

=THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL=

Lesson 11

Rahab, the Spies, and Crossing the Jordan

AIM: to teach my pupils the story of the crossing of the Jordan.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask the pupils to guess which is the longest river in the world and which is the widest river in the world. See how many rivers the pupils can name. Then ask them to guess which river, as far as we know, is the only river in the world that throughout the greatest part of its course runs below the level of the ocean. Give them a while to guess. The answer is the Jordan River.

INTRODUCTION: The Israelites had been to this place before, and they turned back. Now they have a second chance. God is the God of the second chance. Let us notice three things about the crossing of Jordan.

I. THE KIND OF PEOPLE THAT GOD CAN BLESS.

1. The kind of people that follow the glory of God, Joshua 3:3. Before the people went down into the Jordan, the ark of the covenant went first. This, of course, was overshadowed by the glory of God.
2. The kind of people that don't get ahead of God, Joshua 3:4. Notice how far behind they followed. They were close enough to see, but not too close that they might get ahead of God.
3. A set-apart people, completely dedicated, Joshua 3:5. The word "sanctify" means "to build a fence around." These were people "fenced in" for God. They were truly set apart for Him.
4. Those who follow the leader God gives, Joshua 3:9.

II. THE KIND OF RIVER GOD CAN CROSS.

1. The Jordan River was the most important river in Palestine.
2. Its meaning is "descender." This comes from the fact that it goes down all the way. When it issues from the cave at Baniyas, it is 1,000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. By the time it enters the Dead Sea, it is 1,292 feet below sea level. Hence, it is named "descender."
3. It was a torturous river; it was very swift and dangerous. When God performs a miracle, He performs a good one!
4. The current of the river is so rapid near Jericho that pilgrims who go down to bathe are in danger of losing their lives. Notice Joshua 3:15, 16. God made the waters rise up on a heap even though they were rapid. This is the kind of God we serve.
5. Here are some interesting things about the Jordan:
 - 1) David fled from Absalom toward Jordan.
 - 2) Elisha received the mantle from Elijah near Jordan.
 - 3) Naaman, the leper, washed seven times in Jordan.
 - 4) John baptized in Jordan.
 - 5) Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan.

III. THE KIND OF HEATHEN GOD CAN SAVE. In the crossing of Jordan, God saved a heathen lady, Rahab. Notice several things about her:

1. She was a harlot, Joshua 2:1. God would just as soon save a Rahab as a Mary; a demoniac as a John or a Paul; a harlot as a moral person. Salvation is for everyone.
2. She was from a wicked city. Jericho means "the cursed place."
3. She was from a wicked home that trained her in her profession.
4. She was from a bad occupation. She had a bad name. In spite of all these adversities, God saved her.
5. She lived on the city wall. There were two walls around the city. The top of the wall where she lived was large enough for seven horses to prance abreast. Houses were built in the wall; this is where she lived.
6. She put her faith in the God of Israel. This is shown in the fact that she saved the two spies who were God's men.
7. She was saved by the scarlet thread, Joshua 2:18. This is a picture of the blood applied at the Passover and salvation through the blood.
8. She became a useful person. It was she who became the wife of Salmon and the mother of Boaz, who was the husband of Ruth, and a link in the chain of the ancestry of our Lord.

9. We know that she was saved because she had faith, Hebrews 11:31.
10. We know she is in Heaven. Hebrews 12:1 says she is a witness.
11. We know she was a great Christian. In Hebrews 11 she is listed between Joshua and Gideon.
12. She was concerned about her family, Joshua 6:23.

CONCLUSION: God can use any people who meet His conditions, cross any obstacle with these people, and save any heathen through it.