Canaan October 23

Altered Reports

The Israelites arrived at the edge of their promised land, Moses as the Lord had asked, sent one leader from each tribe into Canaan to find out everything they could about the land, people and fortresses.

They returned to Moses with favorable reports and examples of lush fruit.

Caleb, one of the spies, suggested to Moses – "We should attack now and take the land; we are strong enough to conquer it." Numbers 13:30b. But some of those who had gone with Caleb disagreed saying – "No, we are not strong enough to attack them; the people there are more powerful than we are.” Numbers 13:31b. They spread lies among the Israelites, saying the land was poor and the people were giants!

The people cried and complained to Moses, the Lord was ready to kill the whole nation but Moses prayed for them and their lives were spared. The sin of their lies and all the complaining did not go unpunished. They were sentenced to wander forty years in the wilderness. As for the spies Caleb and Joshua were the only ones to live, the others were killed by a disease.

We see God's love in daily miracles of birds and flowers, but we are not satisfied we are always after signs and more proof that God is involved in our lives. God must be tired of all of our complaints and demands on him to show us he's really there; we must trust the Lord and know he is there without proof.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “…Because you have complained against me, none of you over twenty years of age will enter that land…” Numbers 14:29b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, not to complain and demand proof just to put my faith in you because you have proved you keep your promises.

Balaam October 24

And Animated Lesson

Balaam, a prophet, was asked by the Moabite King, Balak, to put a curse on the Israelites. The Israelites had just moved into the plains of Moab, and Balak was afraid!

God came to Balaam on both nights that he camped with the Moabite officials, the Lord refused to allow Balaam to curse the Israelites.

Balak even tried to increase the payment – But Balaam answered, "Even if Balak gave me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not disobey the command of the Lord my God in even the smallest matter." Numbers 22:18.

The second set of leaders insisted Balaam go to Balak with them, so he went willingly, that angered the Lord. The Lord sent an angel block Balaam’s path that only the donkey could see, three times the donkey refused to go by the Angel, three times Balaam beat his donkey, Balaam even threatened to kill the donkey – The donkey replied, "Am I not the same donkey in which you have ridden all your life? Have I ever treated you like this before?" Numbers 22:30a.

Then Balaam and saw the angel and was humbled, admitting he had sinned. Balaam went with the leaders, and ended up blessing that Israelites three times.

We need to humble ourselves, admit our sin and turn ourselves over to the Lord, blessings will be ours too.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Then Balak said to Balaam, “You refuse to curse the people of Israel, but at least don't bless them!" Numbers 23:25.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you, O Lord, for all the blessings you have given me, they are always be humble before God and man.

Moses October 25

Farewell to a Leader

The children of Israel were camping just across the river from the Promise Land. The wandering was about over, Moses was to go up to Mt. Nebo and carefully look over the Promise Land because he could not enter because he had been unfaithful at Kadesh. Moses struck a rock for water boat did not acknowledge the Lord's power had produced the water, God said to Moses and Aaron – “Because you did not have enough faith to acknowledge my holy power before the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land that I had promised to give them." Numbers 20:12b.

Joshua became the leader of the Israelites after Moses – As the Lord  had commanded, Moses put his hands on Joshua’s head and proclaimed him as his successor. Numbers 27:23.

Moses went up the mountain and saw the Promise Land – The Lord  said to Moses,

"This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob I would give it to their descendents. I have let you see it, but I will not let you go there." Deuteronomy 34:4.

Praise the Lord for forgiveness! Moses was unable to enter the Promise Land because of one mistake, we would truly be lost because of one sin we could not be saved! Through, Jesus Christ, the supreme sacrifice, forgiveness is possible! Praise the Lord!

VERSE FOR TODAY: There was never been a prophet in Israel like Moses; the Lord  spoke with him face-to-face. Deuteronomy 34:10.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you, O Lord, for your sacrifice so that I can be forgiven for my sins! Please forgive me for my sins, O Lord, both those conscious and unconscious, help me never to willfully sin against you.

Joshua October 26

Crossing the Jordan

Spies were sent to Jericho, where they were hidden by Rahab and safely returned to Joshua – They told him everything that had happened, and then said, “We are sure that the Lord has given us the whole country. All the people there are terrified of us.”Joshua 2:23b, 24.

The very next day the Israelites prepared to cross the Jordan River, the priests carrying the Covenant Box went first, with their feet entered the flood swollen Jordan – the water stopped flowing and piled up, far upstream at Adam, the city beside Zarethan. The flow downstream to the Dead Sea was completely cut off, and the people were able to cross over near Jericho. While the people walked across on dry ground, the priests carrying the Lord's Covenant Box stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan until all the people had crossed over. Joshua 3:16, 17. The second dry crossing for the Israelites.

The Israelites set up camp at Gilgal, just east of Jericho; there a mass circumcision of the new generation of Israelites took place because during the wilderness wanderings the covenant of circumcision had not been observed.

What a joy for the children of God to be eating the fruit of the promise land after years of Manna and quail. We can reap the harvest of joy too, if we rely on the promises of God. Heaven waits.

VERSE FOR TODAY: What the Lord did that day made the people of Israel consider Joshua a great man. They honoured him all his life, just as they had honoured Moses.  Joshua 4:14.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you, O Lord, for the joy of today but most of all praise you for all the future joy that lies in store for a child of yours.

Joshua October 27

Jericho Falls!

The Lord gave the following order for taking Jericho:

“…You and your soldiers are to march around the city once a day for six days. Seven priests, each carrying a trumpet, are to go in front of the Covenant Box. On the seventh day you and your soldiers are to march round the city seven times while the priests blow the trumpets. Then they are to sound one long note. As soon as you hear it, all the men are to give a loud shout, and the city walls will collapse. Then the whole army will go straight into the city.” Joshua 6:3–5.

Joshua follow the Lord's order, the inhabitants of Jericho were frightened because of the sheer numbers of the Israelites but what a strange means of attack! Strange or not the wall fell and Jericho was taken, all people and animals were killed, except Rahab and her family because she had hidden the Israelites spies. The city was burned.

– At that time Joshua issued a solemn warning: "Anyone who tries to rebuild the city of Jericho will be under the Lord's curse. Whoever lays the foundation will lose his eldest son; whoever builds the gates will lose his youngest." Joshua 6:26. Joshua had established himself as a true servant of God and a leader feared by others.

If we “attack” the sinful in a strange way, with love and kindness the walls of hate will soon fall in their evilness will be removed instead of charred remains their lives can be rebuilt on God's love! We should build our lives on God's love and forgiveness.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “The Lord's has given you the city!” Joshua 6:16b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to break down barriers with your love.

Deborah October 28

The Victory

Joshua and the Israelite armies under God's command had won many victories in the land had been divided among the twelve tribes. Joshua died and the Israelites turned away from God. Then the Lord allowed leaders of the remaining people to rule over the Israelites, they moaned and groaned to the Lord, for a leader to emerge from the people so peace could reign. The children of Israel were on a roller coaster of obedience and disobedience to the Lord.

Deborah, a prophetess, became judge over Israel, she had a command from the Lord for Barak –‘Take 10,000 men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them to Mount Tabor’ Judges 4:6b.

Barak would go only if Deborah went also and she did! Talk about women's Lib, women back then were nobody but here was a woman, with God's help, about to lead with Barak, 10,000 men to victory over Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army and the whole army was destroyed!

For forty years after this grand victory there was peace throughout the land.

With God on our side victory is for all mankind!

VERSE FOR TODAY: She answered, “All right, I will go with you, but you won't get any credit for the victory, because the Lord will hand Sisera over to a woman.” So Deborah set off for Kedesh with Barak. Judges 4:9.

All PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, have us not afraid to reach out for goals in this life but also not to lose sight of the ultimate goal, life eternally with you in heaven.

Gideon October 29

Victory through Confusion

Israel once again sinned and the Lord allowed them to be taken and ruled by the Midianites, who were large in number and possessed all the Israelites animals and crops. The Israelites were forced to live in caves for safety.

The Lord heard the cries of the Israelites and appeared to Gideon – Then the Lord ordered him, “Go with all your great strength and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I myself am sending you.” Judges 6:14.

Gideon needed reassurance the Lord was indeed with him. Gideon laid meat and bread on a rock an angel touched it with a stick, fire came from the rock and burn the food, another time he put out a fleece and if it was wet in the morning it was proof of God and it was it was wet! Then it was done in reverse if the fleece was dry and the ground was wet, and it was, Gideon was convinced.

Gideon chose his men, twice he had too many men – The Lord said to Gideon, “I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites with the 300 men who lapped the water. Tell everyone else to go home.” Judges 7:7. That very night after midnight, Gideon and his men, were divided into three groups, armed with the a torch in a jar and a trumpet, surrounded the Midianites camp, then suddenly broke the jars, exposing the light, blew trumpets and shouted –“A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!” Judges 7:20b. A surprise attack that sent the enemy away in confusion.

Surprised the world by letting the light of Jesus shine in the world of darkness and sin.

VERSE FOR TODAY: So Midian was defeated by the Israelites and was no longer a threat. The land was at peace for forty years, until Gideon died. Judges 8:28.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to keep your light bright and steadfast in my life and let it shine for others to see.

Samson October 30

Strands of Strength

Samson from birth had been in dedicated Nazirite, a special vow to the Lord, and special rules to follow.

Samson had displayed extreme strength, in defeating the Philistines on different occasions; five Philistine kings would pay Delilah, Samson's wife, for the secret of his strength. Three times Samson fooled Delilah with false stories about how to diminish his strength. Delilah kept after him for the truth; he got so sick of hearing her nag – that he finally told her the truth. "My hair has never been cut," he said."I have been dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the time I was born. If my hair were cut, I would lose my strength and be as weak as anyone else." Judges 16:17.

Delilah knew Samson was telling the truth, she notified the Philistine kings, they paid her, she lulled Samson into sleep and had his hair cut off. The Lord left him and Samson was captured by the Philistines and put to turning the grinding wheel at the prison mill.

Samson was brought from prison to entertain the five King and three thousand people, with one last prayer to the Lord; Samson regained his strength and brought the house down, killing everyone including himself!

People want to learn the secret of peace and happiness that only the Lord can give, it should be our pleasure to tell them about Jesus.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Putting one hand on each pillar, he pushed against them and shouted, "Let me die with the Philistines!" Samson killed more people at his death that he had killed during his life. Judges 16:29b, 30a,c.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise you, O Lord, for all the peace and happiness you have given me, help me to pass it on!