

- Ye Have Not Passed This Way Heretofore (Josh 3:1-6, Matt 3:11, Num 25:1-3)

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Please open your Bibles to the Prophecy of Joshua, Josh 3:1 (2X). Moses has died; God appointed Joshua as the new leader of the nation of Israel, and the children of Israel are now at the point of crossing the Jordan River. The great day has come to enter the Promised Land. This is how we can see the division of this chapter: First God spoke, secondly Joshua told the people what God said, and thirdly God made it come to pass.

- **Ye Have Not Passed This Way Heretofore** (Josh 3:1-6, Matt 3:11, Num 25:1-3)

Josh 3:1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

Josh 3:2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host;

Did you notice how often we have read about three days? We have seen it in: Josh 1:11, Josh 2:16, Josh 2:22, and in Josh 3:2, and in all four cases it refers to the same three days. What do those three days remind us of? It reminds us of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord Jesus Christ atoned for our sins, while on the cross He had to endure the equivalent of an eternity in Hell for our sins. And the Jordan River typifies Hell. That is why John the Baptist said in Matt 3:11,³ I shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. And the word Baptize means cleanse or wash on the cross Christ shall wash you, wash the guilt of your sins with fire.

Josh 3:3 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

Josh 3:4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed *this* way heretofore.

Is that not a strange type of instruction? You must follow the Ark of the Covenant but you must keep a distance of about 2000 cubits, in order that you will know the way, because you have not passed this way before! 2000 cubits is 3000 feet, which is about 900 meters; more than half a mile. At this distance the Ark of the Covenant looks very small. Is this logical? What did God mean by that? God was showing them the new way. In fact, God is showing us also the way. The only way into the Kingdom of God is through Hell, and the only way that this can be realized is if Christ alone is our Mediator. That is why they could not get into the Promised Land from the South, because it cannot be done! We cannot come into heaven without first going through Hell, for God's righteousness demands payment for our sins. How is it that we can know the way when we come not near unto the Ark of the Covenant? Paraphrased God says: Christ must do it alone. Don't go near the fire, because you would be playing with the fires of Hell. If we would come near to it, we would be in on the action of Christ's Atonement. And when we are in on the action, it means that we engage in a works gospel, trying to save ourselves together with Christ. It cannot be done! If we are in a works gospel we are not on the way to heaven, but on the way to Hell.

That is the great deception of the freewill gospels of today. They say: Whether you believe that you are saved by your own free will, or whether God elected you unto salvation, it is not a salvation issue. Is that really so? Does God really have two plans of salvation? Of course not! If salvation comes by our own free will, then God is not displeased if we would give Him more credit than He deserves. But if salvation comes only by the predetermined action and will of God, then a freewill gospel would be a slap in the face of God. Let us see what God says about this in the following verses. We read in Josh 3:5 and Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves, *set yourselves apart and*

be ready for the great gift of God: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.³The Hebrew word translated "among you" could also have been translated "in the midst of you", or "within you". In fact, "within you" fits the context perfectly, because the picture in the crossing of the Jordan represents salvation. Paraphrased God says: Here is a new way you have not known before. This is how you may know the way. This is how you may know Christ. He is the great Mediator between God and us. He stands still in the midst of Jordan, enduring the wrath of God for our sins. This is a Messiah the children of Israel have not known before. And today they still have not understood why they walked on dry ground in the Red sea, and in the Jordan River. It is because it is a picture that Christ took the blame for our sins. He should receive all the credit. We read in Jos 3:6,

Josh 3:6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people.

And they took up the Ark of the Covenant, and went before the people.

But how about us? Have we known this Savior? Has it touched our heart that our Savior endured the wrath of God in our place, and that He endured it for our sins, which we loved so much? Then we must also leave Shittim. What do I mean by that? Please turn in your Bibles to Numbers, Num 25:1 (2X). And do we also recall Josh 3:1?

Josh 3:1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

What was so special about removing from Shittim? Well, Shittim was the place where the children of Israel committed great apostasy. In Shittim they mingled with the heathen. Therefore Shittim identifies with sin. Num 25:1-3 **And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.**

Removing from Shittim means that they repented. This does not mean that repentance must come before salvation. Repentance is a gift from God, and repentance is a sign that God is at work in us, either before or after our salvation. Everyone of us has had a place called Shittim. Everyone of us was born as a sinner. Everyone is in need of salvation, but no one wants the salvation that God has designed. No one wants to give up his self-respect, or his self-esteem. We all prefer a gospel where God does His part, and we do our part. Of course we like that; it makes God our buddy. But that was not God's idea. That was our idea. But if God has done this marvelous miracle of salvation in us, if God has made us see what great sinners we are, then God has given us a regenerated heart, which means God has made us born again, and in our born again condition we are made willing to believe God's salvation by grace alone, through Christ alone, because He had mercy on us. He was willing to give His life for us, and then we can have peace with God no matter what the circumstances are in our life. The Bible says that it was God who in His wisdom chose those circumstances in our life. So we have peace with whatever God brings us.

#1. God Spoke (Josh 3:7-8, Isa 42:8)

Josh 3:7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

Now, this is an amazing verse. How is it possible that God will magnify the man Joshua? That is so totally out of character with God. God will only magnify Himself. Did God not say in [Isa 42:8](#), "I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images". In fact, in Josh 3 you will read that it was God who did all the miracles and signs, not Joshua. Why then did God say: "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel"? The answer comes when we consider the name Joshua. It is the same name as Jesus. Joshua is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. And has God magnified the Lord Jesus Christ? Absolutely! When did God **begin** to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ? It was when He nailed Him to the Cross of Calvary. And when we go through this chapter carefully, we will see that this chapter totally identifies with the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ in AD 33. That is why Joshua announced the three days. Then God said in verse 7: "as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee". Moses was known for leading the children of Israel through the Red Sea. But it was God who separated the waters of the Red Sea, so that the children of Israel walked on dry ground. Here in Joshua chapter 3 something very similar occurred: God separated the waters of the Jordan River, so that the children of Israel walked on dry ground. When God said the words: "as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee" God draws our attention here in verse 7, indicating that this event at the Jordan River has great similarities with the event that happened at the Red Sea. We will see later what those similarities are. Now let us look at [verse 8](#):

Josh 3:8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

Paraphrased God says: "Command the priests to carry the Ark of the Covenant to the Jordan River, and when they have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan River, do not stand still, but keep going until they have come to the midst of Jordan, and there they shall stand still". That took a great deal of faith. But that is what God said.

- **Joshua Told the People** ([Josh 3:9-13](#), [Rom 15:4](#))

Josh 3:9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

Come close to Jesus, and listen to the words of God. He made great and wonderful promises to us. [Josh 3:10](#),

Josh 3:10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

God was going to give them a sign that the living God, the ruler over all the earth, was among them. God did not say that He would give them a sign that God would bless them, or that God would look favorably upon them, but God said that He, Himself, was among them, and that He was in the midst of them and that God Himself was going to drive out the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. The sign of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night was no longer accompanying them. But God gave them another sign. Here is that sign in verse 11:

Josh 3:11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

The Ark of the Covenant had been with the children of Israel for 40 years, but it was never seen, and never has it been engaged in battle. But now, God said that the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth was out in

front of them, uncovered, going into the Jordan River. And now read verses 12 and 13:

Josh 3:12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

Josh 3:13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.

It shall come to pass that the waters of Jordan are going to be divided like the waters of the Red Sea were divided. That was a promise and God was going to perform that great miracle. Who needs this miracle? Did God need that miracle just to display His great power? No! God had already displayed His power many times before. Did Israel need this miracle so that some of their souls might be converted by seeing this miracle? No! Jesus said that nobody would be converted by a miracle. Who needs this miracle? We do! God says in Rom 15:4,

Rom 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

God gave us faith so that we would see through it the wonders of God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

- **The Ark of the Covenant** (Heb 9:4-5, Gen 17:8, Gal 3:16,29)

Please turn in your Bibles to the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb 9:4 (2X). The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box, 2 ½ cubits long, 1 ½ cubit wide and 1 ½ cubit high, which was overlaid with gold inside and outside so that no wood was visible. The lid of this box was called the Mercy-Seat, and it consisted of one piece of gold. In the two ends of the Mercy-Seat were two golden cherubim, and the two cherubim were one piece of gold with the Mercy-Seat. God told Moses to place this Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, and God told Moses what to put inside the Ark of the Covenant. In the tabernacle was the Holy Place where only the priests could come, and within the Holy Place was the Holy of Holies, which was a space of 15 feet by 15 feet by 15 feet. God reviewed the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy of Holies in Heb 9:4-5, where He said:

Heb 9:4-5 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the Mercy-Seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Inside the Ark of the Covenant there were three items, which all three identify with the Lord Jesus: **#1**, The golden pot with manna, the bread from heaven, identifies with Christ as the Bread of Life. The pot with manna was only a shadow of Christ, who is our true Bread from Heaven. **#2**, Aaron's rod that budded was a dry stick of wood that became alive, bearing blossoms and almonds, also identifies with Christ as the life giver of all of us for whom He is the Savior and the great High Priest. **#3**, The tables of the Covenant were the two tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God. These tables were a representation of the Law of God, which identifies with Christ as the Word of God. Christ came into the world under the Law, and He fulfilled the Law in our place. Therefore He could be to us the Bread of Life and therefore He could give us eternal life. Why is the lid of the Ark called the Mercy-Seat? It is because Christ is our Mercy-Seat. This word Mercy-Seat has also been translated Propitiation, and the N.T. tells us that Christ is our Propitiation. So we see that the Ark of the Covenant was entirely

a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. But Joshua also typified the Lord Jesus Christ. Is that not confusing? Can Christ be in two places at the same time? Of course He can. Christ never ceased to be God, and God can be in more than two places at the same time. For example, the Bible teaches that when Christ went to the cross as the Lamb of God, Christ also was the High Priest who sacrificed the Lamb of God. But there is a distinction between Joshua and the Ark. The pictures God is showing us in this Prophecy of Joshua are these: The Ark of the Covenant represents Christ as the Suffering Servant, whereas Joshua represents Christ as our victorious Leader leading us into the Kingdom of God. What was the promise of Josh 3:13? God said in Josh 3:13,

Josh 3:13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.

What actually was the Promise of Josh 3:13? It was an outwardly visible fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham that His descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. The Jordan riverbed was made dry, so that the children of Israel could walk on dry ground across the Jordan, and begin to occupy the land of Canaan. What was the purpose of God to make this promise to Abraham? God was creating a picture that God's elect children from throughout the world would enter into the Kingdom of God, because God delights to have mercy on them. This is expressed in God's promise to Abraham that: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed". Gen 17:8,
Gen 17:8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

God promised to Abraham and to his Seed all the land of Canaan. But Abraham never owned anything in the land of Canaan, except a plot of land to bury his wife. Moreover, God promised to him and to his Seed: "All the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession". But the land of Canaan will burn up with this earth on the last day. So how could this earthly land of Canaan be an everlasting possession? The only way we can understand this is if God did not mean this earthly land of Canaan. Abraham was not confused. Rom 4 says that Abraham knew he was going to inherit the world to come, and Heb 11 says that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God". This city is the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven in Rev 21. Abraham was not confused. But if we want to understand what Abraham already understood, then we must include the information the N.T. provides. God wrote the Book, and God defines His own terms. To whom were the promises made? The promises were not made as a blanket statement to the entire nation of Israel. Why is it so hard for people to remember that God specifies to whom the promises were made? God says it so explicitly in Gal 3:16,

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.

The Seed of Abraham is first of all Christ and secondly all the elect who are in Christ. Therefore Gal 3:29 says
Gal 3:29 And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What was the Promise of Josh 3:13? It was the promise that all the elect will inherit the Kingdom of God. That is the promise hidden in the miracle of Josh 3:13. God spoke to Joshua, Joshua told the people, and then:

#2. God Brought It to Pass (Josh 3:14-17)

Josh 3:14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

This was a most unusual sight. The golden Ark of the Covenant, which was always kept hidden in the Holy of Holies, was now uncovered and was ahead of the people, ahead of the soldiers, 2000 cubits ahead of everyone else, as if it was going to battle alone, carried only by the priests.

That is indeed the picture that God is showing us: Christ going to battle alone. Now verse 15:

Josh 3:15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)

Josh 3:16 That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

Josh 3:17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

The moment the feet of the priests, bearing the Ark, touched the waters, the waters of Jordan were instantly separated, "and at a distance of at least 3000 feet away from the Ark all the Israelites passed over on dry ground". The priests bearing the Ark stood still in the midst of Jordan, and they stayed there until every last one of the Israelites were passed over. At least one and a half million people with their cattle, and their tents, and all that they had, passed over in one day. That took several hours, and all the time the priests stood still in the midst of Jordan until everyone had safely crossed over to the other side. We could also say: "Christ stood still in the midst of Jordan until every last one of His elect was safe in the Kingdom of God". Immediately a similar event comes to our mind: God also separated the waters of the Red Sea, and they also crossed the Red Sea on dry ground. What are the similarities, and what are the differences?

In both instances a great mass of water is miraculously divided. In both instances God receives all the credit. At the Jordan River they were the hunters, but at the Red Sea they were the hunted. At the Red Sea all their enemies were drowned, but at the Jordan river the enemy was not in sight. At the Red Sea, God in the form of the cloudy Pillar was behind Israel. At the Jordan River, Christ represented by the Ark of the Covenant was before Israel. At the Red Sea it was judgment day for the enemies of God. Was it also judgment day at the Jordan River?

- **The Jordan River** (Josh 3:7, Ex 14:28, 15:6-8, Rev 20:9)

How many judgment days are there? There are two judgment days. When the Lord Jesus Christ was laden with the guilt of our sins, He had to pay for our sins the full penalty that the Law of God required, and that was the equivalent of an eternity in Hell. On Friday April 3, in the year AD 33, the Lord Jesus paid that penalty in full while hanging on the cross of Calvary. That was judgment day for the Lord Jesus Christ, and it was also judgment day for all the elect who were represented in Christ. We will not stand for judgment again, because we were already judged with Christ in the year AD 33. But on the last day all those who are still unsaved, and who have died unsaved, will stand for judgment, and they will all be found guilty because their sins have not been paid by Christ on the cross,

and they will all be thrown in Hell to burn away the sins they have committed. But that takes an eternity in Hell. Therefore, Hell will last forever. Did we remember what God said in Josh 3:7?

Josh 3:7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee.

If the Red Sea was a picture of Hell, then the Jordan River also was a picture of Hell. Please turn in your Bibles to the Prophecy of Exodus, Ex 15:6 (2X). In Exodus 15 Moses and all the children of Israel sing to the Lord out of gratitude, that He has delivered them from **all** their enemies. God states in Ex 14:28, ¶here remained not so much as one of them.³It is a song that we will sing when on the last day all our enemies will have been cast into Hell.

Ex 15:6-8 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

Now, we know that God did not consume them by fire; God did not consume them as stubble, which typifies the judgment on the last day. But God gave us these words to show that the heart of the sea was a picture of Hell. The drowning of Pharaoh and his army is somewhat similar to what we read in Rev 20:9,

Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

So we find that the Red Sea is a picture of a place called Hell. None of the enemies of God escaped; they all died in the Red Sea. Likewise the Jordan River was also a picture of Hell, but it was not a picture of the place called Hell, but the condition called Hell, of being under the Wrath of God like the Lord Jesus had to endure. That is why the Ark of the Covenant had to remain in the midst of Jordan until all the children of Israel had safely crossed over. Allow me to summarize this important conclusion: There are two judgment days:

#1. When the nation of Israel crossed the Red Sea, God created a picture of the judgment on the last day. None of the Egyptians escaped that Judgment. It was like Rev 20:9 described: "and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them".

#2. When the nation of Israel crossed the Jordan River, God created a picture of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Ark of the Covenant remained in the bed of the Jordan River "until all the people were passed clean over Jordan"; in other words: Until all the sins of all the elect of God had been fully paid. That is how long the Lord Jesus Christ had to stay on the Cross. God brought it to pass that they were not swallowed up by the Jordan River. In both instances it was a miracle from God. Therefore we must give God credit for the miracle.

- **The Miracle of Salvation** (Josh 3:17, Num 33:36-40)

What actually was God's Message in Josh 3:17?

Josh 3:17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

God shows us here the picture of Christ, in the form of the Ark of the Covenant, atoning for the guilt of our sins standing in the midst of Jordan, which means He was standing in the midst of Hell. Christ took all the blame, but the

children of Israel walked on dry ground. The children of Israel were not personally touched by Hell. God also shows us here that salvation is a miracle done by God. Salvation does not come by us making a decision for Jesus. Salvation does not come by us being baptized in water. Salvation does not come by any action or decision on our part. Salvation is done by God whenever He will, and to whomever He will. In this picture all the children of Israel represent the elect of God. But when Christ died on the Cross on that momentous Friday, April 3, in the year AD 33, Christ died for the sins of all the elect of God from every tribe, and nation, and kindred, and tongue, throughout the world. In this picture God is showing us that no one can enter into the Promised Land, the kingdom of God, without going through Hell. How can we enter the kingdom of God? We must be chosen by the Father and be placed in Christ, who went through Hell in our place. Therefore, everybody will go through Hell. Either the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross paid for our sins, and we went through Hell with and in Christ, or we must pay ourselves for our own sins in Hell for an eternity. Besides, have you noticed that the children of Israel could not enter the land of Canaan from the South? They could not enter the Promised Land without the crossing of the Jordan River, even though they have had plenty of opportunity? Look at all the opportunities they had. Please turn to the Prophecy of Numbers, Num 33:36 (2X). In Numbers 33 we have a complete listing of all the camping places of the nation of Israel in the wilderness, and many of those were South of the land of Canaan. Num 33:36-40

Num 33:36-40 And they removed from Eziongaber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which *is* Kadesh. (*This indicates they were South of the land of Canaan.*) And they removed from Kadesh, and pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom. (*This was on the edge of the Southern area.*) And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor at the commandment of the LORD, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first *day* of the fifth month. (*Forty years: That means they were near the end of their travels.*) And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor. And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel. (*This means they were again South of the land of Canaan.*)

In Num 21 we can read that they fought king Arad the Canaanite and all his army, and they destroyed all their cities. But they did not move to the North, into the land of Canaan, because the Cloudy Pillar guided them to the Eastern side of the Jordan River. That was a very deliberate act of God. They had to go through the Jordan River to act out this picture of Christ atoning for all His people. God was hereby showing that nobody can enter eternal life in the Promised Land unless Christ has already paid for them on the Cross in 33AD.

#3. The Task of Israel in the Land of Canaan (Deut 7:1-2, Gen 15:16, Rom 10:17)

Please turn in your Bibles to the Prophecy of Deut, Deut 7:1-2 (2X). The nation of Israel was a type or a figure of the true Israel of God as described in the NT. But what was the task of the nation of Israel when she had crossed the Jordan River and entered into the Promised Land? They had to exterminate all the nations that were in the land, male and female, young and old, even babies, for judgment day has come upon them. We read in Deut 7:1-2,

De 7:1 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

De 7:2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

Why was it that God's wrath was upon them? Many years earlier God said to Abraham in Gen 15:16, The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. The idolatry of the Canaanites was very great. They worshipped many idols. They even worshipped Moloch the idol of the Ammonites, which had outstretched arms which were heated until red hot, and then they would sacrifice their children on those arms, until the burnt bodies fell through the middle of the outstretched arms. This came to pass wherever we read in the OT that they made their children pass through the fire. Now God was finished enduring these insults and God commanded the children of Israel to be the executioners. The iniquity of the Amorites was now full. But let us now consider this situation carefully.

At this point in time when Israel crossed the Jordan, were any of the Canaanites saved? Except for Rahab the harlot, none of the Canaanites were saved. Why not? Were they not sincere enough? O yes, they were very sincere. They willingly sacrificed their children to these idols; that is how sincere they were. But they were not under the hearing of the true Gospel. God says in Rom 10:17, For then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Anyone whom God will save must come under the hearing of the true Gospel, and during the hearing of the true Gospel God the Holy Spirit regenerates the soul of that person so that faith can take hold as a gift from God. This is how Rahab the harlot was saved. She heard the Gospel from the two spies, and God gave her faith. But none of the Canaanites were saved because they were listening to their false prophets who were teaching them a false gospel, and God brings no salvation under those conditions. Let us apply that to our time. Can we say that people can be saved under the hearing of the free-will gospel which is so popular today? This is the gospel where people say that they must accept the Lord Jesus as their savior, or they must make a decision for the Lord Jesus, or any other actions of their own free will. Is this an option that the Bible allows? The answer is, absolutely Not! God declares in Rom 9 and in Eph 1 and in hundreds of other places that this free-will gospel is definitely not the Gospel of the Bible. This is idolatry, for in designing a free-will gospel people have to erase many pages from the Bible, and thereby they have created in their mind another god whom they worship. This is plainly the idolatry of the Canaanites. This is an abomination to God, and God will avenge these sins by Hellfire on the last day. Let us now bring it closer to home. If one of our loved ones, or perhaps our spouse, or perhaps the preacher in our church believes the Arminian free-will gospel, they are like the cursed Canaanites, and we would not wish that any of them would teach our children, for our children would be drawn away like by the Pied Piper, and we would never see them again. Let us meditate on these things, for these idolatries have been tolerated carelessly by many in our time. We must worship the only true God of the Bible, and we must love Him above all others in this world, for God declares that if anyone would add or take away from the Bible, that person is worshipping another god. Pray to God that He will give us wisdom. AMEN. Let us turn to the Lord in prayer.