

Come to Understanding

They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24

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Can You See Beyond Jericho?

After Moses led the people of Israel from their Egyptian bondage, he brought them to the edge of the promised land of Canaan. They needed to pass through Jericho to enter into the promised land. Yahweh (the LORD) allowed Moses to *see* the promised land, but because of his disobedience, he could not enter it:

- 49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, *unto* mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, that *is* over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession:
- 50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:
- 51 Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.
- 52 Yet thou shalt see the land before *thee*; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel. -Deuteronomy 32

Although Yahweh had given the law to Moses, He chose Joshua to take Israel into the promised land. Before entering the land, Joshua sent spies to “view,” or see, Jericho (see Joshua 2:1). While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal, which was located just east of Jericho, they kept the Passover for only the *third* time:

- 10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. -Joshua 5

After keeping the Passover, which used the death of a lamb as a memorial showing the power of Yahweh to save His people, Joshua saw an awesome vision:

- 13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries?
- 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face

to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

- 15 And the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so. -Joshua 5

Who was the “captain of the host” of Yahweh (the LORD) that Joshua saw? Was He an angel? Why did Joshua worship him?

The angel which John tried to worship rebuked him for his efforts. Instead, he told John to worship God.

- 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. -Revelation 19

Because Joshua worshipped the captain of the host of Yahweh, we can only conclude that He was God. Appearing as a man, this person must have been God revealed as a man, the preincarnate Yahshua (Jesus) the Messiah.

The description of the man that appeared to Joshua had great similarities to that which was also described by John as the Word of God. He described Yahshua, who returns as the leader of armies (hosts), but with the sword in His mouth, instead of in His hand:

- 13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.
- 14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
- 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
- 16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. -Revelation 19

Joshua saw God, revealed as a man of war, near Jericho. By faith, Joshua went on to capture Jericho and enter into the promised land. While in the promised land, however, Israel lost sight of Yahweh, worshipped the gods of the land, and was divided into two kingdoms.

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8

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Both were eventually led back into captivity. The king of Judah, the southern kingdom, was captured near Jericho:

5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. -2 Kings 25

Ironically, king Zedekiah's eyes were put out by his Babylonian captors (see 2 Kings 25:7). He was blinded after being taken in Jericho, which had been the entry point for Israel into the land of the promise.

Like Israel had been for so many centuries, Yahshua's disciples remained spiritually blind. Just before departing for Jericho on His way to Jerusalem to keep the Passover, Yahshua told them of His death for the *third* time:

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken. -Luke 18

Isaiah, however, wrote that, although the people of Israel walked in darkness, they would finally see a great light:

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. -Isaiah 9

Yahshua revealed that He is that Light:

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. -John 8

As Yahshua approached Jericho, He found a blind man:

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me. -Luke 18

Even though the man was blind, He could see with his heart who Yahshua was and told Him that he wanted to be able to see. Not only did the blind man receive his sight, but he was saved by faith. Yahshua spoke:

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. -Luke 18

As Yahshua continued through Jericho, a rich tax collector named Zacchaeus wanted to see Him but could not because he was short and the crowd was large:

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4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. -Luke 19

When Yahshua, whose name means Yah the Savior, or the salvation of Yah, said today "I must abide at thy house," the others could not understand what He meant. They thought He was going to spend the night at Zacchaeus's home:

7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. -Luke 19

Zacchaeus revealed that he was already obedient to the commandments of God (see Exodus 22:1; Psalms 112:9):

8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold. -Luke 19

It is tempting to read this as though Zacchaeus was saved by his good works. We remember, however, that Yahshua said the work of God was to believe on Him (see John 6:29). The works of the hands would then show the faith that is in the heart.

This day, however, was a new one for Israel. It was at Jericho that Yahshua said that He came to find and save the lost people of Israel. They had been spiritually blinded and taken into bondage:

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. -Luke 19

Yahweh promised Abraham that all the nations would be blessed through his seed (see Genesis 22:18). Believing God, Abraham lived in the earthly land of promise, with Isaac and Jacob, who were also heirs of the promise. They were looking for the heavenly city built by God:

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in a* strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. -Hebrews 11

Zacchaeus trusted God and wanted to see Yahshua. Although he kept the law and did good works, Zacchaeus was saved by faith. He thereby became an heir of the promise. It was purchased by Yahshua for him (and for us) on the other side of Jericho, when He was sacrificed as the Lamb of God at the Passover.