

Joshua 07-03-16a

This is Friday the 16th of March 2007. We continue our study in the book of Joshua, resuming in chapter 6. Let's take a moment at the outset to go to the Lord in prayer. It gives us an opportunity to avail ourselves of God's grace in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Shall we pray? Father, it is a great privilege to spend time together in fellowship, to receive the encouragement and the building up that comes from the gifts that you have distributed amongst us, and whether we know exactly what they are or how they function, we know that they are in operation and that they are the means of blessing anytime that we assemble in the name of the Lord Jesus. We thank you for this passage of scripture and the great truths that are contained therein. We thank you that these are not simply historical remembrances, they're not just historical stories, but they are written for our instruction to help us live day by day in a way that is pleasing in your sight.

And we pray that our study this evening will contribute toward that goal. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

It's been two weeks since we joined Joshua on the outskirts of the city of Jericho. By way of some topology, some geography, some history, there are a couple of towns that are in view here in Joshua chapter 5 and chapter 6. You remember the Children of Israel cross? We looked at all of that in detail. What is the name of the place where they are now encamped? Gilgal.

And it is named that because of the verb galal, which means to roll or roll away. And there is a wordplay there in the sense that an operation involving circularity has been performed on the men of Israel. And at the same time, the reproach of Egypt has been rolled away.

And one of the interesting things about this reproach of Egypt is that not only does it hark back to the days of slavery, the days of sort of shameful servitude and oppression, stomping mud into bricks and so on in Egypt, being told when and where you're going to have your children or not have your children and so on. You remember the instruction of the midwives to kill the baby boys? That is a reproach. But there was also what the Egyptians would say.

And Moses recounts this to the Lord in Exodus when he says, after the golden calf incident, what will the Egyptians say if you destroy your people in the wilderness? And this is also something that could be considered the reproach of Egypt. What is the world going to say if the people of God do not fulfill and partake of God's covenant? Now, what about us? Is there a reproach of Egypt on us? We, a lot of us, depending on when you were saved and how much history you had before you got saved, people can hark back. And sometimes even after you're saved, people can look at your life and say, boy, I see

episodes.

I see some history. I see some bad things here. There's stuff that dogs you, especially within your own family, especially within people who knew you well, your high school classmates or whatever, your Marine Corps buddies or whatever it might be.

You get back and people say, oh, I remember you doing this, that and the other or having this, that and the other problem. And a lot of times people play this game. It's rooted in the same kind of arrogance as bigotry and racism where I have, I know something about you and I'm going to put you down with it.

And people try to elevate themselves by pushing the people around them down. You can do this with aspersions about someone's heritage or their culture or their race or their religion or their past life. If you're at a phase in your life where you weren't really an active, growing, narrow road Christian and you made some mistakes and maybe they were splashy mistakes, maybe they were spectacular fireworks and nine o'clock news mistakes.

There are people who will like to dredge that up and hold it over your head. This is sort of the reproach of the Egyptians. The Egyptians are the unbelieving world, the world that doesn't believe in God and doesn't care about God and is looking for a way to bring you down and drag you back to where they are.

That's the reproach of Egypt. Gilgal is the place where that was rolled away. Why? Because there is a communion.

There is a fellowship between God and Israel. God has made promises to this generation just like he did to the first generation. I will bring you to a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

I will give you victory. I will disperse your enemies before you. But you have to trust.

You have to be willing to step out in faith into situations that you cannot foresee. Remember those priests at the front of the procession with the ark walking ever closer to the raging torrent of the spring flood Jordan. God didn't stop the river two hours ahead of time and let it get nice and dry and the priests say, oh look at this nice dry river bed.

Hey, no problem. That thing is running right up until the first priest's sandal slaps into the water. Now why did God do that? Why didn't God stop it the day before? Why didn't God stop it six hours before? Because he's waiting for people to express faith.

What does Hebrews say about faith? Hebrews 11:6. Now faith is, we should put that in our verse packet by the way, now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I am wading through the swamp of secular humanist liberal pinko propaganda as expressed in textbooks in the public school system with my

daughters. And one of the things that impresses me over and over again day by day as they go through different things in history and different things in science is there is a faith based religion abroad in the world today with its priests and its dogmas and its unseen explanations for things.

It is secular humanism. It is science based. And one of the things in science is I've got to be able to measure it.

You know, science is reproducible. One guy pours three things from test tubes and gets bubbling goo. I should be able to pour those same three things and get bubbling goo just like he did.

It's repeatable, verifiable, measurable, testable. And yet you have all of these things that are slipped under the banner of science that are not repeatable, are not testable, cannot be proven. You know, you have this nice little adaptation mechanism in DNA that helps different species shift their abilities to survive in varying environments.

It gets cold, they start growing thicker hair. It gets snow all over the place, well, their legs get longer. Their eyes get better shielding from the brightness or whatever.

You know, things adapt. Things have a limited ability to change. You know, the berries on a tree get to be small and the bird's beaks are accordingly going to modify within limits.

To me, it's like the tide going in and out. Under the influence of the moon, the tide comes in. Somebody sitting on the beach could say, look, that tide, it's creeping in six inches an hour.

Well, my goodness, in two weeks the entire continent's going to be flooded with water because look at how this just changes. Well, look, it's within a range. If you keep watching, it's going to go back the other way.

You can breed dogs all the way from Mexican hairless chihuahuas up to Great Danes and Dobermans and St. Bernard's and these big mastiff dogs. But I don't care what you do with the canine genome, you cannot get a cat. You cannot get a giraffe.

You cannot get a deer. You can play all kinds of games, but it's within limits. Well, they don't understand this and they say ex nihilo, not testable, not provable, not repeatable.

It isn't a doable thing. And yet science is supposed to be tangibility, materiality. I can touch it.

I can measure it. I can put it under a microscope. So there is this hypocrisy, I would call it, where these untestable things are put under the banner of science and treated as science.

And people say, if you're anti-evolution, you're anti-science. Let me just digress briefly

on this because it has to do with faith. What is faith? These people have faith that the Big Bang took place, that evolution took place, that background radiation, etc.

We have faith also. Their faith is in something unseeable and untestable and so is ours. What is the difference? Well, think about this.

There is a fundamental assumption abroad in the world today that man is basically good. That if you get the right environment, everything will turn out fine. My big gripe this week is the history textbook that says that the United States is to blame for World War II.

That communism is actually a wonderful system of government. The only reason it didn't work is the people who perpetrated it just didn't do it right. If the Ruskies and the Chai Khans and the Khmer Rouge and all the rest of those shining path communist guerrillas, if they had just done communism right, it could have been a wonderful form of government.

They just didn't do it right. It's our fault that Germany invaded Poland and Czechoslovakia and set off World War II because we messed up the ending of World War I. We didn't let them come to the table and be a participant in the aftermath. You had Wilson and you had Clemenceau and you had Marshall Falk and you had the other guy from Italy and so on and you eventually ended up with the big three.

You had David, what's his name, from England. The three of those guys basically distributed Europe and the colonies and all the rest of it after World War I. We cut Germany out. It was so mean of us to cut them out after they tried to take over all of Europe.

Theodore Roosevelt and a lot of the rest of the people around in the late teens of the last century said unconditional surrender means no conditions. You don't get to haggle, you don't get to barter, you don't get to have a say because you messed up. You started this war, now you're in trouble.

They say, oh that was such a We should have never gone into World War II and meddled in the affairs. The fundamental assumption is this. The assumption is if you will create the right environment for Germany, Germany will be happy and productive and never start a war.

If Germany starts a war, it's your fault because you mistreated Germany. Germany can't be blamed for their invasion of Poland. Then why did we not go in and manipulate all of the interests of the European countries after World War I and make sure that the Japanese didn't get the Chinese interests.

We should have intervened. We were the big power. We should have gone in and made these countries toe the line, made them give Germany back certain things, made France and all the rest of these countries.

Because we did not, we didn't go in and enforce the 14 points of light in Wilson's little 14 point plan. We didn't do it and we didn't really go for the League of Nations. It's our fault.

So hey, Germany, World War II, it was inevitable. We caused it. We mistreated them and of course they were going to invade Europe and take over with the Third Reich and become racist Aryan supremacists.

It just boggles the mind. But this is the view. Textbook, teacher, all unified on this front.

Now, how does this relate to our subject? It's part of a consistent world view. Nations, of course the logic changes completely if you go mental in the affairs of the Middle East and stuff Iraq back in their little box when they go invade Kuwait and when they try to assemble weapons of mass destruction and so on, which whether they had them or not, he was definitely trying to get them. And anyway, I digress.

But the same thing is true on an individual basis. People say, oh look, school shooting, 18 students dead. What did we do to create these shooters? Just like what did we do to create the Third Reich? Well, I have an answer for that question, but it's nothing.

You know, there is such a thing as volition and responsibility and accountability and nations are accountable for themselves. Germany needed... I'll tell you why World War II happened, that all of the compromising and giving away and flim-flamming around that took place after World War I, there was not enough sanction put on Germany. Look at Japan after World War II.

Has Japan come back and created World War III? No. Why? Because we forbade them from having an army. We forbade them.

We went in and reconstructed, you know, Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the things that we tore up and we helped them get back on their feet economically. We gave them technology. Their industry has in some ways surpassed our own.

Look at the automotive industry. Look at electronics. We did that.

We gave them the footing and the foundation to do that. We helped them in a productive way, but we didn't let them keep a standing army. That's not what we did with Germany.

So the Germans... but whether it's in nations or whether it's individuals, there are two fundamentally opposing viewpoints and they're both based on faith. One believes the biblical view. We are conceived in iniquity.

We are born in sin. We have to have control placed upon us. There has to be an authority structure to which we respond.

And if we transgress that authority, there has to be penalty. There has to be punishment because we are inherently in need of those structures. God has ordained parents for

children.

God has ordained government over the citizens of a nation. God has ordained independent individual nations that are uniquely able to govern their own people. One world government is unbiblical.

Federations of nations are unbiblical. Go to the Tower of Babel. God says all of these people uniting in common projects is a bad thing.

Scatter them out. Why did God change the languages? He scattered them and he changed the language. Why? So that they would not create the United Nations.

But what have we done? We've reversed God's action at the Tower of Babel by hiring all of these little translators and microphones and headsets and everybody can talk the same language, trying to get English to cover the globe. We're rebuilding Babel. This whole thing, it takes a village.

What is that? Community, socialistic responsibility for child training, for all of these things. Everybody pitches in. This is the thing that God did not ordain.

What did God ordain? For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they become a unit and they raise their family. When their kids grow up, they leave. They don't come back and move in.

They don't create this large extended family all under the same tent. They leave. They create their own families.

That's biblical. Why? Same reason the Marine Corps is such a great organization. Distributed responsibility.

If you watched that documentary a couple, three weeks ago on the Marine Corps, one of the things that they emphasized that distinguishes the Marine Corps from, say, the Army, is pushing decision-making, responsibility, and accountability down the chain of command to the corporals and the sergeants, your E-4s and your E-5s. And it's great because you train people to lead, you train people to think, and they do their own thing. You can kill the general and the colonel and the major and the captain and the first lieutenant and the second lieutenant, kill the gunner, kill the staff sergeant, and you're still going to have sergeants and corporals who understand the mission and are going to take their fire teams and their squads and are going to accomplish the goal.

You can't cut the head off of a distributed organization. This is the way God made Israel. Twelve tribes, dozens and dozens of clans within the tribes, hundreds of families within the clans, and individual fathers within those families, within those clans, within those tribes, within that nation.

Distributed government. You can't cut the head off. What happened in the latter days of the monarchy? They centralized power with the corrupt kings and it destroyed the nation.

Well, I say all of that to say this. There is the need, based on the fundamental recognition of man's nature, we are fallen, we are corrupt. The mechanism, whether you're saved or not, if you respect God's divine ordinances, God's divine institutions of marriage, family, nations, and individual free will, which carries with it individual accountability and responsibility, this is what God has ordained.

That sets your worldview. Now, when you look at Germany in before, during, and after World War I, before, during, and after World War II, you look at them in that light and you say a nation is going to need to suffer the consequences of making bad decisions and invading its neighbors. It should suffer.

It should be sanctioned. It should be chastised. It should be put in its place by other nations who are going to protect their own sovereignty.

In the same way, individuals, if they become criminals, if they violate law, should be punished. What is the nature of the punishment? That's why you've got courts and lawyers and all the rest of it. But it is not productive to blame society and try to change society, to blame a group or a community or any other entity and say this entity needs to change so this person will change or this group will change.

We need to go in and renovate the inner city, the ghettos, and if we create wonderful white picket fences all up and down Harlem, all of those people are going to drop their syringes and their guns and knives and they're going to start planting orchids and mowing their lawn and watering their daisies and walking their dogs and smiling at one another because we've changed the environment. You give them money and now they have no need for crime. They have no need to steal and break in and kill one another and so on.

No. Why? Why is there a drug culture in the inner city? Oh, it's poverty and it's the conditions that we've created that drive them to this. Not at all.

It is exactly the opposite. There are two different and opposing world views. Both of them are based on faith.

You can't prove either one. You cannot scientifically distill either one. So, as God intended from the very beginning, our choice of which worldview to believe is based on, fundamentally, at the root level, what is your response to God? When God comes in the person of the Holy Spirit and says, you know, there's such a thing as sin, there's such a thing as righteousness, and there's such a thing as judgment, what is your response? If you have a response of humility and teachability and you respond to that message, then

you are going to begin to adopt and see the world through the biblical worldview.

Those who don't are the Romans chapter one kind. When they knew him as God, they did not glorify him as God. They were not thankful.

They became empty in their imagination. Their foolish hearts were darkened. How does that pertain to Joshua chapter six? Why is God sending Israel in to annihilate these people? Why don't they negotiate? Why don't they compromise? Why are, let me ask you this, how come there are not, say, 12 elders from every tribe, 144 witnesses sent forth from Gilgal to evangelize the Canaanites? Why not? Is there any evangelistic effort? What would the Baptists have to say about these Israelites? Went into a land, look at this mission field.

The fields are white for harvest. There's not a believer other than Rahab in the whole place. It's wide open.

Let's get the tracts and the flyers printed up. Let's send the people out. We'll have a five-year plan to go out and evangelize Jericho and Ai and Hezron and all these other places.

We'll go out there and we'll win Canaan for God. Why did God not do that? Oh, the God of the Old Testament is a what the, you know, the liberal scholarship will say. Not at all.

These people have had decades and decades and decades. Who first traveled this land? When did these people get the gospel? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Esau, even before Abraham who was there evangelizing. Melchizedek.

God said, Abraham, these people are not responsive. You're going to sojourn in a land populated by enemies and your descendants for 400 years until their iniquity is full. The iniquity of the Amorites.

I'm going to let it run its course. Why are they being destroyed? Because God is not merciful. Because the Israelites are uncaring.

The Israelites just didn't give them a chance. Going to rush into Jericho, grab a guy and say, you believe in the God of Israel or shall I cut your head off? I mean, they're not going to do that. They're just going to go in and slay them.

Why? Because their iniquity is full. They have had a chance, not just for years, not just for decades, but for centuries. The Word of God has gone forth into all of that land.

Rahab says, we know what happened in Egypt. We know what happened in the wilderness. We know all about that.

Has there been any response? Rahab, a few people in her family, nobody else. All the rest of the people are quaking. They don't come out and say, they don't send a delegation to Israel and say, we've heard of your God and we want to join.

We want to worship him. We recognize that he's greater than all of our gods. We're going to throw over our gods, come to the God of Israel.

They don't. Why? They have already made their decision. It is a clash of cultures.

It is a clash of viewpoints. And they are totally incompatible. You cannot have one foot in Canaan and one foot in Israel.

It's either or. You either believe that man is totally depraved, that man needs the structure and the power and the grace of God to function, or you don't. There is no middle ground.

It's one or the other. You either believe that the Word of God is alive and powerful, you either believe that it thoroughly equips us for every good work, or you don't. There is no middle ground.

As soon as you make an added mixture, as soon as you syncretize and synthesize, you have what Satan said to Eve in the garden. Hath God not said, you may eat of every tree in the garden? Well, that's sort of what God said, but not exactly. And the difference is fatal.

Eve saw that it was good for food, and she reached out and grasped it. And this is the issue. Now, historically, this city of Jericho is strategic.

At the time that Joshua and the Israelites cross, why do they go to Jericho? You've got a land full of Amorites and Canaanites. Remember we talked about how the Amorites are kind of the hill-dwelling warrior types, and the Canaanites are the plains-dwelling people closer to the Mediterranean Sea. What is the strategy for entering the land? Well, it is divide and conquer.

Jericho is at the halfway mark. By driving a wedge through Jericho and Ai, and up the valley there beside the Jordan, this is going to isolate northern Canaanites from the southern Canaanites. They are not going to be able to band together and join forces in an attack against Israel.

He's driving a wedge right across the middle of the land. Now, you'll recall that later on in the period of the monarchy, it's going to split into essentially those two halves anyway, isn't it? You have the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. They are in separate areas, separate regions, and they divide naturally along that same border that Joshua is driving across.

So it is strategic. Now, Jericho is one of the oldest settlements in the world. It's one of the oldest cities on the planet.

It has been inhabited, if you believe, carbon dating since like 8,000 BC. Archaeologists

have dug down to the earliest primitive layers where they have found evidences of human occupation. Why was it favored as a place to occupy? Because there are springs there.

There are perennial springs that provide fresh water. This place is about 24 kilometers or so from Jerusalem. If I remember right, are there 2.2 kilometers per mile? Do I remember that right? I think it's about 10 or 12 miles from Jerusalem.

So this spring and the oasis, which is fed by it, led to plant life and so on. And so in one place in the Bible, Deuteronomy 34.3, Jericho is called the city of palms. So like many other places, it had an oasis and some vegetation there because of the fresh water.

The earliest settlements were by these, what they like to call, hunter-gatherers. You know, primitive people who would gather around the water and settle there. They've found remnants of seeds and woven baskets and things from that time.

Later on, the earliest agriculturists built huts there and eventually, and the scientists, the archaeologists, date it to the 8th millennium BC. They have some revetment walls built, some stone towers and so on with a stairway. Then rectangular houses, and they would take the skulls of the people that died and clean them off and then put mud over them and make little mud heads, kind of like the medical reconstructionists do now.

You know, they say, Oh, what did this skull look like? And they, you know, they rebuild it. Well, these people would say, Well, grandpa passed away here. And so they wait for all you get all the flesh off.

And then they would reconstruct grandpa out of clay on his own skull. And they have found these burials in the 5th and 4th millennium BC. Eventually, they make pottery.

But then, somewhere around 4,000 BC, 3,500 BC, the place is abandoned for a while and there's no evidence of settlement. And then, around 3,200 BC, Jericho is rebuilt and inhabited as a major city. Now, 3,200 BC is what I would consider post flood.

I don't know how to account for the stuff before that. I think maybe the carbon dating is off because I think the carbon levels in the atmosphere were off at that time. But that's another subject.

In about 2,300 BC, Jericho perished violently, they say, at the hands of uncultured newcomers who eventually resettled the site. And these conquerors mixed with the Canaanites to create the second, that was the first major settlement, big city, it got wiped out, totally destroyed. So then another one built on that site.

And this is the one that is built around the time of Abraham. In the time that Abraham was in the land, there is a city at Jericho and it thrives and flourishes and expands. And the tombs from this period, this is from the New Bible Dictionary, by the way, the tombs

have preserved more than the town buildings and things that have been eroded badly.

There's been a lot of erosion of the Jericho Tell and they don't have much archaeological remains at the dwellings. But the tombs preserve a lot of their culture. They had splendid pottery, wooden three and four legged tables, stools and beds, trinket boxes of bone inlay, basketry, platters of fruit and joints of meat, metal daggers and circlets.

Why is this important? This is the culture that Joshua and his folks are going to meet when they come into the land a few hundred years later. Well developed, mature, artistic, cultured. They have even restored an entire Jericho house interior and have a model of the walled city on its mound from that period.

But sometime, and according to the archaeologists, this is where it gets interesting. This city was the big major city of Jericho. It's Jericho at its prime.

But according to the archaeologists in 1600 BC. Now think about it. When do we say the exodus took place? 1445 BC thereabouts.

Well, about 150 years before this time, when we say Israel left Egypt, they dated it 1600. There is a huge destruction of Jericho. Jericho had giant walls of piled stones.

It had dwellings. It was a huge major city. But according to the archaeologists in 1600, it was violently destroyed, they say, by Egypt's 18th dynasty.

I won't even go into the Egyptian chronology problems. But after this, there's virtually nothing. And this is why you will often hear, if you watch the Discovery Channel, or if you watch the National Geographic Channel, and they say, oh, let's look at the archaeology of the Holy Land.

And they'll talk about Garstang, and they'll talk about Kathleen Canyon, and they'll talk about different ones that have excavated Jericho. And they say, oh, you know, we have discovered that the biblical record is all wet, because in the time of Joshua, which they date at 1200 BC, there was no city in Jericho. It was abandoned.

It was empty. Well, without going into all the gory details, the big major destruction that they date at 1600 BC is the Joshua destruction. Yes, the walls fell.

Yes, a major keystone city. This is the gateway to Canaan. This is the gateway to the avenue that is going to split that nation in half.

And then Joshua is going to conduct the southern campaign, and then he's going to conduct the northern campaign. And he's going to clear out the land of Canaan, by and large. But archaeologically speaking, the late Bronze Occupation, from 1400 to 1325, and from the 13th century onward, virtually nothing is known.

It is possible that there may have been a small town somewhere else that was called

Jericho, they say, but this particular site, Tel Es Sultan, could not have been the Jericho. Joshua was never there. There was no trumpet.

There was no ark. There was no falling down. There was no major invasion of the land.

They say, archaeologically, it didn't happen. Well, it's easy to say if you have got everything slipped by 150 years. Get your chronology straight, and here's the destruction layer.

There are layers of soot in Jericho, like six inches thick, where the city was burned to the ground, just like you find in Hazor and other major destruction layers of the towns that have been burnt by Joshua. Jericho is one of them. In every one of those towns, when they dig archaeologically, they find a big destruction layer, but they conveniently date it to sometime other than the conquest.

Well, given a choice between some guy in a lab saying, well, my carbon date says 1600, and my Bible, which says Joshua did it, and I assume that was 1400 BC, but whatever the big destruction was, that was Joshua, and figure it out. I don't know how you're going to figure it out, but if the walls fell, and there's a big carbon layer of soot, then that's your Joshua destruction. So, go back to the drawing board and find out what's the matter with your carbon dates, is what I say.

Well, we don't have to agonize through all of that. I just want to mention it, because you will see books, articles. It is the most popular thing in the world.

Have you seen all of these deconstructing Jesus books and films that have come out? There are guys that even claim that they used to be Christians, and they've come out and said, well, I'm an atheist now because I just can't believe the Bible anymore. Here's all the reasons. Jesus is a fabrication.

The Bible is a fabrication. It's all late. Constantine burned everything but the Bible you have now, and the Gnostics were right.

It's the same kind of rewriting of history that you find being done about World War I and World War II. Why? We're going to redefine history without God, without God's structure, without the Christian foundations. You ought to see what the history books say about the foundations of our country.

The Puritans were all like the people in Salem. That's the cartoon that portrays all of the Puritans. They were the worst thing that ever happened to this country, and we didn't really get it right until we shed the whole Puritan ethic.

You just can't believe it. No matter how far back in history you go, go to the time of Christ. Well, there might have been a Jesus, but he wasn't the Son of God.

He didn't do any miracles. Paul invented Christianity. Constantine invented Christianity.

It is a conscious rewriting of history. Can it be proved? Can it be documented? Can it be substantiated? No. There is far more abundant evidence for traditional Christianity, traditional history as found in the Bible than there is for these fantasies.

But what sells? What will get your book sold? You want to write a book saying Joshua went in just like the Bible says? We've heard that for 2,000 years. Tell me something I haven't heard. There was no Joshua.

Kathleen Kenyon went to Jericho, and there was nothing there. The Bible is bunk. There was no Jesus.

There was no Peter. There was no Paul. There was no crucifixion.

There was no miracle. The Israelites never left Egypt. They never wandered in the wilderness.

They never conquered the land. It was a gradual migration. They invented it all during the Babylonian captivity and so on.

This will sell books because it's tearing down. It's debunking. Do you want to read a great book about Thomas Jefferson, or do you want to read a book about how he slept with a slave and had a mulatto daughter and this, that, and the other? People want to go for the sensational.

They want to go for the remarkable. They want to go for the counterculture thing. Let's debunk.

Let's debase. Let's tear down. Let's get rid of the Ten Commandments.

Let's get rid of the In God We Trust. Have you seen the new dollar coins? Took it off the face. It's not gone.

It's just stank around the edge. If you look real close and turn the coin all the way around, you can still read In God We Trust, but it's been relegated to the thin edge of the coin. Well, it's all of a piece.

Do you see what I'm saying here? It's a fabric. It is an agenda. It is a propaganda machine, and it's consistent, and it's a flood.

It is easy, and it is easier to just pull your oars into the boat and go with the flow and stop rowing against the tide of the press, entertainment, scholarship, science, archaeology. People say, well, you know, Sam, if all that stuff's against you, maybe your Bible is just wrong. No, it isn't.

The problem is that we have an enemy who has this set agenda of blinding people to the truth of God, and he's good at it. The God of this world has blinded the minds of them without faith, them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. That's the other verse I wanted to put.

The God of this world has blinded the minds, and he's good at it. It masquerades as wisdom. It masquerades as scholarship.

It masquerades as science. It masquerades as truth, and it conveniently defines God out of the equation. We are going to be destroyed as a nation before the tribulation period.

Why? The same reason Israel dropped in the wilderness. The same reason these Canaanites are going to be destroyed. Faithlessness.

Rejection of God and his word. It is going to happen. There is no United States in the great battle of Armageddon.

King of the North, King of the East, King of the South, revived Roman Empire. There is no United States, and if you see it at all, it's in that woe unto Babylon, stand afar off from the ships and watch the smoke rise. Boo hoo, we can't buy the stuff we used to buy anymore.

All of the merchandise and the silks and the perfumes that we used to get from them, we can't get anymore. Whatever that Babylon is, it is a great producer of exportable goods. That's what we are.

Where else can you stand off in ships and view the destruction? You can see this country from three different oceans. When Jericho was surely shut up, Joshua and his people sat at Gilgal with their reproach rolled away. This is a unique generation.

On the entire planet, there is one small group of people who believe God and fly in the face of all conventional wisdom. They disable their army at a time when they are about to invade. They celebrate a feast to God.

They honor God first before they go into battle. Now they are going to do this strange ritual of marching around the city of Jericho because God tells them to. It makes no kind of sense, but they are obedient when it makes sense.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But faith doesn't just appear. Faith is not a gift of God.

Faith isn't a product of efficacious grace as Calvinists would have you believe. Faith comes after a decision to accept the testimony of God. I will say that again.

Faith comes after a decision to accept the testimony of God as true. Testimony of God comes in creation. The testimony of God comes in His word.

The testimony of God comes in the person of the Holy Spirit. In the mouths of two or three witnesses, a thing is established. Romans tells us what may be known of God is manifest in creation.

What may be known of God is manifest in His word. And what may be known of God is manifest in the heart of every man by the Holy Spirit. God has put the knowledge of Himself in the heart of every man.

His Spirit goes and says, I am here and you are accountable. Every man knows this in his heart of hearts. You can count on it.

Each one of us, if you look in your heart of hearts, you know that God has been there and God has done His convicting work in the person of the Holy Spirit. It is a three-fold witness. Based on each individual human being's response to that witness, there is either the potential to have faith and to pursue an understanding of those witnesses, or to reject that truth and to fall for the lie.

Those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, Romans chapter 1, will be given over to strong delusion. It's not weak delusion. It's not lame delusion.

It is strong delusion. It is persuasive. It is compelling.

It is something that people can embrace with passion. Look at the homosexual agenda in this country. They embrace it with a passion.

Look at the social gospel. They embrace it with a passion. It's persuasive.

It is compelling. And it is the devil's lie. But that's all that you have left if you suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

That's the fundamental choice. These people in Canaan have made the negative choice. And for that choice, they will be destroyed.

Joshua's generation, that he's leading into the land, have made the opposite choice. And they are going to lay hold of eternal promises. Well, we'll resume our verse-by-verse study in this chapter, having sort of given ourselves some perspective here after the break.