

The Book of Joshua

I. The Summons to enter the promised land

A. ***Joshua 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: 2 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them--to the Israelites. 3 I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. 4 Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates--all the Hittite country--to the Great Sea on the west. 5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.***

1. Joshua from Yehowshuwa', [yeh-ho-shoo'-ah;] - Jehovah-saved. The Name Jesus is from this same root.
2. The boundaries are more extensive than previous boundaries (e.g. Deut 3:25) which limited the eastern boundary to the Jordan River. However other earlier texts did allude to Euphrates as the eastern border (e.g Gen 15:18; Dt. 1:7). But the most consistent O.T. description is that Israel must cross the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. At any rate the Hebrew text is difficult here and wonder

II. God's help conditional on faithfulness to the Law

A. ***6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.***

B. Similar exhortations occur in Ex 13 and the Great Shema prayer of Israel:

1. Deut 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

III. Support from Transjordanian Tribes

A. ***10 So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: 11 "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.'" 12 But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-***

tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, 13 "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land.' 14 Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, fully armed, must cross over ahead of your brothers. You are to help your brothers 15 until the LORD gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise." 16 Then they answered Joshua, "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. 18 Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey your words, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!"

- B. Note that the transjordanian tribes are not without virtue or loyalty. Despite this they prefer to live outside the promised land. For us there is a lesson here. Not every un-believer is an obviously wicked or evil person. Some are very nice. But they don't want God, or the things of God. Notice they refer to the Lord YOUR God. Thus those who fail to attain to heaven may be obviously wicked or they may not but what is consistent is that they do not want God. God respects our final choice. This is why there is a hell.

IV. Reconnoitering the crossing point to the Promised Land

A. *2:1 Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there. 2 The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." 3 So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land." 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. 5 At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them." 6 (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.) 7 So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut. 8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof 9 and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. 10 We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. 11 When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. 12 Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign 13 that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death." 14 "Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land." 15 So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. 16 Now she had said to them, "Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way." 17 The men said to her, "This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us 18 unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house. 19 If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him. 20 But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear." 21 "Agreed," she replied. "Let it be as you say." So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window. 22 When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them. 23 Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them. 24*

They said to Joshua, "The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us."

- B. Who was Rahab?
1. She is never mentioned again in the Old Testament as an historical figure, though she or her descendants is/are alluded to (e.g. Job9:13; Psalm 87:4; Ps 89:10; Is 51:9;
 2. The New Testament however has several mentions of her specifically
 - a. Mat 1:5 *Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was **Rahab**, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of King David.*
 - b. James 2:24 *You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.*
 - c. Heb 11:31 *By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.*
- C. In New Testament terms she prefigures the inclusion of the Gentiles who are justified by faith and judged by good works. This story also contains a typological reference to salvation in Christ. Perhaps we can consider her story along these lines:
1. **She is a prostitute.** That is to say she is in bed with many other gods, as were the Gentiles. Christ, like in Hosea 1-3 or in Ez. 16 would take a prostitute for a wife and purify her. Thus she is not favored because she is good. Neither were we better than the next guy, we were saved because we were bad and needed it. *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick"* Mat 9:12
 2. **She welcomes the spies** (v. 1ff) into her home. Likewise, the Gentiles and Jews were called to sit down to table together. Though this was a struggle in the Early Church, by Acts 10 there is a Gentile, Cornelius, who welcomes Peter to his home. Further, it was frequently the Gentiles who welcomed the Gospel more than the Jews, most of whom rejected Jesus.
 3. **Her own king bids her to turn over the spies.** (V. 3ff) She does not do so at the risk of her own life. Later many Gentile Christians would refuse to reject Christ, despite the risk of martyrdom.
 4. **She confesses her faith** (V. 9ff) - in God as would the Gentile converts confess their faith in the God of Israel.
 5. **She seeks salvation** (v. 12ff) - She asks to be spared when God's Judgement falls on the city. Gentiles too sought salvation from the day of

Judgement from Christ.

6. **The Scarlet Cord:** (v. 12ff) She seeks an assurance of salvation through the swearing of an oath. The Latin Word for oath is *sacramentum*. The Scarlet Cord is hung in the window as a sign and an assurance. The red blood of Christ is source, sign and assurance of our salvation.
7. Three days pass before the men reappear in the story. Three days pass before the Savior Jesus reappears.

V. Preparing to Cross the Jordan

A. *3:1 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. 2 After three days the officers went throughout the camp, 3 giving orders to the people: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, who are Levites, carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. 4 Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about a thousand yards between you and the ark; do not go near it." 5 Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you." 6 Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people." So they took it up and went ahead of them.*

B. The Lessons:

1. Don't get ahead of God. Wait for God to lead then follow. Only God can lead you home.
2. Keep perspective and acknowledge God's power and sovereignty
3. Turn away from sin, purify yourselves

VI. Final instructions

A. *7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. 8 Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: 'When you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and stand in the river.'"...13 And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the LORD--the Lord of all the earth--set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap."*

B. Another lesson: You have to wade in the water. You have to risk getting wet (and swept away in the flood waters to see the miracle. You have to step out in faith and trust God.

VII. The Crossing

A. *14 So when the people broke camp (took leave of their tents) to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. 15 Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge,*

16 the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17 The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.

B. Lessons

1. They left their tents behind to enter the promised land.
 - a. James 4:4 *You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*
 - b. Luke 16:13 *"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."*¹⁴ *The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.*
2. The flood stage made crossing impossible. Only God could open the doors. The ark led the way and acted as a door opener
 - a. John 10:7 *Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.*
 - b. John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*
3. In human terms, the priests, God's ministers, lead the way. Here is a liturgical point.
4. Note the waters piled up many miles upstream at the city of Adam. Is it coincidence that the city named after the one by whom the gate was shut, now becomes the place from which the gates are opened. That is looking back. Looking forward, Jesus is the new Adam who opens the gate.
 - a. Rom 5:14 *Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.*
 - b. 1 cor 15:22 *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.*
 - c. 1 Cor 15:45 *So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being" ; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.*
5. The salvation is complete in two senses:

- a. No one even got their toes wet
- b. The waters held back until all who were to be saved had crossed.

VIII. The crossing concludes

A. **4:10** *Now the priests who carried the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything the LORD had commanded Joshua was done by the people, just as Moses had directed Joshua. The people hurried over, 11 and as soon as all of them had crossed, the ark of the LORD and the priests came to the other side while the people watched....15 Then the LORD said to Joshua, 16 "Command the priests carrying the ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan." 17 So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." 18 And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before.*

B. Lesson

- 1. There comes a day when the gates are barred.
 - a. Luke 13:24 *"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. 25 Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' 26 "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' 27 "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' 28 "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out.*
 - b. Mat 25:10 *"But while [the five foolish virgins] were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.*
 - c. Rev 3:7 *"To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.*

IX. Arrival at Gilgal

A. **19** *On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho...5:1* *Now when all the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings along the coast heard how the LORD had dried up the Jordan before the Israelites until we had crossed over, their hearts melted and they no longer had the courage to face the Israelites.*

- B. Lesson:
1. Always remind the devil what the Lord has done for you.

X. The Manna ceases

A. ***10 On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, the Israelites celebrated the Passover. 11 The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. 12 The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate of the produce of Canaan.***

B. Lesson

1. For them the manna brought them over. Now they had made it home and ate the produce of the land. The manna had served its purpose.
2. For us it is the Eucharist which is the manna that gets us over.
 - a. John 6:32 *Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ...35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty....48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ...58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."*

XI. Theophany

A. ***13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" 14 "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" 15 The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.***

Purgations in the Promised Land

We may wonder, if we are seeing the Promised Land as an image of heaven, why are there struggles after entering the land of milk and honey. In our Catholic tradition we are not at a loss in understanding the struggle that ensues. There is a type of purgatory at work here. See flyer. We shall approach the struggle from that perspective.

XII. Siege and instructions at Jericho

A. ***6:1 Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. 2 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. 3 March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. 4 Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. 5 When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in."***

B. Historical look

1. Jericho was a walled city.
2. In fear the people have shut the gates and are walled up inside.
3. The traditional military approach was to lay up siege works and breach the wall.
4. But God instructs that it will fall by prayer and his presence

C. Spiritual look

1. If we allow the image of purgation what do we have here.
2. Jericho represents the human heart of which scripture says:
 - a. Jer 17:9 *More tortuous than all else is the human heart, beyond remedy; who can understand it? I, the LORD, alone probe the mind and test the heart,*
3. The depths of our innermost heart are mysterious to us and resist inspection or change. The final purgations involve coming to grips with our crafty and wily heart. Only God can really do this for us. That is why the ark circles our Jericho and the trumpets announce God's presence.

XIII. The implementation

A. ***6 So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant of the LORD and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it." 7 And he ordered the people, "Advance! March around the city, with the armed guard going ahead of the ark of the LORD." 8 When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the LORD went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the Lord's***

covenant followed them. 9 The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. 10 But Joshua had commanded the people, "Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!" 11 So he had the ark of the LORD carried around the city, circling it once. Then the people returned to camp and spent the night there. 12 Joshua got up early the next morning and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13 The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the LORD and blowing the trumpets. The armed men went ahead of them and the rear guard followed the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets kept sounding. 14 So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

B. Historical

1. No war cry was to be shouted. This was the usual practice to intimidate the people within. Only the trumpets are to sound for six days. In the scriptures trumpets among other things announce the presence and the voice of God. It was to be God, not the power of the people that was to be announced to those within! The ark carried the presence that was announced.
2. Persistence and patience were called for. Six days would have to pass before the walls would be breached.

C. Spiritual -

1. The presence of God is what is announced first to the soul. No shouts, no violence, no force. First the voice of God, then will the walls and defenses begin to crumble.
 - a. Ps 109:21 *But you, O Sovereign LORD, deal well with me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me. For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.*
 - b. Ps 139:23 *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*
2. Patience is called for. There is a process at work.
 - a. Is there "time" in purgatory?

IV. The seventh day

A. *15 On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. 16 The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city!"*

1. Historical

- a. Up to this point the focus has been on announcing God. Now the Israelites are to be involved and raise the battle cry. It is time to

work together with the Lord to take the city

2. Spiritual -
 - a. We are surely involved in the purgation of our hearts. God does not do violence, purge or prune us against our will. We too must shout the battle cry and join in the work. This is just as it is here wherein we must cooperate with the work of God to save us and do our part by receiving and accepting God's work in us.
 - (1) Acts 16:30 *He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household."*
 - (2) Mat 19:16 *And behold, one came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."*

XV. Exceptions

A. 17 The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent. 18 But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. 19 All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the LORD and must go into his treasury."

1. Historical -
 - a. The city was placed under the "ban" that is to say it belonged wholly to God. Nothing was to be kept by the soldiers or Israelites for their own. It was all to be purged. O one was to be left alive.
 - b. We have previously discussed such shocking instructions before and will do so again in class.
 - c. Rahab and her family were to be spared since she had exhibited faith. She had been a prostitute but now was made holy by her act of faith.
2. Spiritual -
 - a. Nothing of our heart is to be withheld. All is to be presented before God for purification. All that is unholy will be purged. No exceptions!
 - b. However, there are aspects of our heart that have already been purified. These former prostitutions have been made right by grace working through faith. This will ne be purged, it will be retained.

XVI. The fulfillment

A. *20 When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city. 21 They devoted the city to the LORD and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it--men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys. 22 Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring her out and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her." 23 So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. They brought out her entire family and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. 24 Then they burned the whole city and everything in it, but they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord's house. 25 But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho--and she lives among the Israelites to this day. 26 At that time Joshua pronounced this solemn oath: "Cursed before the LORD is the man who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho: "At the cost of his firstborn son will he lay its foundations; at the cost of his youngest will he set up its gates." 27 So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.*

B. Historical

1. Here is the actual performance of what was announced.
2. A puzzling historical note is that, despite Joshua's curse, the city would later be rebuilt and it existed in Jesus' time

C. Spiritual -

1. The people worked together with God and carried out the plan. So too with us. We must even now work together with God to purge our hearts of all that is unholy. If this work is incomplete at our death it must be completed in purgatory. That which is holy is to be retained, that which is impure, removed, that which is incomplete or imperfect brought to completion and perfection.

XVII. *7:1 But the Israelites acted unfaithfully in regard to the devoted things ; Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord's anger burned against Israel.*

A. Historical - three of the Israelite leaders help themselves to things placed under the ban. Rather than destroying all the spoils they kept something for themselves. God's anger (wrath) burned.

B. Spiritual - All must be offered to God for healing and holiness, nothing can be retained. In the end, we must *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* (Mat 5:48). *Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.* (James 1:4) Our whole heart is

summoned: *Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!* (Psalm 119:2-3). God promises a healing of our whole heart: *I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.* (Jer 24:7) Until we are thus perfected we cannot behold the face of God but will experience “wrath”

- C. Question? In the Catholic tradition is sin possible in purgatory? Not likely, but perhaps our cooperation and openness to healing is slow and halting at first. This is only speculation.

XVIII. Consequences

A. *2 Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth Aven to the east of Bethel, and told them, "Go up and spy out the region." So the men went up and spied out Ai. 3 When they returned to Joshua, they said, "Not all the people will have to go up against Ai. Send two or three thousand men to take it and do not weary all the people, for only a few men are there." 4 So about three thousand men went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai, 5 who killed about thirty-six of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes. At this the hearts of the people melted and became like water. 6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the LORD, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads. 7 And Joshua said, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan! 8 O Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies? 9 The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?"*

B. Historical -

1. Joshua is clearly befuddled by the loss and wonders how it can be that God would do all he has done and then let them lose. Yet the truth is, he does not see or know the sin that has been committed.

C. Spiritual -

1. Perhaps our biggest sin is that we do not see or know half our sins: *But who can discern my errors? Clear thou me from hidden faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.* (Ps 19:12-13)
2. Just because we don't know or understand the depths of our sin does not mean it fails to cause harm. Indeed, a hidden enemy is far more powerful. The drives within that remain undisclosed and only vaguely grasped have far greater power than things which come to light.

3. Jesus stood before a man possessed and spoke, *"What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many."* (Mk 5:9) Sometimes a demon must be named, disclosed, before it is driven out.
4. This process can be arduous and anxiety provoking but it is necessary.

IX. Exhortation and expurgation -

A. *10 The LORD said to Joshua, "Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? 11 Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions. 12 That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction. 13 "Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, 'Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: That which is devoted is among you, O Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove it. 14 "'In the morning, present yourselves tribe by tribe. The tribe that the LORD takes shall come forward clan by clan; the clan that the LORD takes shall come forward family by family; and the family that the LORD takes shall come forward man by man. 15 He who is caught with the devoted things shall be destroyed by fire, along with all that belongs to him. He has violated the covenant of the LORD and has done a disgraceful thing in Israel!'" 16 Early the next morning Joshua had Israel come forward by tribes, and Judah was taken. 17 The clans of Judah came forward, and he took the Zerahites. He had the clan of the Zerahites come forward by families, and Zimri was taken. 18 Joshua had his family come forward man by man, and Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19 Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give him the praise. Tell me what you have done; do not hide it from me." 20 Achan replied, "It is true! I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: 21 When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath." 22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent, and there it was, hidden in his tent, with the silver underneath. 23 They took the things from the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites and spread them out before the LORD. 24 Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold wedge, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent and all that he had, to the Valley of Achor. 25 Joshua said, "Why have you brought this trouble on us? The LORD will bring trouble on you today." Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. 26 Over Achan they heaped up a large pile of rocks, which remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his fierce anger. Therefore that place has been*

called the Valley of Achor ever since.

B. Historical -

1. A shocking purgation takes place. All those and their households which did not observe the ban are disclosed and killed.
2. Note it is God who discloses. Once this disclosure is made Israel is expected to purge them. They, having been detected make a full disclosure for nothing remains hidden before God.

C. Spiritual -

1. In this case it helps to visualize all the Israel as a collective individual and the persons purged as sinful attitudes and drives.
2. God discloses the problems in our soul.
3. Once this is done, we can articulate our true problem. For example, we have been greedy and grasping, preferring the things of this world to God.
4. Such attitudes must be utterly purged.
5. Ps 69:5 *You know my folly, O God; my guilt is not hidden from you.*
6. Ps 32:1 *Happy the man whose offense is forgiven, whose sin is remitted. 2 O happy the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no guile. 3 I kept it secret and my frame was wasted. I groaned all day long, 4 for night and day your hand was heavy upon me. Indeed my strength was dried up as by the summer's heat. 5 But now I have acknowledged my sins;*
my guilt I did not hide. I said: "I will confess my offense to the Lord." And you, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin.

7. From the Hymn *Dies Irae*

- a. Lo the book exactly worded
- b. Wherein all hath been recorded
- c. Thence shall judgement be awarded

- d. When the judge his seat attaineth
- e. And each hidden deed arraigneth
- f. Nothing unavenged remaineth

XX. The Capture and Destruction of Ai.

- A. **8:1** *Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Take the whole army with you, and go up and attack Ai. For I have delivered into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land. You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king, except that you may carry off their plunder and livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city."...26 Joshua did not draw back the hand that held out his javelin until he had destroyed all who lived in Ai. 27 But Israel did carry off for themselves the livestock and plunder of this city, as the LORD had instructed Joshua. 28 So Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanent heap of ruins, a desolate place to this day. 29 He hung the king of Ai on a tree and left him there until evening. At sunset, Joshua ordered them to take his body from the tree and throw it*

down at the entrance of the city gate. And they raised a large pile of rocks over it, which remains to this day.

XXI. Deception Pass

A. *9:1 Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things--those in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Great Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites)-- 2 they came together to make war against Joshua and Israel. 3 However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4 they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended. 5 The men put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy. 6 Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us." 7 The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "But perhaps you live near us. How then can we make a treaty with you?" 8 "We are your servants," they said to Joshua. But Joshua asked, "Who are you and where do you come from?" 9 They answered: "Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the LORD your God.... 12 This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now see how dry and moldy it is. 13 And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are. And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey." 14 The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD. 15 Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath. 16 Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. 17 So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim. 18 But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel.... 22 Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you deceive us by saying, 'We live a long way from you,' while actually you live near us? 23 You are now under a curse: You will never cease to serve as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God." 24 They answered Joshua,... we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this. 25 We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you." 26 So Joshua saved them from the Israelites, and they did not kill them. 27 That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD at the place the LORD would choose. And that is what they are to this day.*

XXII. Victories from on high

A. *10:1 Now Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai and totally destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and that the people of Gibeon had made a treaty of peace with Israel and were living near them. 2 He and his people were very much alarmed at this,*

because Gibeon was an important city, like one of the royal cities; it was larger than Ai, and all its men were good fighters. 3 So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem appealed to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish and Debir king of Eglon. 4 "Come up and help me attack Gibeon," he said, "because it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites." 5 Then the five kings of the Amorites--the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon--joined forces. They moved up with all their troops and took up positions against Gibeon and attacked it. 6 The Gibeonites then sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: "Do not abandon your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, because all the Amorite kings from the hill country have joined forces against us." 7 So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men. 8 The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you." 9 After an all-night march from Gilgal, Joshua took them by surprise. 10 The LORD threw them into confusion before Israel, who defeated them in a great victory at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. 11 As they fled before Israel on the road down from Beth Horon to Azekah, the LORD hurled large hailstones down on them from the sky, and more of them died from the hailstones than were killed by the swords of the Israelites....22 Joshua said, "Bring those five kings out to me." 23 So they brought the five kings out of the cave--the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon. 24 When they had brought these kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had come with him, "Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came forward and placed their feet on their necks. 25 Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the LORD will do to all the enemies you are going to fight." 26 Then Joshua struck and killed the kings and hung them on five trees, and they were left hanging on the trees until evening. 27 At sunset Joshua gave the order and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave...At the mouth of the cave they placed large rocks, which are there to this day.

- B. 28 That day Joshua took Makkedah. He put the city and its king to the sword and totally destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivors.*
- C. 29 Then Joshua and all Israel with him moved on from Makkedah to Libnah and attacked it. 30 The LORD also gave that city and its king into Israel's hand. The city and everyone in it Joshua put to the sword. He left no survivors there.*
- D. 32 The LORD handed Lachish over to Israel, and Joshua took it on the second day. The city and everyone in it he put to the sword, just as he had done to Libnah.*

- E. *36 Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron and attacked it. 37 They took the city and put it to the sword, together with its king, its villages and everyone in it. They left no survivors. Just as at Eglon, they totally destroyed it and everyone in it.*
- F. *38 Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned around and attacked Debir. 39 They took the city, its king and its villages, and put them to the sword. Everyone in it they totally destroyed. They left no survivors.*
- G. *40 So Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded.*
- H. *11:19 Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. 20 For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.*
- I. *23 So Joshua took the entire land, just as the LORD had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war.*

XXIII. Distribution of the Lands:

- A. Chapters 14-21
- B. See map

IV. Last discourse of Joshua

- A. *23:1 After a long time had passed and the LORD had given Israel rest from all their enemies around them, Joshua, by then old and well advanced in years, 2 summoned all Israel--their elders, leaders, judges and officials--and said to them: "I am old and well advanced in years. 3 You yourselves have seen everything the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake; it was the LORD your God who fought for you...6 "Be very strong; be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, without turning aside to the right or to the left. 7 Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them. 8 But you are to hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have until now....11 So be very careful to love the LORD your God. 12 "But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them,13 then you may be sure that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the LORD your God has given you....24:14 "Now fear the*

LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.15 But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." 16 Then the people answered, "Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods!...19 Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. 20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, after he has been good to you." 21 But the people said to Joshua, "No! We will serve the LORD." 22 Then Joshua said, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen to serve the LORD." "Yes, we are witnesses," they replied....28 Then Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance. 29 After these things, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. 30 And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. 31 Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who had experienced everything the LORD had done for Israel.