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THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN
 Golden Text.—As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, or forsake thee. —Josh. 1:5

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE
 By J. C. Macaulay, D.D.

Approach to the Lesson

In Hurlbut's Bible Atlas (Rand McNally & Co., Chicago 5: \$5) there is an interesting chart on page 61, showing the areas under control of Israel at various periods. According to this chart, Moses and Joshua conquered 11,000 square miles of territory, while Solomon inherited from his father David an empire 60,000 square miles in extent. For the lands involved compare the maps on pages 45 and 60, keeping in mind the different scales. What Joshua partitioned to the tribes was less than one-fifth of what God promised (Josh. 1:4). It was not till David's time that Israel possessed the promised inheritance. Why did it take half a millennium? Because of unbelief, disobedience, apathy. Perhaps some of us are just as slow to possess our possessions in Christ. Had the tribes carried on as Joshua set the pace for them, they would have spread abroad and possessed the land in indisputable possession. Instead, even what they did hold was being constantly challenged by those whom they disobeyingly spared. Do we have an uncertain grasp of spiritual realities, or do we walk with a firm tread in the land of our inheritance?

For interesting light on the fall of Jericho, see Garstang's account of his archaeological findings in "The Foundations of Bible History" (Constable, London), pp. 143-147. Not only does he describe the defense system of Jericho, with its outer and inner walls, but he gives the evidence for the falling of the walls outward, along with the houses built on them. Traces of the burning of the city are also in evidence, such as "reddened masses of brick, cracked stones, charred timbers, and ashes." See Joshua 6:24. Garstang also reckons the date of the event to be about 1400 B.C., his calculation being based on the complete lack among the ruins of Mycenaean art, which appears in the period immediately following. This accords with calculations based on Biblical data. Some would attribute the falling of the walls to an earthquake and that is not an unreasonable conjecture. God used a wind to dry up the Red Sea (Exod. 14:21). Whatever the means, it was an act of God, miraculously timed.

CONTRACTOR PROMISES TO PAY ARREARS

William G. Carleton, R.R.4 Uxbridge, lost a lot of money building houses in Oshawa this fall on his first contract job. He told Magistrate F. S. Ebbs at Whitby Magistrate's Court that he is now working as a builder's laborer himself to pay off the wages he owed to the men who worked for him.

Carleton was charged under the Master and Servant Act with failing to pay \$112 in wages to Kenneth Brown of Whitby. "Can't you two get together on this?" asked Magistrate Ebbs.

"We have," replied Carleton. He said he would draw his first pay in Toronto this week and he would give Brown \$50 of it on Friday night. To make sure an accounting is given Magistrate Ebbs put the case over until next Wednesday.

Verse by Verse

Josh. 1:1.—"Now after the death of Moses . . . the Lord spake unto Joshua." Compare Isaiah 61. The passing of a great leader whose loss seems irreparable is an occasion to look up and listen to the voice of God. At such times He would teach us that our dependence must be on Him, not on man.

Verse 2.—"Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go." When the going seems most impossible, God says, "Go." See Exodus 14:15. Then He wants to show His faithfulness and sufficiency. Israel's possession of Canaan did not depend on Moses, but on the Lord. The human agent was secondary.

Verse 3.—"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon." Moses conveyed such a promise to Israel (Deut. 11:24). Here the promise is made to Joshua as the leader of the nation, but a similar promise was made to Caleb as an individual (Josh. 14:9). Planting the soles of the feet on the ground here represents an act of claim, and God promises to honor the claim of faith.

Verse 4.—"From the wilderness . . . unto the great sea . . . shall be your coast." See Genesis 15:18. Not until the days of David did the promised territory come under the sway of Israel and then only for a short time. Through unbelief, backsliding, and disobedience Israel failed to possess its possessions.

Verse 5.—"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee . . . with Moses . . . with thee." It was not the prowess of Moses and Joshua that made them invincible, but the unfailing presence and help of God. The faith that counts on God is the faith that conquers. The promise is for us (Heb. 13:5).

Verse 6.—"Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide . . . the land." The assurance of ultimate triumph was intended to sustain Joshua when the going would be difficult. There are many discouragements in the way, but if we have a divine certainty of the end, we do not faint.

Verse 7.—" . . . strong and very courageous; . . . to do according to all the law." It takes strength and courage to obey God in face of all the oppositions of men and devils; but that is the way of true prosperity, and God will give the needed grace. Why should we fear if God is with us? (Rom. 8:31; Heb. 13:5, 6.) Verse 8 should not be missed here.

Chap. 6:1.—"Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel." See Joshua 6:9-11; Exodus 23:27. They did not dare to face Israel in the open field, but pinned their only hope upon ability to endure a siege. Even in this they had no heart.

Verse 2.—"See, I have given into thine hand Jericho." Their lack of fighting spirit was evidence that God had already reduced them through terror to defeat. Israel had little to do but possess.

Verse 3.—"And ye shall compass the city . . . six days." The first day would seem like reconnaissance, but repeated six days, the strange tactics would confuse

other hand, it was a test of Israel's faith and obedience.

Verse 4.—"And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets." The presence of the ark in the line of march, and the action of the priests, were a reminder that this was an operation of God and that He was in the midst of His people. These were not the silver trumpets used for ceremonial purposes, but common rams' horns.

Verse 5.—"All the people shall shout . . . and the wall of the city shall fall down flat." No battering rams, no catapults, no ladders. It all sounded like a child's game, with lots of imagination. But God!

Verse 20.—"So the people shouted when the priests blew . . . the wall fell down flat." Not a stone had fallen from the walls when the shout began, but by the end of it the entire wall had crashed inward—not because the foundations had been loosened by the marching, but because God did it. God's ways may seem contrary to all earthly wisdom and practices, but they work!

The Heart of the Lesson

It was a formidable task to which Joshua was called. First, he was to succeed Moses, a man of such towering character that Joshua could never hope to fill his shoes. Second, he had seen, over a period of forty years, the recalcitrance and rebellion of the people, and he must have wondered how he could handle them when even Moses had so difficult a time. Third, the conquest of Canaan was no small undertaking, coupled with the settlement of the tribes in their inheritance. It was enough to make the stoutest heart stand still.

But God answered with a three-fold encouragement. First, there was the divine assurance of victory: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you" (Josh. 1:3). Second, there was the promise of the divine presence: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (v. 5). Third, there was strength from the divine law (v. 7, 8). With this fortifying, Joshua assumed command.

Right in the line of march lay Jericho a fortified city, and the key to the whole land. Now, just as the first-born belonged to God, and the first fruits of the land, so the first city to fall in Canaan must be "devoted" unto God, and not go for spoil to the Children of Israel; hence the strict commands utterly to destroy and to take no loot. In keeping with this, the campaign against the city was no ordinary military campaign. It was claimed for God by the progression of the ark of the covenant around it, and by the blowing of the priests' horns over it. No engines of war made the breach, but the act of God. We are engaged in a warfare in which carnal weapons are of no avail. A stiff upper lip and a set chin will not overcome the temptations that beset us. Reason and oratory will not regenerate sinners. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Cor. 10:5). The shout of victory is not for the strong and the swift and the subtle, but for those who

Junior Farmers Meet At Uxbridge

In the high school at Uxbridge on Saturday afternoon and evening of last week the Ontario County Junior Farmers held their annual meeting and conference. The theme of the gathering was "Self Help and Community Betterment."

Following the registration period, the conference got under way at 2:15 p.m., with Everson Norton of Brooklin presiding. A group discussion was held on the conference theme by Junior Institute members with Doris Risebrough of Uxbridge as leader.

Helen Meeck of Uxbridge, a provincial camper this year, presented her report following which there was another discussion group, on the conference theme, with Ross McMillish of Beaverton as leader. Vernon Barrett of Pickering, another 1951 provincial camper, also reported.

Prior to the election of officers, Bill Boyes of Pickering reported on his trip to Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New York.

A turkey dinner was served in Trinity United Church at which the speaker was Eleanor Saracuse of Waterford, president of the Provincial Junior Farmer Association. Prizes and trophies won for livestock judging and at the junior farmer field day were presented.

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