God would be with them. As they approached the gates of the city, the gates of the city swung open and thousands of Amorite soldiers came rushing down upon them.

The Israelites were so surprised, they began running away from the city. When the Israelites finally regrouped they learned that 36 of their men had been killed by the Amorites.

Joshua was shocked when he heard the news of what had happened. What did he do then?

“And Joshua _____ his _____ , and fell to the _____ upon his _____ before the _____ of the _____ until the eventide, he and the _____ of _____ , and put _____ upon their _____” (Joshua 7:6).

Tearing one’s clothes and placing dust on one’s head was a sign of great sorrow and humility. Many people were very sad about the death of the 36 Israelites.

Joshua then prayed to God. He asked God why He allowed this to happen. What was God’s answer to Joshua’s prayer? Read Joshua 7:11 and summarize what God said on the lines below.

God showed by the casting of lots that a man named Achan had taken some valuables from the city of Jericho. Because of his sin, he was stoned to death by the people of Israel.

God promised to help Israel this time when they went to attack the city of Ai. During the night, Joshua sent troops to hide near the city of Ai. The next morning, he took troops towards the city. Once again, the soldiers in Ai rushed out against the Israelites. As Joshua planned, the Israelites began running away, causing the Amorite army to chase them farther and farther away from the city.

When the Amorites were far enough away, the troops that were hiding near the city attacked and burned it. When the Amorite army saw the flames rising from the city, they turned to race back. But they were cut off by more Israelites who were coming from the city. God brought a great victory for Israel that day (Joshua 8:10-28).

Not long after Ai had been conquered, the people of Israel, led by Joshua, gathered on the slopes of Mt. Ebal, and Mt. Gerizim. Offerings were made to God, and Joshua explained to them the many blessings that would come from obedience to God and curses for disobedience. These laws were also written on stones (Joshua 8:30-35).

One day, Joshua noticed some weary looking travelers coming toward the Israelite camp. They requested to see the leader of the Israelites.

Joshua stepped forward to hear what they had to say. “We are ambassadors from a distant nation,” they said. “We have come a long way to make a treaty with you and your people.”

Joshua asked them to prove they were from a far country. The messengers showed him their belongings which appeared as if they had been on a long journey.

Joshua agreed to make a treaty with them. He shouldn't have done this without consulting God first.

When the messengers left, Joshua sent spies to follow them. After only a few days the spies returned to report to Joshua.

Joshua was angry when he heard that these men had tricked him. They were really Hivites from four neighboring cities. Joshua sent an army to the city of Gibeon, one of the Hivite cities. After speaking with the leaders of the Hivite cities and discussing the matter with the elders of Israel, he decided to keep his agreement (Joshua 9:1-27).

1. Flax _____
2. Monument _____
3. Treaty _____
4. Idol _____

Adoni-zedek, a king of Jerusalem, heard of the treaty between the Israelites and the four Hivite cities. He wanted to punish the Hivites for this, so he gathered a large army from other cities to attack them. When the people of Gibeon heard that a large army was swiftly approaching, they sent messengers to Joshua for help (Joshua 10:4-6).

When Joshua heard the news, he asked God what to do. What did God say to Joshua? "Fear them _____ for I have _____ them into thine _____; there shall _____ a _____ of them stand before _____" (Joshua 10:8).

Once again, God encouraged Joshua by telling him that He would be with Israel.

Joshua assembled the troops and they marched during the night to reach Gibeon. It was dawn when they arrived, and they could see the Canaanite troops preparing to attack the city. Just as the Canaanites were about to attack, the Israelites rushed down on them.

The battle lasted for several hours. Joshua noticed that it wouldn't be long before night would come and many of the Canaanites would escape.

Joshua asked God for help in defeating the Canaanites. Read Joshua's prayer in Joshua 10:12 and fill in the blanks. "Sun _____ thou _____ upon Gibeon; and thou, _____ in the _____ of Aijalon."

God preformed another mighty miracle. The sun stayed in the same place until all the Canaanites were killed.

The Israelites continued to conquer many of the Canaanite armies. God worked miracles to help Israel win their battles.

After much of the land had been conquered, the tribes were divided and each lived in the areas where God wanted them (Joshua, chapters 13-21).

The two and one-half tribes which helped to conquer Canaan were now sent back home across the Jordan. When they returned they began building a large altar of stones near the Jordan River. News quickly reached Joshua and the elders of Israel as to what they were doing.

The elders of Israel went to see the altar and the people from Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh. The elders said to them, “What _____ is this that _____ have _____ against the _____ of _____ to _____ away this day from _____ the Lord, in that ye have _____ you an _____ that ye might _____ this day against the _____?” (Joshua 22:16).

The elders were relieved to hear that the two and one-half tribes were not building an altar to a false god. What was the reply of the Reubenites, Gadites and Manassites” “God _____ that we should _____ against the _____ and _____ this day from _____ the _____” (Joshua 22:29).

Joshua was very old by now, and he called the people of Israel together. He then reminded them that God had fought their battles for them. He also told them that they had inherited a good land, and should continue to keeps God’s commandments. He told them how God brought them from Egypt where they were slaves.

Afterwards, when Joshua had finished speaking, he told the people to return to their homes. Shortly after this Joshua died. He was 110 years old. The people of Israel were very sad because of his death.

The Israelites continued to obey God after the death of Joshua, during the time of the elders.

In our next lesson, we will learn about what happened to the Israelites during the time of the Judges.

