

# Joshua Leads Israel

**Key Verse:** *“The LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.”*  
—Joshua 6:2

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Joshua 5:13-15;*  
*6:1-20*

**WHILE SOME MAY QUESTION** the fairness of Israel’s being given land that was already occupied by other peoples and nations, we must consider the matter from God’s viewpoint. Psalm 24:1 tells us, “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” (*New International Version*) From this and other Scriptures, we understand God has the right to do with the earth as he

pleases. (Ps. 135:6) Much earlier, God had promised this land to Abraham and his posterity. (Gen. 12:1-7) After the Exodus from Egypt, and their subsequent forty-year wilderness journey, the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, confirming God’s power to fulfill his promises.

Giving the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants was partly a judgment on the sinful Canaanites. In Genesis 15:16 God gave a timeframe for the transfer of the land: “In the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” This statement identifies sin as one of the reasons God wrested the land from its former inhabitants. Later, as the Israelites approached the border of the promised land, Moses gave them the same explanation. (Deut. 9:4) Abraham had not inherited the land immediately

because it was not yet time for judgment to fall, nor was there a sufficient number of his seed to possess it. Nevertheless, at the proper time God turned the land over to his chosen people.

After the death of Moses, it was time for the Israelites to cross the Jordan River and enter the land of promise. God selected Joshua to lead this conquest. (Josh. 1:1-4) The Lord reassured Joshua with these powerful words, which we also can claim: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them."—vss. 5,6; Heb. 13:5

After entering Canaan, the covenant of circumcision was renewed according to the instructions of God, thus removing any remaining vestige of reproach from the Israelites' former bondage in Egypt. (Josh. 5:2-9) As Joshua stood before the walls of Jericho, he was approached by an angel of the Lord, holding a sword in his hand and declaring the words found in our Key Verse.

The capture of Jericho was to be accomplished in a peculiar manner. For six days the armed men of Israel were to pass around the city one time each day. They would be followed by priests bearing the ark of the covenant and by other priests blowing trumpets. On the seventh day they would pass around the city seven times, and after a long blast by the trumpets, Joshua would signal for all the people of Israel to give a shout. (Josh. 6:3-21) It required much faith on the part of Joshua to issue such instructions, and faith among the people of Israel to follow such a seemingly senseless plan. Nevertheless, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."—Heb. 11:30

As Israel was faithful to Joshua, let us be faithful to our leader, Christ Jesus, that we may be able to say with the Apostle Paul: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."—Phil. 4:13 ■