

day, a mighty shout rent the air, and the strong walls of Jericho tottered and fell, just as God had promised.

The people of Jericho, except Rahab and those whom she sheltered in her house, were killed; their property was destroyed, and the city razed, and Joshua pronounced a solemn curse upon any one who should attempt to rebuild it.

In reward for the good she had done for the spies, Rahab was given in marriage to an Israelite. In time she became the mother of Bo'az, the great-grandfather of Da'vid, the greatest king of the Israelites. This David became the ancestor of Jesus the Redeemer, the Holy Seed which had been promised to Eve many years before.



LV. The Conquest of the Promised Land.

GOD had ordered that all the property of the inhabitants of Jericho be destroyed. Only one man dared transgress this command, by keeping back a portion of the spoil. He hid it, and fancied that his disobedience would remain unknown and unpunished. But when the Israelites next tried to take a city, they were defeated. Joshua knew that this misfortune would never have happened if the people had obeyed God's commands; so he now fervently prayed that the sinner might be revealed.

Lots were drawn, first among the twelve tribes, then among the clans of the tribe on which the first lot had fallen, and lastly among the families. By this means the sinner was discovered. He confessed to having saved two hundred shekels, or pieces of silver, and this sin was punished, lest the people learn to disobey the Lord to their hurt; he was stoned to death with all his family.

This signal example having been made, Joshua again led the people against the city, which they succeeded in taking by stratagem. Thus the Israelites won all the passes from the valley of the Jordan; and, marching on to Shechem, they erected an altar upon which they inscribed the Law.

While the Israelites were tarrying at Shechem, the Canaanites made a league against them; but the Canaanites of Gib'e-on went to Israel to make a peace treaty with them, and thus secure their lives. Hoping to make Israel believe that they lived very far away, and thus were not of the family of Canaan, the Gibeonites came in tattered garments and worn shoes, and brought no provisions but moldy bread.

Without consulting God, the Israelites made the desired alliance; but when they found out the fraud three days later, they marched against Gibeon, and took it. While they could not destroy the Gibeonites because of their word which they had promised, they instead made them all slaves.

Shortly after this, Joshua's troops were attacked by the combined forces of five allied Canaanite kings, and he would have been overwhelmed by their numbers had he not been helped by a violent hailstorm. Such was the fury of the storm, that there were more who died of the hailstones than the children of Israel slew with the sword.

Joshua began to pursue the fugitives, and seeing that daylight would fail him before the victory was really assured, he commanded: "Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and moon, in the valley of Ajalon." In obedience to this order both sun and moon stood still, for nearly a complete day, until Joshua had won a great victory. As the Canaanites worshipped the sun and the moon, this event struck terror into their hearts, because of the Hebrews and their God, who was far greater than the Canaanite gods.

Joshua pursued the Canaanites to a place where the five kings, his enemies, were hiding in a cave. These monarchs were dragged from their retreat and led away and hanged, just as the sun at last went down and closed the longest day which has ever been known (1451 BC).

By a few more battles Joshua became master of all the southern half of the country, and now he prepared to march northward, and subdue another king, who had an army as the sand that is upon the seashore in multitude. In spite of this array of warriors, Joshua defeated the king, burned his principal city, put the inhabitants to death, seized their property, and then took possession of all the northern part of the Promised Land. All these battles occupied Joshua and the army of Israel for six years.

Although Joshua had thus conquered all the Promised Land, many of his enemies still stubbornly remained in isolated districts, thus the Canaanites and Philistines still owned some territory. The conquest of the land, however, was reserved for another leader; for Joshua was now old, and he felt that his end was near (1445 BC).

